(English version)

Question for written answer E-002895/24
to the Commission
Moritz Körner (Renew)
(12 December 2024)

Subject: Golden Triangle

The Zhao Wei transnational criminal organisation (TCO) is allegedly involved in drug trafficking, human trafficking, money laundering, bribery, wildlife trafficking and other forms of transnational organised crime. Much of this illicit activity is allegedly conducted through the Kings Romans casino organisation in the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone along the Mekong River. The United States Treasury Department imposed sanctions on the Zhao Wei TCO in 2018.

The Commission is asked to answer the following questions separately:

1. Can the Commission say how high the level of economic damage caused by the Zhao Wei TCO or the illegal activities in the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone has been for the EU? If so, how high, and in what context? If not, why not?

2. Can the Commission say why the EU has so far failed to impose sanctions against Zhao Wei and the Zhao Wei TCO?

3. Does the Commission recommend sanctioning Zhao Wei or the Zhao Wei TCO?

Submitted: 12.12.2024

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(12 March 2025)

EU restrictive measures (sanctions) are a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) instrument to uphold international law, prevent international crises, support conflict resolution, fight terrorism and organised crime and tackle the proliferation of weapons.

According to the EU Treaties, the decision to adopt sanctions lies with the Council, acting by unanimity, on a proposal by the High Representative/Vice-President and/or one or more Member States.

EU sanctions designations are based on specific listing criteria and require legally robust evidence. They must respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, as stipulated by the EU Treaties.

While the EU recognises the significant economic damage caused by illicit activities of Zhao Wei and the Zhao Wei Transnational Crime Organisation, providing a precise quantification of the impact in this specific case is currently not feasible.

The EU remains committed to addressing these challenges through continuous international cooperation and targeted measures.