

**Question for written answer E-001203/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Liam Aylward (ALDE)

Subject: Human rights commitments in trade agreements with third countries

While human rights clauses are now a common feature of trade agreements between the EU and third countries, it is important that these clauses be respected.

A trade agreement between the EU, Peru and Colombia, which includes clauses on human rights, entered into force in August 2013. Yet the human rights situation in Colombia remains a serious concern. According to human rights organisations, specific instances of human rights violations include the murder of human rights defenders (52 instances between January and September 2013) and trade unionists (27 instances during 2013), the displacement of people and the breach of freedom of expression by criminalising social protests and facilitating violence against protestors (including 15 murders in the most recent social mobilisation).

1. Could the Commission comment on the human rights situation in Colombia and its compatibility with the terms of the trade agreement? Could it outline the measures it intends to take to deal with any breaches of the human rights clauses in this instance?
2. The EU holds a human rights dialogue with Colombia twice a year. Was there proper consultation with Colombian civil society before the most recent meeting? Can the Commission ensure that civil society will be part of the process?
3. Could the Commission advise on how it monitors the human rights situation in third countries with which the EU has trade agreements? Does it intend to develop a transparent assessment procedure for finding breaches of human rights in such countries?
4. Could the Commission outline the measures it takes when it finds breaches of human rights in a third country with which it has a trade agreement, and give examples of when it has taken such measures?