

**Question for written answer E-002666/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Lucas Hartong (NI)

Subject: Development aid to Congo

On Tuesday 4 March, Commissioner Lewandowski warned the Committee on Budgets of the deficit of EUR 23.4 billion which is being faced by the budget of the Union as a result of the high numbers of applications in the areas of cohesion and development policy.

While Commissioner Lewandowski is sounding the alarm bells on the gaping hole between income and expenditure for this year, Commissioner Piebalgs coolly announced today, 5 March, among other things that EUR 620 million is to be paid into the bottomless pit that is Congo.

1. Has the Commission not learnt from the fiascos in the previous programming period¹?
2. Why is the Commission failing to take seriously the concerns of the European Court of Auditors and why are we continuing to pump money with wanton abandon into one of the most highly corrupt countries in the world²?
3. Does the Commission already have an excuse in reserve if it emerges a few years down the line that the taxpayer's hard-earned money has once again not been spent wisely? If so, what is this excuse?

¹ <http://www.euractiv.com/development-policy/auditors-slams-effectiveness-eu-news-530807>

² Transparency International: Ranked 154/177 in 2013