

Brussels, 13th May 1997

“Our analysis of the Boeing-McDonnell Douglas file is conducted strictly on the basis of the European merger Regulation, and nothing else” Mr Karel Van Miert says .

Reacting to press reports according to which some Members of the US-Senate take the view that the European Commission's approach to the Boeing-McDonnell Douglas file is “politically motivated”, Mr Karel Van Miert, the European Commissioner in charge of Competition policy said :

“ Our analysis of this case is strictly conducted along the lines and criteria which have been spelled out in the legal framework of the European merger Regulation, and nothing else.

Our analysis is based on facts and figures, not on so-called “political issues”. As I stated repeatedly during my recent visit to the US, the Commission examines this file strictly on its own merits : I have not involved and will not involve other elements into the debate.

As a consequence of our strong doubts, we have decided to initiate an in-depth scrutiny into this merger file, on March 19 of this year, because we express very serious reservations as to the compatibility of the proposed merger with the European rules on competition policy (see IP/97/236 of March 19, 1997). The initiation of such an in-depth inquiry clearly demonstrates that, in its present form, this merger case is not in line with the European merger Regulation.

The deadline for a final decision by the European Commission is set for July, 31 of this year. I expect a statement of objections to be ready before the end of May : in this document which will be sent to the companies involved in this merger case, we will clearly point out all the elements that cause our deep worries. As usual, we expect the recipient companies to offer formal remedies to the worries expressed.

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