

FREEPORT INVESTIGATION TO CONTINUE

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MEP Ana Gomes, centre, is leading the inquiry commission on the Luxembourg Freeport

Investigations are expected to continue after MEPs paid a visit to Luxembourg's Freeport on Monday amid concerns over transparency.

The 11,000m², high security storage and trading platform for valuables opened next to Findel airport's cargo centre in September 2014.

The site offers operators tax breaks on VAT and customs duties for items like fine wines, art work and vintage cars in transit.

The MEP visit was part of a European money laundering investigation. Following the Panama Papers revelations, a survey carried out at the

European Parliament in March last year raised concerns about “operating problems” with the Freeport.

President Robert Goebbels welcomed the MEP visit after the publication of a “derogatory” report in December 2017.

MEP Ana Gomes, who leads the inquiry commission, said that while the reception was warm, “several questions remain unanswered for the Luxembourg authorities.”

Gomes was interested in how the Freeport administration controls what passes through the warehouse.

Goebbels said the Freeport identifies the economic beneficiaries but for the rest, customs and other administrations are responsible. He stressed that the Freeport is constantly monitored and meets regulations, citing a 22 November report on free trade areas naming the US, Bogota and Luxembourg as exempt.

Gomes said further investigation was needed. “The important thing is transparency, is it possible to hide something? There is a protection wall between the Freeport and customs so we must continue to discuss with them.”

Fonte: <http://delano.lu/d/detail/news/freeport-investigation-continue/168917>