

**Question for written answer E-001737/2018
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Investigation into financial fraud in the Republic of Moldova

In late 2014, dubious financial dealings on a massive scale resulted in nearly USD 1 billion being removed from banks in the Republic of Moldova and transferred abroad. Despite ongoing prosecutions, the stolen money has not yet been returned. Kroll, the British company charged with conducting the internal investigation, stated in its second report, published in December 2017, that in all likelihood, more than half the money remained directly accessible to Member States and partner countries.

Are any EU bodies involved in the investigation into the theft? If so, with what mandate? Are they cooperating with the law enforcement agencies of the 14 Member States which, according to Kroll, might each be housing some of the money?

What legal scope does the Commission think exists for accounts and assets across the EU which are linked to the theft to be frozen and people who deliberately undermine the investigation to be penalised on an individual basis?

What action will the Commission take against such third countries as the Hong Kong SAR, Ukraine and the People's Republic of China to persuade them to help in getting back the stolen money which has been taken there?