

**Question for written answer E-000179/2022
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Virginie Joron (ID)

Subject: COVID-19: made in China, financed by the US

A report on the origin of COVID-19 written by Major Joseph Murphy for the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) was released on 11 January 2021.

The officer states that COVID-19 came from a research project (Project Defuse) on bats in China and in the US, conducted by the NGO Ecohealth Alliance and funded by the NIH/NIAID. DARPA purportedly received Ecohealth Alliance's proposal in 2018 but refused to provide the USD 14 million requested – including around USD 1 million for the laboratory in Wuhan – due to safety concerns. A total of USD 86 378.25 was budgeted for a test on the deployment of immune-boosting aerosols in a bat cave in China.

1. Will the Commission check the veracity of Murphy's report on Ecohealth Alliance's project – which allegedly created and spread COVID-19 in China – and, working with the EU Intelligence and Situation Centre (INTCEN), Member States and the US authorities, will it look into whether the project was publicly financed by the US via the NIH/NIAID?
2. If the report turns out to be true, what legal, political and commercial means could it use to take action? Will it open an investigation to identify who should be held liable?