

**Question for written answer E-003631/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Barbara Kappel (ENF)

Subject: Conflict minerals

The current Commission proposal on conflict minerals lays down binding rules for upstream companies and provides for voluntary self-regulation by downstream companies. These arrangements will impose additional burdens on the European raw materials industry and break up integrated European production chains.

What view does the Commission take of the fact these arrangements will inevitably place EU firms at a disadvantage vis-à-vis their competitors from third countries, who will not be required to bear the additional costs involved in employing specialist staff and obtaining information.

How can this proposal be reconciled with the 20% reindustrialisation target, given that once again rules are being introduced which place EU firms at a competitive disadvantage?

Firms have demonstrated their commitment to addressing the problem of conflict minerals by launching initiatives and voluntary certification schemes which are proving effective. Why is the Commission not supporting such initiatives, rather than once again proposing a specifically European approach which may place EU firms at a competitive disadvantage?