

**Question for written answer E-008944/2013
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 117
Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL)

Subject: VP/HR - Human rights in danger in Colombia: Santos threatens to remove OHCHR

On 16 July 2013 Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos announced that he will decide whether or not to retain the human rights office of the United Nations in Colombia. He maintains that Colombia has made sufficient progress in the field of human rights.

Oddly enough, this statement comes following a series of concerns expressed by the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia. On 10 July 2013 the High Commissioner denounced economic, social and cultural rights violations in the region of Catatumbo and in mid-June judged the law on military justice approved by the Colombian senate to be a major setback for human rights.

Furthermore, Colombia remains a seriously dangerous country for trade union leaders, community leaders, journalists, land activists, human rights defenders, and indigenous and Afro-Colombian leaders.

In such a context, the presence of international bodies is extremely important given that they can provide leverage in the prevention of human rights abuses and in the monitoring of allegations of such abuses.

- Could the Vice-President / High Representative comment on the actions she has taken to address President Santos' alarming statements?
- Is the Vice-President / High Representative willing to withhold or withdraw funds and trade cooperation from Colombia unless these concerns are addressed?