

**Question for written answer P-009188/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Charles Tannock (ECR)

Subject: Sri Lanka - GSP+ status

The Commission recommended in December 2009 that the EU suspend Sri Lanka's GSP+ status following concerns about the country's human rights record, to which the GSP+ status is directly linked. This decision was endorsed by the Council of the European Union in February 2010, and took effect on 15 August 2010.

Following the election of a new Government in Sri Lanka in 2015, there has been speculation of reinstating the status, speculation that has increased following a Sri Lankan delegation visit to Parliament led by Sri Lankan Prime Minister Wickremesinghe, at which he called on the European Union to consider re-awarding the status. In October/November 2016 a Parliament delegation visited Colombo, in part to 'look at the groundwork laid for a successful GSP+ application', as quoted in an EEAS press release.

1. The Commission has started engaging with Sri Lanka to help clarify and explain the GSP+ entry criteria, as mandated by the Council in November 2015. Can the Commission provide an update as to how these talks are proceeding?
2. What assessment does the Commission make of Sri Lanka's human rights record since December 2009, particularly after the cessation of hostilities?
3. Does the Commission consider Sri Lanka to be eligible, or not, for GSP+ status at the present time?