Question for written answer E-002602/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: Merger of European aerospace companies

In order to achieve critical mass within the global aerospace market, Airbus, Safran and Ariane, companies at the cutting edge of their respective fields of satellites, rockets and launch systems, had decided to merge in order to achieve economies of scale which would allow them to fight off competition from the USA, Japan and China.

These savings would have allowed them to invest heavily in research and innovation, which is key to this sector.

However, the Commission has just opposed this merger on the grounds that it may harm global competition. At the same time, foreign competitors remain free to continue with mergers and the States that have created them subsidise them heavily because of their strategic importance.

In view of its decision, we would like to ask the Commission the following questions:

- How does preventing the merger of European companies at the cutting edge of technology, while their foreign competitors are heavily subsidised, favour free and undistorted competition?

- How does the creation of a European corporate group which is a global market leader in its field risk harming free and undistorted competition?