



02/12/2009

## **EU Trade negotiations with Colombia and Peru**

At its meeting in Brussels on 01 - 02 December 2009, the Executive Committee of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) adopted a Resolution on EU Trade negotiations with Colombia and Peru

The Executive Committee of the European Trade Union Confederation expresses its outrage at the continued killings of trade unionists in Colombia where at least ten trade unionists were assassinated over the last eight weeks.

It reiterates its opposition to ongoing negotiations between the European Union and the governments of Colombia and Peru aimed at concluding bilateral trade agreements.

The talks negate the initial aim we have supported of negotiating an association agreement between the European Union and the Andean Community including political dialogue and cooperation as well as a trade dimension. By abandoning the full association agreement with the Andean Community, the European Union undermines the strategy launched at the Rio Summit in 1999 and reiterated at subsequent summits in support of the development of political associations that strengthen integration and social cohesion processes in Latin America. The ETUC is concerned that the Sustainable Development Chapter being negotiated as part of the trade agreements will not provide the solid basis required to ensure that human and trade union rights are respected. Provisions on labour rights of the EU's GSP+ agreement that apply currently, and which may be reflected in the free trade agreement, have had little moderating effect.

The ETUC once more expresses its concern at failings in coherence between the EU's trade and foreign, development and employment policies and calls on the new Commission, now including the High Representative, to review and recast its approaches to ensure that the EU's wider objectives are met through the coordinated application of all available policy tools.

The ETUC will continue to work with the unions of Colombia to try to ensure these objectives and a trade agreement which is acceptable to them and the ETUC. As a first step, the Commission should suspend the trade talks pending the outcome of an investigation into Colombia's human rights record under GSP+.



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*Last Modification : December 2 2009.*