



EU Domestic Advisory Group under
the EU-Vietnam FTA

Letter from the European Union Domestic Advisory Group under the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement

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Ms. Nguyen Son Tra
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Division
Multilateral Trade Policy Department
Ministry of Industry and Trade
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BY EMAIL ONLY

Subject: Establishment of the Vietnam Domestic Advisory Group

Dear Ms. Nguyen Son Tra,

On behalf of the European Domestic Advisory Group (DAG) of the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA), we would like to welcome the establishment of our counterpart DAG in Vietnam.

We are keen to see the Trade and Sustainable Development chapter of the EVFTA implemented in full. The creation of the respective Domestic Advisory Groups is the bedrock on which it can be ensured that the commitments undertaken are implemented in practice by both Parties.

As we stated in June 2021, civil society engagement and scrutiny is essential with respect to the implementation of the agreement. We therefore welcome the fact that the DAG has now been formally established, but we maintain that this is only one element of the process.

We reiterate that the EVFTA explicitly stipulates that DAGs must be composed of “independent representative organisations” (Article 13.15.4). We are concerned by the limited number of participants in the Vietnamese Domestic Advisory Group and therefore ask that a defined process for further civil society engagement and participation be clarified. This is all the more urgent as we

understand that a number of civil society organisations have had their applications for participation rejected on unclear grounds.

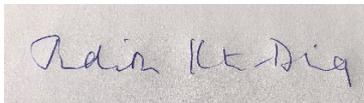
Meanwhile in July, the EU DAG directly raised the cases of two Executive Board members of VNGO-EVFTA who were arrested on 2 July in a letter addressed to the Executive Vice-President of the European Commission Mr Dombrovskis.

As the EU DAG, we have already started our work on the implementation of the trade and sustainable development commitments in the EVFTA. To this end, we have established four sub-working groups of the DAG working on:

- Reform of labour law and the implementation of the roadmap;
- Sustainable food systems and wildlife trade;
- The relationship between EU and Vietnamese businesses in global supply chains - and global supply chains in the context of due diligence;
- Follow-up of the implementation of the TSD-chapter and the role of civil society in that regard.

We look forward to hearing about the priorities of our Vietnamese counterparts in the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely,



Judith Kirton-Darling
Chair of the EU DAGⁱ

EU DAG Secretariat

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