Resolution on the state of play of the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement

2013/2989(RSP) - 17/04/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 461 to 89 votes, with 9 abstentions, a resolution prepared by international trade negotiations on the state of play of the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement.

While welcoming the ongoing progress in the FTA negotiations, Members requested that some points be included in the future agreement.

The elements highlighted by the Members include:

- respect for the core ILO conventions and the WTO obligations;
- **better access to markets** of non-agricultural and agricultural products;
- (eventual) **reciprocal full duty elimination**, while respecting a degree of asymmetry also involving suitable transition periods in implementation;
- the lifting of unjustified trade barriers;
- the simplification of EU rules of origin – without lessening the strictness of the current system – in order to make them easier to apply for economic operators and customs administrations;
- the fair and equitable treatment of all investors and services providers in the banking, insurance, legal, accounting, transport, and distribution services, notably in the retail and wholesale sectors;
- the strengthening of Vietnamese **data protection** legislation;
- effective and transparent procurement systems so as to ensure fair competition between private and state-owned enterprises;
- the reduction and the regular supervision of the use of subsidies and other preferences, such as beneficial conditions provided to SOEs and domestic companies in Vietnam;
- a specific policy for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
- a **liberalisation of trade in manufacturing** by ensuring effective implementation and enforcement of intellectual property rights;
- the **respect of the sensitivities linked to trade in agricultural and fisheries products** (foreseeing the mutual opening of markets in sectors of complementarity if necessary);
- a transparent and effective state-to-state dispute settlement arrangements;
- the inclusion of animal welfare standards;
- a binding and enforceable **sustainable development** chapter reflecting the EU's and Vietnam's common commitment to promote respect for, compliance with, and enforcement of international human rights agreements, the eight core ILO conventions, and key MEAs.

Members called on the Commission to apply **an approach based on conditionality**, so as to offer the signing of the FTA in exchange for concrete progress on human rights and other fundamental rights as well as the strengthening of bilateral dialogue on these questions ((including religious freedom).

Lastly, Parliament urged the Commission to develop **'comprehensible trade indicators based on human rights and on environmental and social standards'**, as it has already requested several times.