

Alþingi
Erindi nr. P 138/2259
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Nefndasvið Alþingis
Utanríkisnefnd
Austurstræti 8-10
150 Reykjavík

Reykjavík, 12. maí 2010

Umsögn BSRB um tillögu til þingsályktunar um fullgildingu fríverslunarsamnings milli ríkja Fríverslunarsamtaka Evrópu og Lýðveldisins Kólumbíu og landbúnaðarsamnings milli Íslands og Kólumbíu, þskj. 971 – 580. mál.

BSRB hefur fengið til umsagnar tillögu til þingsályktunar um fríverslunarsamning EFTA og Kólumbíu. BSRB vekur athygli á því að í Kólumbíu á verkalýðshreyfing og mannréttindabarátta mjög undir högg að sækja af hálfu stjórnvalda. Á undanförunum árum hafa hundruð félaga í verkalýðshreyfingunni verið vegnir og hafa einstaklingar og hópar sem haft hafa í frammi gagnrýni og beitt sér í mannréttindabaráttu þurft að sæta ofsóknum og harðræði.

Af þessum sökum hafa verklýðssamtök í Evrópu (bæði ETUC, European Trade Union Confederation og EPSU, European Public Services Union), sem BSRB á aðild að, hvatt til þess að ekki verði gerðir viðskiptasamningar við Kólumbíu á meðan ógnaröldin varir. Verkalýðshreyfingunni í Bandaríkjunum tókst á síðasta ári að stöðva slíka samninga á milli BNA og Kólumbíu. BSRB hefur gert grein fyrir fyrirvörum sínum gagnvart slíkum fríverslunarsamningi EFTA-ríkjanna og vísast í því sambandi til sameiginlegs fundar samráðsnefndar EFTA og ráðherranefndar EFTA í Hamar í Noregi í júní síðastliðnum.

Fyrir hönd BSRB

Helga Jónsdóttir
Helga Jónsdóttir
framkvæmdastjóri

Meðfylgjandi eru greinargerðir sem vísað er til hér að framan:

Erindi frá ETUC:
Brussels, 9 July 2009

JM/TJ/lw

To All the Permanent Representatives of the EU Member States Colombia
Your Excellency,

The Executive Committee of the European Trade Union Confederation at their meeting yesterday considered EU-Colombia relations and in particular the ongoing bilateral negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement with that country.

They noted with deep concern that assassinations of trade unionists in Colombia continue at a rate unseen in any other country. According to the International Trade Union Confederation's universally well respected Annual Report, out of 76 trade unionists assassinated in 2008, 49 were Colombians. So far in 2009, the toll is 29.

The paramilitary murderers seemingly act with impunity. The country's main trade union confederations, the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT) [Central Union of Workers], the Confederación General del Trabajo (CGT) [General Confederation of Labour] and the Confederación de Trabajadores de Colombia (CTC) [Confederation of Workers of Colombia] are alerting us and providing documentation that refutes claims by the Uribe Government that the situation is under control. In such a climate, trade unionism cannot possibly perform its tasks, unemployment is on the rise, and collective bargaining has been drastically reduced.

In these circumstances, we believe that it is a serious error on the part of the EU to continue its bilateral trade negotiations with Colombia, which are being used by the Government as evidence of normalcy and proof that the EU acquiesces in the situation.

We would urge your Government to call a halt to the FTA negotiation, which we understand it is planned to conclude with indecent haste within weeks, and so make it clear to the Colombian authorities that the EU and its Member States do not condone the current situation in Colombia but expect serious change to the better before normal bilateral relations can be resumed.

Yours Sincerely,
John Monks
General Secretary
John Monks, General Secretary

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Ályktun EPSU

EPSU Congress backs call to block EU-Colombia trade deal Congress backs call to block EU-Colombia trade deal (10 June, 2009, Brussels) Delegates at the EPSU Congress heard some harrowing reports of what it is like to be a trade unionist in Columbia when Gail Cartmail of the UK union Unite introduced an emergency resolution on the country's trade negotiations with the EU.

The resolution says that: "Displacement, murder and repression are everyday fears in a country where thousands of trade union members and leaders have been killed by paramilitaries and even the Colombian army and police over the last decade."

The Colombian trade union movement has called for solidarity to block a proposed free trade agreement currently being negotiated between the EU and Columbia and due to be finalised before the end of the year.

Resolution text:

This Conference notes that at the beginning of May 2009 the European Union held a third round of trade negotiations on the Free Trade Agreement with Colombia. . These discussions are continuing and are to be concluded by end 2009.

This Conference deplores the fact that Colombia remains the most dangerous place in the world to be a trade unionist. Displacement, murder and repression are everyday fears for trade unionists in Colombia and thousands of trade union members and leaders have been killed by paramilitaries and even the Colombian army and police over the last decade.

We regret that the regime in Colombia remains a stain on the continent. This conference demands that the international community act to ensure that the right to life, freedom of association and ability to carry out normal trade union activities are respected in Colombia.

In particular the Colombian trade union movement has specifically asked for solidarity at this time to ensure that the proposed EU-Colombia free trade agreement, currently being negotiated, is blocked. It is abhorrent, that the European Union should be considering engaging in free trade with a regime condemned around the world for human rights abuses and particularly the targeting of trade unions.

It is particularly disgraceful that the EU is considering signing such an agreement at a time when even the proposed trade agreement between the USA and Colombia has been effectively blocked through, in particular, the actions of the US labour movement. Conference further notes that Norway has suspended talks on free trade with Colombia whilst it investigates the human rights situation there.

In recognition of the recent declarations by the major trade union confederations in Colombia, this congress calls on EPSU and all its affiliates to;

Use all avenues of influence to campaign against the proposed free trade agreement with Colombia.

Raise awareness of the struggle of the Colombian trade union movement and investigate any opportunities for solidarity activities.

Formally request the ETUC to co-ordinate activities of the European Trade union movement to ensure that no free trade agreement is signed with the regime.