



2018/0356M(NLE)

16.10.2019

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

for the Committee on International Trade

on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Free Trade Agreement
between the European Union and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
(2018/0356M(NLE))

Rapporteur for opinion: Isabel Wiseler-Lima

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the Committee on International Trade, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Recalls that Parliament gave its consent to the EU-Viet Nam Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Partnership and Cooperation (PCA) on 17 December 2015¹, which defines future relations and aims to enhance further cooperation on global and regional challenges;
2. Underlines the strategic importance of Viet Nam as a crucial partner of the EU in South East Asia and among the ASEAN countries, specifically but not exclusively in relation to climate change negotiations, good governance, sustainable development, economic and social progress and the fight against terrorism;
3. Acknowledges Viet Nam's efforts to undertake an ambitious reform agenda, notably on the environmental and labour rights of the sustainable development chapter of the FTA; welcomes the ratification of six out of eight core ILO Conventions, namely No. 29 on forced labour, Nos. 100 and 111 on non-discrimination, Nos. 138 and 182 on child labour and most recently No. 98 on the right to organise and collective bargaining; calls on the Vietnamese Government to quickly ratify the outstanding Conventions;
4. Remains concerned about human rights violations, including the application of the death penalty in Viet Nam; calls on Viet Nam to introduce a moratorium and move towards abolition; highlights that human rights constitute a cornerstone of the trade and sustainable development chapter of the FTA; calls for periodic evaluation of the impact of the agreement;
5. Underlines that Article 13 of the FTA embodies a cooperative approach based on common values and interests, taking into account the differences in the Parties' respective levels of development; welcomes the possibility of first resolving matters that fall under Article 13 on trade and sustainable development through exchange in the Committee on Trade and Sustainable Development; recalls that a Party may request that a Panel of Experts be convened to examine such matters in the event that the Committee is unable to resolve them satisfactorily;
6. Highlights that the FTA creates an institutional and legally binding link to the PCA; points out that Article 1 of the PCA contains a standard human rights clause which can trigger appropriate measures, including, as a last resort, the suspension of the PCA, or parts thereof, without delay;
7. Encourages the Commission to step up technical assistance and available funding to Viet Nam and its independent civil society in order to support Viet Nam's compliance with its international human rights obligations and the monitoring of the proper implementation of Article 13 of the FTA.

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0467.