

**Priority question for written answer P-002805/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Bart Groothuis (Renew)

Subject: Follow-up questions on the Customs Control Equipment Instrument (CCEI) and Nuctech

In March 2023, over 50 MEPs urged President von der Leyen to exclude the Chinese state-owned company Nuctech from participating in CCEI tenders in order to safeguard security interests (E-000213/2022). She assured them that security was of the utmost importance and prevailed over other criteria such as price (Ares-2022-8423484).

Belgium recently excluded Nuctech¹ from participating in tenders on security grounds, whereas Estonia awarded a CCEI grant to Nuctech². The CCEI call for proposals states that 'projects must comply with EU policy interests and priorities (including security)' and considers 'equipment that is subject to third country requirements that could affect the implementation or put into question the award of the grant' to be ineligible for funding. This is not compatible with the Chinese national intelligence law that obliges Chinese companies to provide data to China's intelligence agencies.

1. Does the Commission agree that Nuctech equipment and its requirements under Chinese law make it ineligible for CCEI funding?
2. What other Member States apart from Estonia use CCEI funds to pay for Nuctech equipment and what will the Commission do to counter this?
3. How does the Commission enforce the President's commitment that 'security requirements prevail over other criteria such as price' in the evaluation of CCEI tenders?

Submitted: 26.9.2023

¹ <https://www.tijd.be/politiek-economie/belgie/algemeen/chinese-scanners-van-douane-vormen-veiligheidsrisico/10472972.html>.

² <https://epl.delfi.ee/artikkel/120228808/eesti-ja-venemaa-piiri-turvavad-hiina-valitsuse-silmad-riik-ostab-julgeolekuriskiga-seadmeid-juurde>.