

**Question for written answer E-000846/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Jean-Paul Garraud (ID)

Subject: Green light given to trips by a Commission official paid for by Qatar

Politico has revealed that between 2015 and 2021 Henrik Hololei, Director-General of the Commission's Transport Department, flew free of charge in business class on Qatar Airways nine times. At the same time, its teams were negotiating a major air deal for the Gulf state's national airline.

Following the allegations of corruption against MEPs and EU officials involving Qatar, it is clear that there are questions about the transparency and neutrality of Mr Hololei.

Added to this is the fact that the air transport agreement in question has been strongly criticised by European long-haul airlines and trade unions, who have argued that it undermines competition. It would appear that Qatar's interests took priority over those of the European Union.

1. Can the Commission explain how it was able to authorise a Commission official to undertake trips paid for by Qatar at a time when it was in negotiations with Qatar, which would appear to amount to corruption?
2. Can it confirm that Qatar has not extended favours to other Members of the Commission?
3. What does the Commission think about the idea of launching an independent investigation into the management of its relations with Qatar?

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