

**Question for written answer E-006991/2020  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Christine Anderson (ID)**

**Subject:** Reporting of suspicions against German opposition party by national television

A report was broadcast in the 'Frontal21' television programme<sup>1</sup> alleging links between the AfD, the largest opposition party in the German Bundestag, and illegal arms transactions. The accusatory report concerned a German 'arms dealer' who is said to have purchased firearms which, it suggested, were intended for the AfD. 'Frontal21' provided no evidence for this.

'It is true that Alexander R., who is the subject of the report and who is said to refute the allegations, joined the AfD in 2016. But since then he has never again put in an appearance in the party', explained AfD press officer Peter Rohling. 'Instead he has been involved in a lengthy exclusion procedure, as he failed to pay membership fees for four consecutive years. Nor did he hold any office in the AfD, and the AfD was unaware of his alleged actions.'

Laying on the AfD a completely unfounded and clearly far-fetched charge gives rise to a suspicion that the intention here was to cause wilful damage rather than exercise journalistic meticulousness. This is demonstrated not least by the failure by the ZDF channel to give the AfD's federal association the opportunity to comment before the programme was broadcast.

1. Did the Commission take journalistic quality into account when approving the State Media Treaty?<sup>2</sup>
2. What is the Commission's evaluation of such reports against the backdrop of its 'Action Plan against Disinformation'?
3. Why was this report not flagged as misleading by so-called fact-checkers (who are engaged under the Action Plan)?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.zdf.de/nachrichten/politik/balkan-waffen-afd-100.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www1.wdr.de/kultur/kulturnachrichten/eu-medienstaatsvertrag-100.html>