

**Question for written answer E-009294/2011
to the Commission
Rule 117
Harlem Désir (S&D)**

Subject: Free trade agreement with India and its compatibility with the EU's social, environmental and development aid objectives

The European Union is India's leading trading partner - with trade in goods and services amounting to nearly EUR 84 billion in 2009 and 2010 - and the leading investor in India (cumulative total of nearly EUR 20 billion since the year 2000). The free trade agreement (FTA) currently being negotiated should increase this trade even more.

In accordance with Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union, however, European commercial policy must be conducted in a manner consistent with all the European Union's objectives, which include social, environmental and development objectives.

Is the Commission taking these objectives into account in the negotiations with India? NGOs and the International Trade Union Confederation are currently campaigning for the abolition of child labour and for the ending of arbitrary arrests of demonstrators and trade unionists and of forced labour, a practice still employed, for example, in the agricultural and mining industries.

Will the Commission undertake to include in the FTA a requirement to comply with basic ILO conventions and international environmental standards? What does it intend to include in the 'sustainable development' chapter of the FTA?

In keeping with the principle of fair trade, will the Commission agree to the inclusion in the FTA of binding measures concerning human rights and social and environmental standards and penalties for non-implementation?