

**Question for written answer P-003566/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Charles Tannock (ECR)

Subject: Security issues linked to the illegal reactivation and selling of weapons for criminal purposes

According to reports, the automatic weapons used in the Charlie Hebdo attacks last month have been traced to a shop in Slovakia that legally sells decommissioned weapons. Such weapons are mechanically deactivated so that they may be used as props in movies or historical re-enactments, or held in private collections.

These 'expansion' weapons are being sold legally over the counter to anyone over 18, with no need to present a licence. These weapons may then be reconverted by simple procedures to fire live ammunition.

Such conversion of deactivated guns is widespread in Europe. There are concerns that third parties, including organised criminals and terrorists in EU countries, are discovering this practice and beginning to use these weapons by virtue of being in Schengen, where goods can move freely with limited checks.

Whilst the Commission suggested in 2013 that it would propose common guidelines on deactivation standards, has it since taken steps to:

1. Propose to Parliament and the Council ways to ensure that deactivated firearms are rendered irreversibly inoperable?
2. Consider the comparison between the simple Slovakian method of deactivating weapons and that of the Czech Republic, which is much harder to circumvent?
3. Propose to Parliament and the Council less ambiguous and more stringent guidelines to offer to Member States for implementing the 2008 Firearms Directive?