



Open Letter

Greens/EFA demand Council not to resume Association Agreement negotiations with Honduras

We, the undersigned Greens/EFA MEPs, have come to know with utmost concern that the COLAT (Committee on Latin America of the EU Council) decided at its meeting on September 1, 2009, not to exclude Honduras from the group of Central American countries it was negotiating an Association Agreement with. The negotiations were originally suspended following the coup in Honduras on 28 June 2009. On the contrary, COLAT recommends to go ahead with so called technical rounds of negotiation, and it envisages to support an electoral process convened by the internationally not recognized government of Honduras.

If the General Affairs Council (GAERC) confirms the COLAT decision in its forthcoming meeting on September 14 and 15, 2009, this would give absolutely the wrong signal. The implicit normalization of the relations would explicitly recognise the first military coup of the 21st century in Central America. It would also be an open invitation to all antidemocratic forces in the region to return to the brutal regimes of the 80's.

Following the coup and the installation of a *de facto* government, the EU firmly condemned the coup. It asked for a return of ousted President Zelaya into office and suspended the negotiations until he was re-established in office. Since the coup, the EU budgetary payments for Honduras have been put on hold. In as many as seven declarations on Honduras, the EU warned against the return of the military coups of the 70s and 80s in the Central American region. Less than a month ago, the EU presidency underlined that it would continue to support mediation efforts made by Costa Rican President Arias.

This COLAT decision of 1 September 2009 represents a non justifiable U-turn in its declared policy of worldwide support for democracy and rule of law. It comes at a moment where no Latin American country has recognised the coup administration. Furthermore, it occurs in a time where the USA have frozen their budgetary and military aid, and they have decided that as of 26 August 2009, they will not issue visas to any member of the coup government.

According to several reports from international human rights organisations which have sent missions to Honduras, the human rights situation in Honduras has deteriorated during the last weeks. The *de facto* government has not accepted any of President Arias' mediation proposals. If the EU decides to return to the negotiation table with the *de facto* government under these circumstances, the message is that the EU does not care about human rights and democracy, for the sake of tiny business advantages it wants to secure from Central America.

We call on the General Affairs Council, scheduled for 14-15 September 2009 not to accept COLAT's recommendations. We demand that no negotiations take place with Central America, including at technical level, as long as democratic order according to the Honduran Constitution is not reinstalled. We demand that the GAERC does not recognize nor support the electoral process put in place by the coup government. All economic, political and diplomatic relations with the *de facto* government of Honduras must be suspended.

Brussels, 7.9.2009

The undersigned:

José BOVE, France

Frieda BREPOELS, Belgium

Pascal CANFIN, France

Isabelle DURANT, Belgium

Hélène FLAUTRE, France

Sven GIEGOLD, Germany

Catherine GREZE, France

Martin HÄUSLING, Germany

Yannick JADOT, France

Oriol JUNQUERA, Cataluña

Ska KELLER, Germany

Jean LAMBERT, England

Philippe LAMBERTS, Belgium

Barbara LOCHBIHLER, Germany

Caroline LUCAS, England

Ulrike LUNACEK, Austria

Raul ROMEVA, Cataluña

Heide RÜHLE, Germany

Judith SARGENTINI, Netherlands

Bart STAES, Belgium

The block contains handwritten signatures corresponding to the names listed on the left. Notable signatures include 'i.o. Hlyt' (likely for Frieda Brepoels), 'Juan Giegold' (for Sven Giegold), 'P. Chir' (for Catherine Greze), 'Ska Keller' (for Ska Keller), 'Judith Sargentini' (for Judith Sargentini), and 'Bart Staes' (for Bart Staes). There are also several other illegible signatures.

Elisabeth SCHROEDTER, Germany



Malika BENARAB- ATTOU, France



Eva LICHTENBERGER, Austria



Carl SCHLYTER, Sweden



Michèle RIVASI, France



Jan Philip ALBRECHT, Germany