

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000045/25
to the Commission
Jonas Sjöstedt (The Left)
(8 January 2025)**

Subject: The situation in Viet Nam regarding human rights and labour rights

While the EU-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA), which came into effect four years ago, has created economic opportunities, Viet Nam's progress on labour rights, working conditions and environmental standards has been slow, which threatens the ethical foundation of EU-Viet Nam trade. Human rights defenders, journalists and peaceful activists are still facing censorship, arrests and persecution. Additionally, the growing trend of transnational repression towards Vietnamese citizens abroad is making things even worse.

The silencing of civil society representatives is a clear breach of Viet Nam's commitments under the EVFTA and the EU-Viet Nam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA).

1. What is the Commission's current and future role in monitoring both the implementation of the International Labour Organisation's standards in Viet Nam and the country's hindrances to freedom of association?
2. What steps has the Commission taken to address the imprisonments and persecutions of human rights defenders, journalists and peaceful activists in Viet Nam, specifically with regard to the EVFTA?
3. What actions is the Commission taking to ensure that Viet Nam complies with its obligations under the EU-Viet Nam PCA?

Submitted: 8.1.2025

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(12 March 2025)**

The EU has a multifaceted relationship with Viet Nam and several bilateral agreements and partnerships, including a Partnership Cooperation Agreement (PCA) ⁽¹⁾, a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) ⁽²⁾, and a Just Energy Transition Partnership. Human rights, including labour and environmental rights, are addressed in all these arrangements.

The shrinking space for civil society, the arrests of human rights defenders and the slow progress on labour rights are of concern to the EU.

The EU consistently calls on Viet Nam to uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms and to refrain from harassment and arrests. It did so at the EU-Viet Nam Human Rights Dialogue on 4 July 2024, the Joint Committee of the PCA on 22 October 2024, and the PCA Sub-Committee on Good Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights on 21 October 2024.

With regard to International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards, Viet Nam has ratified 9 of the 10 fundamental ILO Conventions. Labour rights were subject of the 2024 Universal Periodic Review of Viet Nam.

The EU closely follows developments in Viet Nam like the amended 2019 Labour Code, and the recent revision of the 2012 Trade Union Law.

Viet Nam has committed to work towards the ratification of ILO Convention 87 on the freedom of association and protection of the right to organise.

This issue was discussed in the committees mentioned above and in the Trade and Sustainable Development Committee of the FTA, which held its last meeting on 21 November 2024.

⁽¹⁾ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22016A1203\(02\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22016A1203(02))

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2020:186:FULL>