

**Priority question for written answer P-001636/2023
to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs
and Security Policy**

Rule 138

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Subject: Evasion of EU sanctions against Russia through Central Asia

According to a March 2023 report by Deutsche Welle, despite EU sanctions, the Russian economy has not contracted as was predicted. Trade data shows that EU goods banned from export are still reaching Russia, mainly from the countries of Central Asia. In February 2023, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development published a report showing that exports from the EU and the UK to Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan increased by 90% after sanctions were imposed. Some of these goods are high-tech items used by the military in Russia.

This evasion is facilitated through the Central Asian countries' dependence on Russia and carries with it the risk that the increase in trade further reinforces this economic and political dependence, as illustrated by the presence of the presidents of the Central Asian republics at the 9 May military parade in Moscow.

In view of the above:

1. What steps is the Commission considering taking to prevent evasion of sanctions?
2. What are the effects on relations between the EU and Central Asia?

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