

Termination of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Liberia on Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade in timber products to the European Union

2025/0259M(NLE) - 17/06/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 542 votes to 52 against and 70 abstentions, a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the termination of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Liberia on the enforcement of forest regulations, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union.

The Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) between the European Union and the Republic of Liberia on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade in Timber Products (FLEGT) to the European Union entered into force on 1 December 2013.

Parliament recalled that the EU-Liberia FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) has led to improvements, including in stakeholder participation in government processes and forestry reform, but that unfortunately this progress has not been consistent over the last 13 years. It regretted the **lack of progress in the implementation of the VPA with Liberia**, especially with regard to the establishment of an operational FLEGT licensing scheme and a timber legality assurance system.

To address problems such as weak governance, ineffective law enforcement, insecure land tenure systems, lack of access to finance, shrinking civic space and corruption, Members believe the EU must meaningfully **engage stakeholders**, such as indigenous peoples and local communities, to overcome regulatory implementation hurdles regarding transparency and traceability.

Parliament emphasised the importance of:

- integrating **multi-stakeholder mechanisms** that bring together civil society, the private sector and local authorities in the Commission's decision-making processes; civil society organisations, indigenous peoples and local communities should actively participate in any future forest partnership;
- carrying out **joint assessments** with a view to overcoming obstacles to the implementation of regulations on transparency and traceability in order to combat the root causes of deforestation;
- conducting an **independent and in-depth diagnostic** assessment of the evolution of forest governance in Liberia, and ensuring that the experiences and lessons learned from the VPA process inform any decisions relating to the future of this agreement and are incorporated into any future partnership.

Members regretted the need to end the legally binding Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with Liberia and stressed that the Commission must **continue its dialogue** with the Liberian government on forestry. They emphasised the negative consequences that its termination could have on civic space.

The Commission is invited to:

- explore **complementary initiatives**, in close dialogue with Liberia, in particular by developing a forestry partnership serving as a framework for ongoing dialogue and cooperation, in order to ensure the legality of timber and timber products from Liberia and to address the problem of illegal logging;
- present to Parliament and to the EU-Liberia VPA Joint Implementation Committee a fully-fledged transition roadmap setting out the objectives, targets, negotiation timeline, governance structure and inclusive stakeholder consultation arrangements for future cooperation with Liberia in the form of a forest partnership;
- ensure the full **continuation of the activities of the inclusive and participatory governance** structures of the VPA, such as the joint implementation committee and the Liberia implementation committee, in particular within the framework of the memorandum of understanding which underpins the future forest partnership, and by supporting Liberia's ongoing forest reforms;
- design **detailed indicators** for impact assessments and social benefits into forest partnership compliance and evaluation requirement;
- ensure **coherence** between the EU's frameworks on trade and sustainability when engaging in dialogue with Liberia.

The resolution stressed the importance of **parliamentary oversight** and monitoring of VPAs by the Parliament's Committee on International Trade. It underlined the need to continuously involve Parliament in assessing the implementation of existing VPAs, as well as in the negotiation, signing, and establishment of any potential future forest partnerships.