Question for written answer E-002537/2026
to the Commission
Rule 144
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Subject: New Caledonian nickel industry and Europeans' strategic autonomy

The energy transition and the European defence industry depend on nickel. Our 27 Member States are 80 % reliant on Chinese or Indonesian production, while for refined nickel, the figure reaches 90 %.

New Caledonia, a French overseas territory, remains the world's largest source of nickel, possessing some 25 % of the world's lateritic nickel reserves.

However, the New Caledonian nickel sector is in crisis, with production shut down at two out of three industrial sites and uncertainty about the future of the Eramet group, which includes the French State among its shareholders. There are reports of Chinese buyers.

At a time when Europe is aiming to secure its supplies with the Critical Raw Materials Act, no plan has been put forward to make New Caledonia the natural and secure source of nickel for Europeans. In comparison, Chinese dominance in the battery and rare earth sectors demonstrates that mining groups cannot thrive without the support of their governments.

1. To prevent the Critical Raw Materials Act from becoming a dead letter, will the Commission support the New Caledonian nickel sector, including through strategic stockpiling and support for industrial projects?

2. Are steps being taken to oppose Indonesian nickel produced without compliance with environmental, social and governance criteria?

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