

PETI (Nr.0745/2019)

Intervention of Rainforest Rescue at the Petitions Committee of the European Parliament

We say no to the EU - Mercosur Free Trade Agreement

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(13:45 hs)



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Background

On June 2019, our organization sent a letter¹ to the European Parliament, and to the -at that time- Presidents of the European Commission and European Council, Donald Tusk and Jean-Claude Juncker, **asking to stop the free trade agreement EU MERCOSUR**. An unsatisfactory answer from the side of the European Commission was communicated in March 2020.

Today, the support to our and others civil society petitions has grown up to **1,5 million signatures**², manifestos, declarations and letters by more than 400 civil society organisations working together have been sent out to European authorities rejecting the negotiations, ratification and signature of the UE Mercosur Free Trade Agreement. **Because the European Commission has failed to respond to the concerns of civil society regarding this agreement and the creation of the world's largest free trade area continues to have the same unresolved issues.**

The opposition movement against the EU Mercosur Trade Deal continues to grow on both sides of the Atlantic, as it has been happening throughout the whole 20 years negotiation period³.

Demands

Neither the environment, nor social rights, nor labour rights, nor sustainable development are strengthened by this agreement - quite the contrary, it only benefits (few) big transnational companies.

The **division of the agreement in parts**, to evade the consensus of all parties, is just a manipulation that can not improve its content in any way. It can not go ahead in its current form and with its current conditions, as already stated by the European Parliament⁴.

I am here to tell the European Commission that the EU MERCOSUR Trade Agreement negotiation process has not been transparent, and therefore is undemocratic, promoting precisely the opposite values the EU claims to defend.

It encourages even more deforestation⁵, even more climate change and even more human rights violations⁶.

I want to demand:

¹Accompanied at that moment with 209,373 signatures, today are more than 367.000, see <https://www.rainforest-rescue.org/petitions/1133/protect-amazonia-no-to-the-eu-mercosur-free-trade-agreement>

²Petitions with Nr. signatures: [Campact \(DE\)](#): 410,000+; [Rainforest Rescue/ Regenwald.org/ sauvonslaforet.org/](#) [salvaselva.org](#): 377,000; [SumOfUs](#): 270,000+; [WeMove.eu](#): 220,000+; [Greenpeace Germany](#): 138,000+; [Foodwatch](#): 100,000+; [MesOpinions](#): 21,000+

³European public opinion opposes Mercosur trade deal, <https://www.regnskog.no/en/news/european-public-opinion-opposes-mercosur-trade-deal>

⁴<https://www.greens-efa.eu/en/article/news/eu-mercosur-abkommen/>

⁵Manifiesto No Más Agresiones Ambientales en la Amazonía, promovido por grupos de trabajo de América Latina y Geografía Física de la Asociación Española de Geografía, <https://www.age-geografia.es/site/manifiesto-por-la-amazonia/>

⁶<https://www.salvaselva.org/peticion/1216/por-favor-firma-contra-el-genocidio-que-promueve-bolsonaro>
<https://www.rainforest-rescue.org/petitions/1216/prosecute-brazilian-president-bolsonaro-for-genocide>

- Your compromise for the protection of the Amazonien and other forests and ecosystems
- Your attention to full respect for human rights, for the specific rights of indigenous peoples and stop the genocide that is happening.
- **A definitive rejection of the EU's free trade Agreement with Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay.**
- And for it, I ask for the support of the members of this Petitions Committee and other members of the European Parliament, for the petition to remain open. Please help us to keep the discussion alive.

I have to repeat our argumentation, because nothing has changed and it's necessary to express the main critics from civil society, which are:

Critics

I. Deforestation of the tropical rainforests will increase with severe consequences regionally and globally, with all types of extractivism: cattle ranching, agriculture with massive pesticides use, transgenic soya monocultures, timber, mining

In December 2020, the biggest increase in deforestation in the Amazon since the beginning of the Bolsonaro government was reported, the highest in the last 12 years⁷. The same happened with the forest fires in the region. The Brazilian government openly promotes the destruction and appropriation of the Amazon, the *cerrado*, the *pantanal* and its natural resources.

The economic growth⁸ promoted by the European Commission with the EU MERCOSUR Treaty is irrational. **More exports also mean more destruction, more population displacement, abuses grow at the same rate as “inversions” by european companies.**

Deforestation for soy and sugar cane agribusiness pushes one of the **biggest environmental crises on the planet** and biodiversity loss.

II. Human rights violations means genocide of the indigenous peoples

And are a consequence of the political and economic system deepened by president Bolsonaro to its extremes.

While the visible face of the European Union promotes respect for human rights as one of the

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Monitoramento do Desmatamento da Floresta Amazônica Brasileira por Satélite, registra cifra seen since 2008en: <http://www.obt.inpe.br/OBT/assuntos/programas/amazonia/prodes>

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Open Letter regarding the economic impacts of the EU-Mercosur agreement, en <http://s2bnetwork.org/open-letter-sia/>

fundamental principles of democracy, with its hidden face the EU has negotiated with the current far-right Brazilian government, which imposes harmful policies that literally drive to genocide of indigenous peoples, deepening environmental racism and discrimination against the indigenous population. Violence has become a structural part of Bolsonaro's government.

The International Criminal Court in The Hague admitted charges of genocide and crimes against humanity in December 2020 and preliminary investigations against him have begun⁹. Europe will for sure not want to be complicit.

The theft of the lands and indigenous peoples territories, is meant to benefit large landowners and land grabbers, strongly represented in Brazil's parliament with its powerful agrarian lobby or *Bancada Ruralista*.

Defending human rights and stop the genocide is a matter of extreme urgency, please, listen to the specific calls from indigenous peoples in the Amazon, requesting to stop the Treaty¹⁰.

III. More climate change and an immense additional amount of greenhouse gas emissions

From this activities range going through deforestation, industrialised agriculture and the long distances transport of consumer goods, greenhouse gas emissions will contribute to **hindering the achievement of the Paris climate goals and European compromises with climate.**

As a Conclusion

We are not against economic and political relationships between the EU and the MERCOSUR countries, but those relations must be based on solidarity and planetary boundaries and a real New Green Deal, a just transition, which is certainly not the one the European Commission has on the table. On behalf of the hundreds of thousands of people and organisations from civil society, I ask to stop the EU Mercosur Trade agreement. And until then, for your help to keep this petition open.

Thank you very much.

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Corte Penal Internacional de La Haya acepta denuncia contra Bolsonaro por genocidio, en <https://www.salvalaselva.org/noticias/10018/corte-penal-internacional-de-la-haya-acepta-denuncia-contra-bolsonaro-por-genocidio>

10Líderes indígenas de Brasil critican en Bruselas el acuerdo UE-Mercosur, <https://youtu.be/rDB2XmFqhDs>