

Resolution on the accession of Ecuador to the Trade Agreement concluded between the EU and its Member States and Colombia and Peru

2015/2656(RSP) - 26/11/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 499 votes to 61, with 86 abstentions, a resolution prepared by the Committee on International Trade on the accession of Ecuador to the Trade Agreement concluded between the EU and its Member States and Colombia and Peru.

Members welcomed the conclusion of the negotiations with Ecuador on the protocol for its accession to the Trade Agreement between the EU, Colombia and Peru, recognising the important benefits that this will bring for Ecuador's exports to the EU.

They recalled that, before giving its consent to the Trade Agreement on 11 December 2012, Parliament called on the Andean countries, in its aforementioned [resolution of 13 June 2012](#), to ensure the establishment of a transparent and binding road map on human, environmental and labour rights, and that the Colombian and Peruvian Governments submitted action plans on sustainable development prior to Parliament giving its consent.

Defending human rights: Members asked the Commission and the EEAS to submit to Parliament a comprehensive report focusing on the measures taken by the Commission through cooperation programmes, in particular in connection with education, training, regulatory cooperation and the creation of socioeconomic opportunities for the most deprived sections of society and fostering progress on democracy, upholding human and workers' rights and protecting the environment. They also urged the Commission to make full use of the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) in this connection.

The Government of Ecuador is urged to take note of the action plans submitted by Colombia and Peru and to take similar measures as this is an opportunity to improve the general condition of their citizens' lives, including human and labour rights and the environment.

For the Parliament, **human rights and democracy are essential elements of the overall relationship between the EU and the Andean countries.**

Strengthening the economy, social rights and sustainable development: recalling that poverty in Ecuador decreased from 37.6% to 22.5% between 2006 and 2014, while extreme poverty fell from 16.9% to 7.7%, Parliament commended the Ecuadorian Government for having invested over USD 40 billion in the social sector over the past eight years. It noted the major investments made by Ecuador over recent years and reaffirmed support for all legislative and non-legislative action taken by the government and local authorities in Ecuador to combat poverty.

Parliament also drew attention to the EU objective of including a binding trade and sustainable development chapter in all trade agreements concluded with both industrialised and non-industrialised partners. It recalled that the Ecuadorian constitution explicitly recognises the development of **fair trade** as a key objective of the country's trade policy.

Members called for a cooperation agreement between Ecuador and the EU in support of specific environmental programmes and welcomes the interest already expressed by the Ecuadorian Government

in a cooperation agreement with the EU in support of programmes relating to **deforestation**. They recalled that the EU-Andean Sustainability Impact Assessment (2009) predicted that deforestation and reduced biodiversity would result from the projected expansion of the agriculture and timber industries.

Defending minorities: Members acknowledged the efforts made by Ecuador to afford better protection to indigenous communities and urged the Ecuadorian Government to make sure that its policies – in particular its mining strategy – do not have an adverse impact on the rights of indigenous communities. They welcomed the fact that Ecuador has ratified ILO Convention No 169 on indigenous and tribal peoples, but noted that the trade agreement does not make any reference to the convention. In parallel, Parliament called on the Ecuadorian Government to further improve the existing domestic mechanisms and dialogue with civil society.

Imports of Ecuadorian bananas: Parliament noted that, alongside Colombia and Peru, Ecuador is one of the world's top producers of bananas. It called therefore on the Commission to **ensure that the trigger import volumes laid down in the stabilisation mechanism for bananas are fairly respected**. It asked the Commission to regularly inform Parliament without delay, and in any event when the trend in banana imports is such that it could cause the trigger import volumes to be reached, and to provide details of the direct and indirect impact of banana imports from those countries. The Commission is called upon to suspend the duty exemption on bananas imported from those countries **if imports are increasing in a disproportionate manner**, causing or threatening to cause serious harm to the economies of the EU producing regions, such as job losses.

Parliament expressed its conviction that safeguard clauses should be established simultaneously by both sides in order to protect national production against import surges that may cause serious harm.