

**Question for written answer P-007469/2017  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Molly Scott Cato (Verts/ALE)**

Subject: Mercosur and the Paradise Papers

The Paradise Papers have implicated the current Brazilian Minister for Agriculture, Blairo Maggi, and the country's Finance Minister, Henrique Meirelles. Maggi is a shareholder of a food processing company with headquarters in the tax haven of the Caiman Islands. Meirelles has set up a trust for his personal wealth in Bermuda – another tax haven. Argentinian Finance Minister Nicolás Caputo is administrator of an investment company, located in the Caiman Islands, whose hedge funds nearly caused the bankruptcy of the Argentinian state. Argentinian Energy Minister Juan José Aranguren is member of the managing board of a company belonging to Shell that received preferential treatment regarding contractual agreements in 2016.

Those implicated are high-ranking members of Mercosur governments. The EU is currently negotiating an Association Agreement with Mercosur. It is evident that these ministers would not sign an agreement which legally obliges them to disclose, detect or prohibit the aforementioned practices.

1. What provisions are there in EU agreements, and in this particular agreement, to prohibit government officials from practicing tax evasion?
2. Will the Commission stall EU-Mercosur negotiations unless high-level tax evasion is stopped?
3. Will the EU blacklist tax havens and countries where ministers have engaged in tax evasion?