

**Question for written answer E-004929/2013  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

**Linda McAvan (S&D), David Martin (S&D) and Michael Cashman (S&D)**

Subject: Everything But Arms agreement with Cambodia and human rights

We have recently become aware of concerns over the potential negative implications of the EU's Everything But Arms agreement with Cambodia. They relate to the actions of some sugar companies and their associates towards local communities in the context of economic land concessions. These actions include: the clearing of land and the planting of non-native crops and trees; forced evictions and the displacement and relocation of people from their homes and farm lands; intimidation and violence by armed security guards, some of whom are members of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces while others are privately employed; and the lack of effective remedy or recourse for affected communities. These concerns were highlighted in the latest report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia, issued in September 2012.

What contact does the Commission have with the Cambodian Government with regard to human rights and the human rights implications of economic land concessions in the country? Further to its response of 12 April 2013 to Written Question P-002679/2013<sup>1</sup>, does the Commission believe Cambodia is making progress and, if not, is it now considering investigating the human rights situation in the sugar industry with a view to suspending trade preferences?

As the Commission is aware, the Everything But Arms scheme within the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) can be temporarily suspended in the event of serious and systematic human rights abuses. Will the Commission consider formally investigating these allegations concerning Cambodia within the framework of the GSP?

Does the Commission agree that all its agreements with third countries must include non-negotiable and binding human rights clauses that are more enforceable?

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=P-2013-002679&language=EN>