

Prior notification of a concentration
(Case No. COMP/M.3431 – SONOCO/AHLSTROM/JV)

(2004/C 143/02)

(Text with EEA relevance)

1. On 18.05.2004, the Commission received a notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 4064/89 ⁽¹⁾, as last amended by Regulation (EC) No 1310/97 ⁽²⁾, by which the undertakings Sonoco Luxembourg S.à.r.l. (Luxembourg) belonging to Sonoco Products Company ('Sonoco', US) and Ahlstrom Holding GmbH (Germany) belonging to Ahlstrom Corporation ('Ahlstrom', Finland) acquire within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) of the Council Regulation joint control of the undertaking Sonoco – JV S.à.r.l. ('the JV', Luxembourg) by way of purchase of shares in a newly created company constituting a joint venture.

2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are:

- for undertaking Sonoco: worldwide manufacturer of industrial and consumer packaging products and provider of packaging services;
- for undertaking Ahlstrom: worldwide manufacturer of high performance fiber-based materials used in different sectors such as healthcare, transport, packaging and home & office;
- for the JV: the European core-boards and paper cores businesses of Sonoco and Ahlstrom.

3. On preliminary examination, the Commission finds that the notified concentration could fall within the scope of Regulation (EEC) No 4064/89. However, the final decision on this point is reserved.

4. The Commission invites interested third parties to submit their possible observations on the proposed operation to the Commission.

Observations must reach the Commission not later than 10 days following the date of this publication. Observations can be sent to the Commission by fax (fax no. +32/2/2964301 or 2967244) or by post, under reference number COMP/M.3431–SONOCO/AHLSTROM/JV, to the following address:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Competition,
Merger Registry
J-70
B-1049 Bruxelles/Brussel

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 395, 30.12.1989 p. 1; corrigendum: OJ L 257, 21.9.1990, p. 13.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 180, 9. 7. 1997, p. 1; corrigendum OJ L 40, 13.2.1998, p. 17.