

**Question for written answer E-002354/2016
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Participation of European banks in the Russian bond issue

On 14 March the Financial Times¹ reported that EU officials informally advised a number of European banks against bidding on the planned bond issue by Russia. Earlier, the United States had also issued a similar warning to several American banks which were approached by Russia to take part in this deal. The participation of European banks would mean that they would indirectly be financing the conflict in Ukraine, which at the very least would be against the spirit of the current sanctions regime.

Does the Commission agree with the opinion that by European banks participating in this planned bond issue, the sanctions regime would indirectly be circumvented?

Besides this informal communication with a number of European banks, will the Commission consider taking an official position which can be publicly discussed?

Will the Commission consider prohibiting European financial institutions from participating Russian bond issues of this type as part of its sanctions, when these are revised in June?

¹ <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/7a591dcc-ea02-11e5-9fca-fb0f946fd1f0.html#axzz42xzM65TE>