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EU-Morocco trade agreement/Western Sahara

EP must not give its consent to worrying agreement

The European Parliament's trade committee today voted to recommend the EP give its consent to the inclusion of a new protocol on agriculture and fisheries in the EU-Morocco trade agreement. The Greens are opposed to the agreement - both because of concerns about the impact of free trade on small producers and because the agreement includes Western Sahara, in conflict with international law - prompting Green draftsman **José Bové** to vote against his own report, which was amended to recommend consent. After the vote, **José Bové** MEP urged the EP not to proceed and give its consent, stating:

"This agreement is against the interest of small farmers on both sides of the Mediterranean. The proposed blanket liberalisation of trade will threaten the livelihoods of small producers in the absence of social and environmental safeguards.

"There are also major legal and political problems with the inclusion of the non-self-governing territory Western Sahara in the agreement, which conflicts with international law.

"Given these major concerns, the EP should not give its consent to this agreement. Hopefully, the plenary vote will acknowledge this and follow the recommendation of agriculture committee, which voted to recommend the EP withhold its consent (1)."

(1) The EP agriculture committee adopted an opinion report in December, recommending withholding consent. The report is now set to be voted by the EP as a whole at the February plenary session in Strasbourg.

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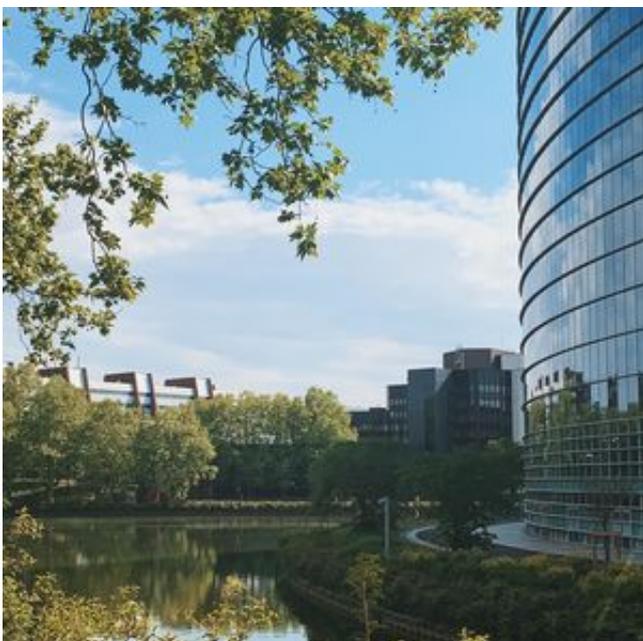


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Responsible MEPs



José Bové

Member

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