

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3224/09
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to the Commission

Subject: Sale of shares in MOL to Surgutneftgaz

In March 2009 the Austrian ÖMV sold its 21% holding in the Hungarian oil company MOL to Surgutneftgaz, which is Russian. The transaction was not preceded by any preliminary agreement; ÖMV did not inform MOL's management of its intention to sell the holding. Moreover, there are many question marks over the ownership of Surgutneftgaz. This company, which is considered to be Russia's fourth largest producer, has not disclosed any information about the identity of its owners since 2003. As a result of this transaction, Surgutneftgaz became MOL's largest shareholder.

1. Does the Commission consider the sale of shares in MOL to Surgutneftgaz to accord with the EU principle of transparency?
2. The new legislation on the internal market in electricity and gas on which the European Parliament is shortly to vote at second reading includes provisions concerning transactions as a result of which businesses in third countries can acquire powers of supervision over system operators based in the EU. Under the legislation which is awaiting adoption, national authorities may refuse to approve the transaction if the Commission likewise raises an objection. Would this provision be applicable to the above-mentioned sale of shares in MOL?
3. Does the Commission have any instruments by means of which to monitor attempts by purchasers in third countries to buy holdings? What action will the Commission take to prevent further attempts to purchase them?