

**Priority question for written answer P-000109/2023/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: The shady privatisation of the Plovdiv International Fair: a threat to the national security of the Republic of Bulgaria and the security of the EU as a whole

The Plovdiv International Fair is a cultural landmark with strategic infrastructure. It is being privatised by the Russian Honorary Consul, Georgi Gergov, a political person connected with the former communist party and with the Russian Federation, but who also maintains close ties with the 'Euro-Atlantic' political party GERB and President Radev. This shady privatisation demonstrates the weakness of institutions, systemic corruption and breaches of national security in favour of Russian influence and Russian national interests.

Given the above:

1. Does the Commission consider the deal to be a breach of the sanctions regime, imposed on political figures linked to Russia, thus increasing the threat to EU security in the context of a growing conflict and how is the Commission planning to react?
2. Could the acquisition without payment of the Plovdiv Fair and its strategic infrastructure, favouring the Honorary Russian Consul Georgi Gergov, be considered a violation of the Bulgarian privatisation law, as it is a granting of inadmissible and unlawful State aid?
3. Can the Commission coordinate the position of the Member States with regard to Russian honorary consuls in the EU, many of whom openly support the Russian invasion of Ukraine and are involved in hybrid deals to advance Russian interests?

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