

EN
E-006997/2012
Answer given by Mr De Gucht
on behalf of the Commission
(21.9.2012)

The Commission is aware of the reported loan measure involving the Jeffrey Mine and the Province of Quebec. Any such measure will be subject to the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on subsidies, under the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, should it be shown to be a "specific subsidy" under Articles 1 and 2 of the Agreement and to be either prohibited or causing adverse effects to the interests of another WTO Member. At this stage, the nature and effects of the Quebec measure would require further investigation.

The EU ban on asbestos fibres is governed by the REACH Regulation which does not apply to goods that are under customs supervision, provided that they do not undergo any treatment or processing, and are in temporary storage, in a free zone or warehouse with a view to be re-exported or in transit. Shipments of asbestos in vessels moored in European harbours on their way to ports outside the EU would thus not be considered to be imported into the EU and would not be subject to the ban.

The Commission will continue rigorous implementation of existing EU legislation related to trade in asbestos and asbestos goods.