

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3070/03  
by Christoph Konrad (PPE-DE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Distortions of competition caused by the German Foreign Trade Act

1. Is the Commission aware that the Federal German Government is intending to introduce in the armaments industry a new authorisation and notification with regard to the sale to foreign buyers of more than 25% of shares in domestic undertakings to foreign buyers? If so, what is the Commission's reaction thereto, and has it delivered an opinion thereon?
2. This new Federal Act is to apply to undertakings which manufacture or trade in goods for export. It is claimed that the aim of the authorisation obligation is to monitor the relocation of German undertakings and dominance by third countries, but only in respect of the sensitive armaments industry.
3. The definition and demarcation of what is covered by the term 'armaments industry' in the broadest sense of the term is vague. What does the Commission intend to do to prevent the danger that such an authorisation of one EU Government might introduce a politically motivated dominance in other economic sectors as well and thus decisively restrict the competitiveness and entrepreneurial freedom of the German undertakings concerned?