

Committee on Industry, Research and Energy
The Chair

Commissioner Margrethe Vestager
European Commissioner for Competition
European Commission

D 304281 16.03.2017

D(2017) 12443
HK/lw

Strasbourg,

Subject: Comments on Gazprom commitments concerning Central and Eastern European gas markets and compensation of affected parties

Dear Commissioner,

We would like to congratulate you on your important work to ensure fair competition and making sure that all market players, regardless whether they are state or privately owned, abide by EU rules and regulations. All the more important the work becomes when dealing with state monopolies that use their unique position not only to overcharge their customers but also aim to influence the governments of certain Member States.

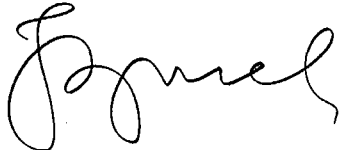
One of the cornerstones of the Energy Union, initiative which European Parliament wholeheartedly supports, is a fully-integrated internal energy market, which we cannot have if all market players do not play by the same rules. For the Energy Union to succeed we need to remove the obstacles both regulatory and physical still present in energy markets in the EU.

We welcome the action taken by you and your services towards Gazprom. Your findings from the investigation show that the breaches of the EU market rules by the Kremlin owned monopolist are continuous and serious. Gazprom has abused its dominant position in eight Member States to limit competition, charge higher prices and gain control of infrastructure. For years both industrial customers and households have excessively overpaid.

The commitments of Gazprom presented by you on 13th March is a step in the right direction. We, however, are disappointed that the preliminary agreement is missing the provisions for compensation to the affected parties and a fine for the breach of the EU rules. The lack of penal measures sets a dangerous precedent and does not send a clear signal of EU's commitment to defend its rules and citizens.

Therefore we urge you to take into full account the outcome of the market test and introduce all appropriate measures to ensure that Gazprom effectively compensates the affected parties for the losses they have incurred in the respective Member States. This would send a clear signal that EU rules apply to everyone equally and the breach of them will not be tolerated.

Yours sincerely,



Jerzy Buzek

On behalf of my colleagues:

Hans-Olaf Henkel, ITRE Vice-Chair, European Conservatives and Reformists Group

Krišjānis Kariņš, ITRE Coordinator, Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)

Dan Nica, ITRE Coordinator, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats

Zdzisław Krasnodębski, ITRE Coordinator, European Conservatives and Reformists Group

Fredrick Federley, ITRE Coordinator, Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe

Claude Turmes, ITRE Coordinator, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance