AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DELEGATION

and summary of activities during the seventh parliamentary term (2009-2014)
1. General context

In accordance with Rules 212 and 214 of Parliament’s Rules of Procedure, Parliament may set up standing interparliamentary delegations, parliamentary cooperation committees and joint parliamentary committees. The number of these bodies may vary from one parliamentary term to the next.

The interparliamentary delegations’ main objective is to establish, channel and promote parliamentary dialogue with the partner countries’ legislative institutions and also with the parliamentary institutions responsible for integration at regional or sub-regional level. Such objectives are achieved by means of regular meetings at Parliament’s premises and in the counterpart countries, during which topics of mutual interest in the national, bi-regional and international spheres are discussed.

2. Delegations for relations with Latin America

The European Union and Latin America have enjoyed a Strategic Partnership since the first Bi-regional Summit in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 1999. EU relations with Latin America were first defined in the communication on ‘A stronger partnership between the European Union and Latin America’ (2005). Since the publication of the communication on ‘The European Union and Latin America: Global Players in Partnership’ in 2010, the EU’s priorities vis-à-vis Latin America have centred, inter alia, around the following issues: deepening the political dialogue at bilateral, regional and multilateral level; deepening trade relations; promoting regional integration; fostering dialogue on financial issues, research, environment and energy; and contributing to LAC efforts to reduce poverty and inequality. Moreover, since most Latin American countries have now attained middle-income status, the two regions are also designing new cooperation programmes which will cover areas of mutual interest, rather than focusing on traditional development cooperation.

During the 2009-2014 parliamentary term, five standing delegations were responsible for bilateral and sub-regional relations with Latin America:

- Delegation to the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee
- Delegation to the EU-Chile Joint Parliamentary Committee
- Delegation for relations with the countries of Central America
- Delegation for relations with the Mercosur countries
- Delegation for relations with the countries of the Andean Community

All these delegations work closely with Parliament’s Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (Eurolat).

The information compiled is made available to the other MEPs by means of regular reports or reports drawn up by the chair after each visit or interparliamentary meeting. The reports are submitted to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Subcommittee on Human Rights, the Committee on Development, the Committee on International Trade and, when directly relevant, other committees. They sometimes give rise to European Parliament resolutions.
3. EU-CAN bilateral relations: state of play and outlook for the eighth parliamentary term

The Delegation for relations with the countries of the Andean Community encompasses relations with Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, in addition to the Andean Community (CAN) itself as an international organisation.

After seven years of uncertainty about whether Venezuela would become a member of Mercosur, on 18 December 2013 the Paraguayan Senate finally approved Venezuela’s entry as a full member – the last pending approval required. Venezuela is thus now a full member of Mercosur. However, despite Venezuela’s withdrawal from the CAN in 2006, the Delegation for relations with the countries of the Andean Community was responsible for the country until its accession to Mercosur.

The EU’s political dialogue with the Andean Community began in 1996 with the Declaration of Rome. In 2003 a Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement was signed. Once ratified, it will constitute the framework of the bilateral relations. The Agreement deepens the process of regional integration, trade liberalisation and economic reform within the Andean Community and steps up efforts towards conflict prevention. It also extends the scope of cooperation to the fight against terrorism and illegal immigration. In addition, it institutionalises the mechanisms of political dialogue that were created in 1996. Other main objectives of the Agreement include: strengthening peace and security; promoting political and social stability through the strengthening of democratic governance and respect for human rights; deepening the process of regional integration among the countries within the Andean region with a view to contributing to their social, political and economic development, including productive-capacity building and strengthening their export capacity; poverty reduction, generation of greater social and regional cohesion, promotion of more equitable access to social services and the rewards of economic growth, ensuring an appropriate balance between economic, social and environmental components in a sustainable development context.

During the XIII Ministerial Meeting between the Andean Community and the European Union in May 2007, ministers expressed their intention to begin negotiations towards an Association Agreement in May 2007. Negotiations were launched on 14 June 2007. In May 2008, during the V Latin America and Caribbean-European Union Summit, the Andean Community and the EU agreed on a flexible framework for the association of the two blocs. The Agreement will cover three aspects: trade, political dialogue and cooperation. Each Andean Community country (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) will be able enter into any one of the aspects of the Agreement, depending on that country’s capacities, ambitions, timescale and rate of development.

Against that background, two different geographic and thematic negotiation lines were opened: one at regional level with the Andean Community as a whole, with the aim of updating the 2003 Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement, and the other in the form of a multi-party trade negotiation open to all Andean countries willing to conclude a comprehensive trade agreement compatible with WTO requirements. In 2009 the EU opened trade negotiations with three countries: Colombia, Peru and Ecuador. In 2010 Peru and
Colombia successfully concluded the negotiations, whereas Ecuador decided to temporarily suspend theirs in June 2009. However, negotiations with Ecuador have recently resumed.

The Agreement has been in force on a provisional basis since 1 March 2013 with Peru and since 1 August 2013 with Colombia. Once fully implemented, it will open up markets on both sides and increase the stability of a trade relationship that was worth EUR 21.1 billion in bilateral trade in 2011. According to an independent study, the Agreement will boost Colombian GDP by 1.3% and Peruvian GDP by 0.7% in the long term. Imports and exports with these countries are likely to increase by 6% in the medium term and by 8% in the long term, with direct benefits for local producers in the agriculture and the processed agricultural goods sectors. The Agreement includes far-reaching measures on the protection of human rights and the rule of law, in addition to commitments to implement international conventions on labour rights and environmental protection. It also substantially improves market access for EU exports to Colombia and Peru by eliminating tariffs, addressing other obstacles to trade and improving market access for government procurement and services. In addition, the Agreement contains provisions on the enforcement of intellectual property rights and includes an efficient and streamlined dispute settlement system.

4. EP Delegation meetings

On the basis of a pre-established annual calendar, the EP Delegation for relations with the countries of the Andean Community holds ordinary meetings in Brussels or Strasbourg with the Diplomatic Mission, representatives from the Commission, the EEAS, international organisations, representatives from academic institutions, and other experts and leading figures, during which the parties exchange views on current political and economic issues. During the seventh parliamentary term, the following people participated in Delegation meetings: Ms Linnéa Arvidsson (Human Rights Officer, Regional Office for Europe, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Brussels), Mr Horacio Guido (ILO Department for international labour standards), H.E. Fernando Yépez Lasso (Ecuadorean Ambassador to the EU), Mr Gustavo Martin Prada (Director, DG RELEX, Commission), General Luis Mendieta Ovalle (former FARC hostage), Mr Roberto Mignone (UNHCR Deputy Representative, Colombia), H.E. Rodrigo Rivera (Colombian Ambassador to the EU), Mr Didier Herbert (Director, DG ENTR, Commission), Mr Gaspar Frontini (Head of Unit, Trade Relations with LAC Unit, DG Trade, Commission), H.E. Cristina Ronquillo (Peruvian Ambassador to the EU), Ms Belén Martínez Carbonell (Head of Unit, EEAS), Mr Patrick Doëlle (DG DEVCO, Commission), Ms María Del Carmen Márquez Ruiz (EEAS Representative), Mr Aniceto Rodriguez Ruiz (Deputy Head of Unit, Latin America and Caribbean Geographical Coordination Unit, DG DEVCO, Commission), H.E. Pablo Villa Gómez (Ecuadorean Ambassador to the EU), Mr Matthias Jorgensen (Head of Unit, Latin America Unit, DG Trade, Commission).

4.1 Main issues discussed during the EP Delegation meetings

2010 political crisis in Ecuador

On the night of 30 September 2010, a revolt broke out in Ecuador involving numerous national police officers and some members of the armed forces, who blockaded highways, occupied the National Parliament, blocked the international airport in Quito and the
international airport in Guayaquil, and took over TV Ecuador’s broadcasts. They called for a strike to oppose a government-endorsed law that would see their benefits reduced.

Thousands of civilians came out in support of President Correa and gathered outside the hospital in which he was held hostage for several hours. According to Ecuador’s Health Minister, the events left eight people dead and 274 wounded.

The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), the Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero and the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States José Miguel Insulza referred to the events as an attempted coup d’état. The EU called for law and order to be respected.

Exchange of views with General Luis Mendieta Ovalle, former FARC hostage

The General told how, just over 12 years previously, he and 60 other police officers and soldiers had been captured during the attack by the FARC on the city of Mitú. He had been held in several FARC camps in the Colombian jungle for 12 years before his release in June 2010. He was frequently moved between camps and was often chained up and tied to trees. He was kept in the jungle the entire time.

He stated, in his view, drug trafficking was currently an extremely lucrative business for the FARC and served as its main source of income. He thought that Colombia was acting alone in its fight against the drugs trade and that the FARC was making more than enough money to continue its operations. He highlighted the extremely high price that Colombia as a whole had paid and was continuing to pay in its struggle, pointing out that the FARC was mining fields of poppies and other crops in an effort to kill those responsible for trying to eradicate the drug plantations.

He welcomed the fact that the European Parliament had declared the FARC to be a terrorist group and called for continued political pressure to be brought to bear in order to help those who were still being held captive. He reiterated that there were both military and civilian prisoners who had been hostages for as long as 14 years. He concluded by calling for practical action to be taken to bring peace to Colombia.

Banana trade

On 17 January 2011 Parliament’s Committee on International Trade (INTA) supported the deal on banana trade reached in December 2009 between the EU and the US, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Venezuela. Under the deal, the EU will gradually cut its import tariffs on bananas from Latin America in eight stages, from EUR 176 per tonne at the outset to EUR 114 per tonne in 2017. In return, the Latin American bloc will drop the proceedings it brought before the WTO against the EU for infringing the rules of international trade.

The preferential treatment granted to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) banana producers by the EU since 1993 has allowed those producers to compete with the US industrial machine. Nevertheless, the WTO has repeatedly found that such treatment is in breach of international trade rules, and even authorised the US to retaliate and impose tariffs on some EU products (from Scottish cashmere to French cheese). The EU has thus agreed to reduce the tariffs on
Latin American bananas, which will probably mean lower prices for European consumers as competition will intensify between ACP and Latin American producers.

**Industrial cooperation between the EU and Colombia, and the development of SMEs, in the light of the visit to Colombia by the EU Commissioner for Industry and Entrepreneurship, Antonio Tajani**

Since 2011 the Commission has been actively working towards the internationalisation of EU-based companies, in particular SMEs. In 2012 only 13 % of SMEs were active outside the EU. This had prompted the Commission to launch a programme promoting internationalisation. Vice-President Tajani has already visited several countries to that end, including Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, the United States, Mexico and Colombia.

The aims of the visit to Colombia were threefold: I. to improve SME market access in third countries – the Commissioner was accompanied by representatives from the business world who had been selected by associations; II. to launch administrative cooperation activities with third countries, through letters of intent, across a number of spheres, including industry, tourism and raw materials; III. to send out the political message that Europe is a continent that still has a range of common interests with the countries visited and that both sides would benefit from strengthening the commercial ties between them.

On his visit to Colombia, the Commissioner was accompanied by 16 businesspeople representing companies from a variety of sectors, such as the construction, security, luxury goods and pharmaceutical industries.

**Meeting with Mr Ollanta Humala, President of the Republic of Peru**

Mr Ollanta Humala, the President of Peru, addressed MEPs in Strasbourg on 13 June 2012, highlighting his country’s democratic progress and the improvements made in the fields of social inclusion and the fight against poverty.

Mr Humala emphasised that the EU is Peru’s second-largest trading partner, and said they both have a common challenge and destiny to cooperate more closely through the acknowledgement of their individual values, identities and projects. He stressed that he supported the EU in its efforts to tackle the economic crisis, reiterating Peru’s intention to have broader cooperation with the Union.

The President also stressed that his government’s objective was to achieve an annual growth rate of 6 % over the next five years, strengthen democracy in the country and improve the conditions of minorities who had been neglected by the previous government. Peru’s economic growth, he said, had helped reduce poverty levels from 54 % in 2001 to 27 % in 2012. According to predictions, an additional 3 million people are expected to climb above the poverty line by 2016. By that year, less than 20 % of the population will be below the poverty line, and less than 7 % will be living in extreme poverty.

**Meeting with the Colombian Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr Enrique Bedoya Vizcaya**
In November 2011 Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos announced plans for a new military strategy, including a substantial increase of 34,000 armed forces personnel and an increase in the funds allocated under the 2013 budget to support a total of 466,000 security personnel. The wide-ranging reform of the Colombian army has created a new military culture based on the modern principles of democratic control, accountability, transparency and gender integration. The Colombian armed forces are also leading the way in the region by incorporating a civilian component into their administration.

The discussion with the Deputy Minister of Defence focused on the reforms carried out in the past few years, which have transformed the Colombian armed forces (the army and the national police) into one of the most advanced and professional armed bodies in South America. Thus, the modernisation of the army has been an important factor in both the significant progress achieved in the fight against the FARC and other illegal armed groups’ operations in Colombia, in addition to the counter-operations against drug trafficking and organised crime in the regions (under the framework of the UNASUR Security Council). The decisive contribution made by the armed forces in the implementation of the ‘Ley de Tierras y Víctimas’ (Land and Victims Law) was also highlighted. What is more, mention was made of the preparations for the post-conflict phase, and the new tasks which will be carried out by the army (in particular humanitarian actions, interventions in the event of natural disasters, and cross-border anti-drug and organised crime operations). In view of the above, the Members stressed that it was in the Union’s interest to further develop cooperation with Colombia, whose experience could be extremely useful, e.g. for EU peace missions. Finally, the Members congratulated Colombia for instigating negotiations with the FARC in an attempt to put an end to the long-lasting conflict, and gave the peace process their full support.

**EU-Andean Community cooperation in the fight against drugs**

The Andean Community has adopted and introduced an ‘Andean Strategy for a combined front against the worldwide drugs problem’. Specific counter-narcotics measures agreed by the Andean countries are based on the principles of shared responsibility and non-conditionality, and on the prioritisation of alternative development. Efforts to tackle the production, trafficking and illegal distribution of drugs are being pursued in accordance with the principles of international law, and in compliance with full state sovereignty, human rights and fundamental freedoms. The strategy rejects any form of unilateral action.

The strategy was agreed by consensus between Andean government experts, and was based on the principle of subsidiarity and on international drugs conventions. It contained strategic objectives for 2012-2019 and Action Plans divided into two implementing phases. The first Action Plan, covering the period 2012-2016, included indicators, targets, expected results and verification methods. The strategy also included a monitoring and evaluation mechanism for measuring the extent to which targets were being met. The strategy encompassed all issues relating to the drugs problem: supply, money laundering, reducing demand, alternative development, research and information, and institutional capacity-building.

Cooperation with the EU in this area was pursued within the framework of the agreements concluded as part of the high-level dialogue on drugs, which had held its 11th meeting in
Quito on 30 and 31 October 2012, and the joint follow-up group to the EU-CAN agreements on chemical precursors.

The new European strategy takes the same balanced and global approach as the current strategy, whilst also taking account of shifts in trends, challenges in recent years and lessons learned from applying the current strategy. Both the current and the new strategies were based on five pillars corresponding to the five main objectives: coordination, reducing demand, reducing supply, international cooperation, and research, information and evaluation. The principle of shared responsibility, bilateral action, evidence-based measures, respect for human rights and human dignity, and compliance with the terms of international agreements underpinned all the international talks and the EU’s support for partner countries in tackling the drugs problem. Given the lack of security and stability in drug-producing and drug-transit countries, efforts would also be made to tackle violence, money laundering and organised crime. In drug-producing countries, the EU was focussing mainly on supporting alternative development programmes, particularly in rural areas.

In this context, a specific discussion was held on EU-Peru cooperation in combatting drug trafficking.

According to UN statistics, the Peruvian authorities had succeeded in wiping out 14 200 hectares of coca crops in 2012, 23 000 in 2013, and anticipated eradicating more than 30 000 in 2014. At the time of the meeting, Peru was ranked as the world’s largest potential producer of cocaine, and second largest in terms of the area of land used to grow coca crops. Most cocaine produced in Peru was transported to other South American countries for domestic consumption or for further transportation from there to Europe or south-east Asia. 4 % of the cocaine produced in Peru could potentially end up on the North American market. To tackle this problem, in 2013 the Peruvian Government allocated more than USD 270 million to the National Anti-Drug Strategy set up first and foremost to increase coca crop elimination by 200 % by 2016. The strategy presented a balanced and integrated approach to the drugs issue, with an emphasis on alternative development. The Ambassador highlighted the support that the EU had given to Peru in this field, backing up the country’s efforts through joint cooperation. One of the most recent examples of such backing was the support programme for the 2012-2016 National Anti-Drug Strategy. The agreement, which was ratified in March 2014, would last for 44 months and would comprise an operational phase and a 12-month closure phase. Cooperation funding totalled EUR 32 million, partly in the form of direct budgetary support and partly through technical assistance programmes on intervention and control measures. For such measures, the EU had assembled a consortium led by Spain’s International Ibero-American Foundation of Public Administration and Policies (FIIAPP) and made up of police and customs representatives from various EU countries (Germany, Spain, France, the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom), in which each nation provided support and training in the area in which it had the most experience. To conclude, the Ambassador also mentioned other cooperation programmes carried out jointly with the EU, such as the alternative development programme, which had been in operation for two years and to which the EU had contributed EUR 8 million.

Dialogue with Colombia, Peru and Bolivia in the field of mining industries
The EU has engaged in dialogue on mining industries with Columbia, Peru and Bolivia. The Commission took the view that although the mining industry and the revenue generated by mining activities were important to the development of Andean countries, they also gave rise to serious environmental concerns. The management of this industry should, therefore, be based on shared responsibility, respect for the environment and transparency. For the mining industries to make a real contribution to a country’s sustainable development, it would be necessary to study and tackle the root causes of conflicts arising from mining activities. In order to achieve this goal, it would also be necessary to increase mining companies’ accountability.

The EU and the Andean countries concerned agreed on the need to strengthen the dialogue on mining industries through an enhanced exchange of views and good practices.

**Multiparty Trade Agreement**

In addition to several meetings dedicated to the negotiation and ratification process of the EU-Peru and Colombia Multiparty Trade Agreement, a discussion took place on trade relations with Ecuador and that country’s prospects of joining the Agreement.

In 2013 Ecuador made an official request for the resumption of negotiations. After the exchange of offers for market access, which occurred in December of the previous year, the first two rounds of negotiations took place. Whilst the first round had served to give an outline of the situation, considerable progress was made in the second in reducing the number of unresolved topics and moving forward in key areas such as improving access to the goods and services market. Despite the progress made in some areas, however, issues relating to geographical indications, public procurement and intellectual property rights were still on the table.

One topic which would need to be addressed in subsequent discussions concerned measures recently taken by Ecuador, which had left European operators with limited scope for exporting to and investing in the country. Some of these measures were a consequence of Ecuador’s desire to alter its production model with a view to increasing its export capacity. One problem concerned the agreements that importers were obliged to sign with the Ecuadorian Government, which included certain commitments to reducing imports or increasing local production. Standards and certification was another area in which measures taken by the Ecuadorian Government had caused complications, as they had been approved without due consultation and applied very quickly, without adequate transition periods. A third set of problematic measures were new customs procedures, which required a separate procedure for every consignment and made no provision for a general import licence. All these measures were questionable, and Ecuadorian companies and consumers had already felt their negative impact. To conclude negotiations as swiftly as possible, it was essential to adopt corrective measures, and although some steps had been made in the right direction, it was not yet possible to predict an end date.

As stressed by the Ecuadorian Ambassador, Ecuador wishes to reach a fair and balanced trade arrangement whereby the EU acknowledges the existing asymmetries.
Peace process in Colombia

Initial informal discussions between Juan Manuel Santos’ government and the FARC started shortly after the President took office in August 2010. Those contacts led to the start of direct exploratory talks with the rebels’ representatives in the Cuban capital, Havana, in February 2012. These discussions concluded with the signing of an agreement that set out a six-point agenda for the formal negotiations. The negotiations were launched in Oslo in October 2012 and began in Havana the following month. The governments of Norway and Cuba are acting as guarantors, and the governments of Venezuela and Chile also support the talks.

Since 2012 several debates have taken place in Parliament on the peace process in Colombia. As underlined by the Colombian Ambassador to the EU, the basic principles of the peace talks include not repeating past errors, making every possible effort to achieve the goal of ending the conflict, safeguarding civilians and forming a dignified, effective peace process, using dialogue as a tool to achieve the above goals.

Unlike in previous peace processes, military operations against the FARC will continue until a final deal has been reached.

The agenda covers six topics:

- land reform,
- political participation,
- drug trafficking,
- victims’ rights,
- disarmament of the rebels, and
- implementation of the peace deal.

Six months after the beginning of the negotiations, an agreement was reached on land reform. The deal provides for the creation of a land bank for the reallocation of land, especially that which was seized illegally during the decades of conflict.

In November 2013 the two sides agreed on a political future for the rebels in the event of a peace deal being reached. This included guarantees, conditions and support for the creation of new political parties.

In May 2014 the two sides agreed on a plan to deal with the illegal drugs trade. The FARC, which controls large patches of rural Colombia, is believed to be partly funded by money generated by the illegal drugs trade.

In June 2014 in Havana, the FARC and government negotiators announced their intention to set up a truth commission to investigate the deaths and human rights violations that had occurred during the five decades of conflict. They also agreed to hear the demands of the victims, who will travel to Havana for that purpose.
In recent years, tens of thousands of Colombians have shown their support for the negotiations at peace marches in major cities throughout the country. Numerous opinion polls in recent months have suggested that a large majority backs the dialogue. Despite this, a significant number of Colombians share the views of former President Alvaro Uribe, who opposes the idea of an amnesty or allowing the rebels to enter politics. However, Mr Santos’ victory at the recent presidential elections shows that the peace process enjoys the support of Colombian society.

Visits to the Andean Community countries

Ecuador, 24-28 May 2010

The Delegation was composed of Mr José Manuel García-Margallo y Marfil (PPE), Ms Esther Herranz García (PPE), Mr Pawel Zalewski (PPE), Mr Ricardo Cortes Lastra (S&D) and Mr Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE), and was accompanied by the INTA Rapporteur on EU-LAC trade relations, Mr Helmuth Scholz (GUE/NGL).

On the first day, the Working Group visited the UNHCR office in Ibarra, which gave an excellent presentation and organised interviews with refugees who had fled from the FARC, paramilitary forces and other groups in Colombia.

At the National Assembly, the Working Group met Fernando Cordero (Speaker), Fernando Bustamante (Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee), and the following party chairs: Leonardo Viteri (Partido Social Cristiano), Gilmar Gutiérrez (Partido Sociedad Patriótica) and César Rodríguez (Alianza País).

At governmental level, meetings took place with Ricardo Patiño (Minister of Foreign Affairs) – accompanied by a 15-strong delegation, including several state secretaries – María Fernanda Espinosa (Minister of Heritage Coordination), René Ramírez Gallegos (National Secretary for Planning and Development) and Juan Fernández García (Deputy Minister for Political Coordination).

The delegation also met with the Vice-President of the Andean Parliament, Patricio Zambrano, and other Ecuadorian Members of the Andean Parliament.

Other meetings took place with Andrés Ycaza (President of the Ecuadorian Institute of Intellectual Property), Alberto Acosta (former Speaker and Minister), political journalists and trade union representatives.

Some Members held additional meetings with NGOs that were currently implementing EU cooperation projects, and other local NGOs. A field visit was organised to view EU cooperation projects in the Ibambura region.

In Guayaquil, the delegations met Jimmy Jairala (Prefect of Guayas), and held a very extensive and animated exchange of views on trade issues with almost 30 representatives, comprising Ecuadorian producers and/or exporters (of bananas, shrimps, shoes, etc.), Chambers of Commerce/Euro Chambers staff and EU entrepreneurs.
Peru, 2-3 November 2010

The Delegation was composed of Mr José Manuel García-Margallo y Marfil (PPE), Mr Ricardo Cortés Lastra (S&D) and Mr Tomasz Poreba (ECR), and was accompanied by the INTA Rapporteur on EU-LAC trade relations, Mr Helmuth Scholz (GUE/NGL).

In Lima, the Delegation held meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr José García Belaúnde, and the Minister of Commerce and Tourism, Mr Eduardo Ferreyros. The MEPs were also received by the President of the Republic, Mr Alan García.

The Delegation met a number of leading political figures, including the President of the National Congress, Mr César Zumaeta, representatives from the main political parties, and the three presidential candidates, Ms Keiko Fujimori, Mr Alejandro Toledo and Mr Ollanta Humala.

The subjects discussed during the various meetings touched in particular on Peru’s political, economic and social situation, the outlook for the presidential elections of April 2011, the fight against drug trafficking, the current situation regarding the Andean Community, EU-Peru relations, and prospects for the conclusion and implementation of the Multiparty Trade Agreement.

Colombia, 25-28 April 2011

The delegation was composed of Mr José Manuel García-Margallo y Marfil (PPE), Mr Catalin Sorin Ivan (S&D), Ms Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE), Mr Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE), Mr Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE), Ms Evelyn Regner (S&D) and Mr Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL).

The Working Group Members held meetings with the following Colombian Government representatives: the President of the Republic, the Vice-President, the Foreign Affairs Minister and the Trade Minister. It also held meetings with the First Vice-President of the Senate, the President of the Chamber of Representatives and the Deputy National Prosecutor.

The Members also met Mr Alejandro Eder (High Presidential Adviser for Reintegration), Mr Francisco Sole (President of the European Association Chambers) and a number of displaced people.

The main subjects discussed during the meetings included: the fight against drug trafficking, corruption and terrorist organisations; the human rights situation in Colombia (displaced people, labour and trade union rights, reintegration of people who have left illegal groups such as the FARC, the ELN and the AUC); the intelligence agency (DAS); the environment and climate change; regional integration; and prospects for the conclusion and implementation of the Multiparty Trade Agreement.

Ecuador, 2-4 April 2012
The Delegation was composed of Mr Luis de Grandes Pascual (EPP), Mr Agustín Díaz de Mera Consuegra (EPP), Ms Evelyn Regner (S&D), Mr Joao Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and the INTA Rapporteur on EU-LAC trade relations, Mr Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL).

The Delegation was received in Quito by the President of the Republic, Mr Rafael Correa. During the meeting, several topics were discussed, including political and trade relations, cooperation, migration and Ecuador’s relations with other LAC countries. Members were informed of President Correa’s intention not to participate in the VI Summit of the Americas, scheduled for 14 and 15 April 2012 in Cartagena, Colombia. Concerning the Trade Agreement, the President stressed that his country wanted to conclude an agreement which would take into account existing asymmetries between the two parties, in addition to sensitive issues such as intellectual property rights and public procurement.

The possible re-opening of negotiations towards a bilateral Trade Agreement was also discussed with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Ricardo Patiño, the Minister for Production, Mr Santiago León, and the Minister for Planning, Mr Fander Falconí. In the light of the perfect complementarity between the EU and Ecuadorian economies, all the Ministers expressed their interest and willingness to conclude the Agreement.

Regarding cooperation, both parties agreed that Ecuador no longer requires conventional development cooperation, but would welcome other types of cooperation in specific areas, such as technology and knowledge transfer, science and education.

Another topic discussed during the visit to Ecuador was climate change and environmental protection, first with the Minister of Heritage, Ms María Fernanda Espinosa, who explained the Yasuní Initiative and how the EU could contribute to it, and later with the President of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), Mr Humberto Cholango. Mr Cholango explained the indigenous peoples’ position on the mining activities carried out on their territory and the impact of those activities on the environment. Afterwards, the discussion focused on CONAIE relations with the Ecuadorian Government.

In Guayaquil, the MEPs held a meeting with representatives from the private sector (producers and exporters), who were very much in favour of concluding the Trade Agreement as a means of developing and diversifying their production activities.

**Peru, 2-4 May 2013**

The Delegation was composed of Mr Luis de Grandes Pascual (EPP), Mr Agustín Díaz de Mera Consuegra (EPP) and Ms Evelyn Regner (S&D).

The Delegation Members met a range of Peruvian Government representatives. With the Minister of Environment, Mr Manuel Pulgar, and the High Commissioner for Dialogue and Sustainability, Mr Vladimiro Huaroc, they discussed how to reconcile the country’s mining activities – Peru’s main source of income – with environmental protection, while respecting the rights of the indigenous communities. The Peruvian authorities provided details on the implementation of the ‘consultation law’, which obliges the government to consult with local communities before launching any new mining projects.
Subsequently, the MEPs held meetings with Mr Henry Ávila Herrera, Deputy Minister for Human Rights and Access to Justice. They exchanged views on the reforms adopted by Peru in the field of human rights, as reflected in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) adopted in November 2012 under the framework of the UN Human Rights Council. The Members held an exchange of views with the Minister of Labour, Ms Teresa Nancy Laos Cáceres, on the challenges faced by Peru and the EU in this area. While the EU’s main priority is to reduce the extremely high rate of unemployment, Peru’s primary concern is the informality of the employment sector.

As the EU-Peru & Colombia Free Trade Agreement had provisionally entered into force on 1 March 2013, the Members held a meeting with Comex – the main Peruvian association of exporting companies – with the aim of discussing how to make good use of the Agreement. The Peruvian representative underlined the country’s interest not only in increasing and diversifying the exports, but also in attracting more European investment.

In addition, the MEPs met the President of Devida (the National Anti-drug Commission), Ms Carmen Masías. Since the traditional paradigm of producing, transit and consuming countries had drastically changed over the past few years, both parties agreed on the need to develop enhanced synergies to fight the phenomena on a global scale.

The Delegation also met the President of the Peruvian Congress and the Members of the ‘EU-Peru friendship group’ in the Congress. The parliamentarians exchanged views on the implementation of the Agreement and the role of the Parliaments in the process.

Finally, the Delegation met congressmen from the opposition parties (Peru Posible and the Christian Democrat Party).

Colombia, 28-31 October 2013

The Delegation was composed of Mr Luis de Grandes Pascual (EPP), Ms Izaskun Bilbao Barrandica (ALDE), Mr Agustín Díaz de Mera Consuegra (EPP), Mr Gabriel Mato Adrover (EPP) and Mr Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D).

In Bogotá, the Delegation met the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Carlos Morales, who thanked Parliament for its support for the EU Multiparty Trade Agreement and for including Colombia and Peru on the visa-free list. He gave details of Colombia’s progress in the field of human rights and of the negotiations towards a peace agreement, for which he requested the Union’s support.

An exchange of views also took place with Mr Rikard Nordgren, Deputy Head of the Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP/OEA), on the state of play of the restitution of land and reparations to the victims of violence. The challenge arising for the new ‘bacrims’ (emerging criminal gangs) was underlined, as was the need to prepare the implementation of a possible peace agreement which will require a massive effort, bearing in mind that more than 5 million people have been affected in one way or another by the conflict. This was followed by a working lunch with the Secretary-General of the Colombian Senate on the legal and institutional issues relating to the forthcoming elections in 2014. An extensive exchange of views then took place with the country’s National Police Director and the Head of Ameripol
on the state of play of the fight against drug trafficking and organised crime and on recent changes to Ameripol’s status and activities. A meeting also took place with Ambassador Carlos Holmes Trujillo, leader of former President Uribe’s political party ‘Uribe Centro Democrático’, during which Mr Trujillo outlined the new political party’s expectations.

Subsequently, the Members met the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr Todd Howland, who gave details of the work done by his office during the previous 15 years, including its geographic and thematic priorities. He acknowledged the fact that a number of improvements had been made on human rights issues (e.g. extra-judicial executions), although the authorities were still reluctant to admit any kind of involvement in those cases.

The Members also met with representatives from civil society and discussed issues relating to human rights and the peace negotiations with the FARC, including land reform, the need for political and electoral reforms, the fight against impunity and the need to place human rights at the centre of the relationship between the authorities and citizens given the key importance of those rights to any future post-conflict arrangement. Before leaving for Medellín, the Delegation also held a meeting with the Colombian Attorney General, during which special attention was paid to the legal framework for the peace negotiations, which could include focussing individual penal investigations exclusively on the highest-responsibility cases and the most serious criminal offences, setting up truth commissions to investigate ordinary and/or mid-rank responsibilities, and rejecting any kind of amnesty, such as that which was accorded to the M-19 guerrilla movement in the eighties.

In Medellín, the Delegation visited the International Cooperation Agency and Biblioteca de Santo Domingo Savio in Comuna 1 (one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Medellín, now linked by cable car to the city centre) prior to a working lunch with representatives from academia based in the Department of Antioquia who were active in the field of peace negotiation research. Meetings were held with the Governor of Antioquia, Mr Sergio Fajardo, on anti-corruption and the transformation of politics in the city and the region, and with the Mayor of Medellín, Mr Aníbal Gaviria, on the development plan and the fight against social inequality, violence and illegal drug-related issues in Medellín. Both men strongly backed the negotiation process and were in favour of the EP issuing a clear message to the FARC to encourage the group to seize this unique opportunity to complete the negotiations and put an end to the conflict.

5. Delegation activities during the 2009-2014 parliamentary term

During the seventh parliamentary term, nine Joint Parliamentary Committee meetings took place: five in Brussels and Seville, and four in Chile.

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<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
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<tr>
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