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News | 14.12.2012

## Greens/EFA Round-up

### Debriefing of the plenary week Strasbourg 10-14 December 2012

#### EU-Colombia/Peru trade agreement

*Recommendation (Mario report)*

*Committee on International Trade*

*Plenary debate Monday 10th December 2012 - vote Tuesday 11th December 2012* Despite hundreds of e-mails from citizens and NGOs asking them to reject the agreement, and a recent study indicating that it encourages the risks of tax evasion and money laundering, a majority of MEPs voted to accept the FTA with Colombia and Peru on Tuesday. The agreement has provoked strong opposition due to concerns that it would negatively impact on the development of the two Latin American countries. The FTA would further expand the export of raw materials from Peru and Colombia, without taking into account social and environmental concerns, and place business interests ahead of human rights. Also as a new study revealed, as negotiated, the risks of illicit financial flows, money laundering and tax evasion are further encouraged by this FTA. The Greens lobbied and voted against this agreement.

- [Webarticle: El TLC con Colombia y Perú significa desplazamiento de campesinos y lavado de dinero \(ES\)](#)
- [Webarticle \(EN\) and Plenary speeches \(FR/DE\)](#)
- [Press report on study](#)
- [Texts adopted](#)

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### Budget of the European Union for the financial year 2013

*Committee in Budgets*

*Committee vote Monday 10th December 2012 - Plenary vote Wednesday 12th December 2012* A draft agreement on the EU's 2013 budget and provisions to cover shortfalls under the 2012 budget was endorsed by the European Parliament Wednesday, following an indicative vote in the budget committee. The Greens criticised the agreement for both failing to bridge the shortfalls under the 2012 budget and continuing the trend of under-budgeting for 2013. The agreement condemns the EU to cyclical budget crises and EU governments are simply refusing to deliver on commitments already agreed to. Ultimately, it is

beneficiaries in EU member states that will suffer as a result of cuts to already agreed to programmes.

- [Press Release \(EN/FR/DE\)](#)
- [Plenary Speech - Hega Trupel \(DE\)](#)
- [Texts adopted](#)

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## EU patent system

*Committee on Legal Affairs (various reports)*

*Plenary debate Tuesday 11th December 2012 - Vote Wednesday* The long-debated unitary European patent was voted for by MEPs Wednesday. The Greens criticised the vote and raised concerns about the legality of the proposal, as well as the decision to grant wide-ranging intellectual property powers to a non-EU institution, the European Patent Office (and the new Patent Court). Despite clear rules against the patenting of software, the EPO grants software patents anyway. The same applies to patents on life forms, with the EPO ignoring national laws and the European Parliament by granting patents. The Greens hit out at the majority of MEPs for voting to hand control over European innovation policy to patent lawyers with vested interests rather than elected legislators.

- [Press Release \(EN/DE/FR\)](#)
- [Plenary Speech - Eva Lichtenberger \(EN/DE\)](#)

Texts adopted:

- [Creation of unitary patent protection](#)
- [Unitary patent protection](#)
- [Jurisdictional system for patent disputes](#)

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## Airport Package - Noise-related operating restrictions at European Union airports

*Legislative report*

*Committee on Transport and Tourism*

*Plenary debate Tuesday 11th December 2012 - Vote Wednesday 12th December 2012* EU rules dealing with airports, including noise restrictions and working conditions for ground staff, were voted on by MEPs Wednesday. The Greens welcomed the vote to reject the proposed liberalisation of ground-handling services at airports but regretted the decision to refer the proposal back to the EP's transport committee. The Greens criticised and voted against the legislative proposals on airport noise which would open the door for the EU Commission to overrule noise-related restrictions introduced in local and regional airports in favour of more airport capacity at the expense of citizens' interests. Unfortunately this was passed by the majority of MEPs.

- [Press Release \(EN/DE/FR\)](#)
- [Plenary Speech - Eva Lichtenberger \(EN/DE\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

Further information:

## Enhanced cooperation on the financial transaction tax

*Legislative report (Podimata report)*

*Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs*

*Plenary debate Tuesday 11th December 2012 - Vote Wednesday 12th December 2012* A report giving the green light for an enhanced cooperation procedure for introducing a financial transaction tax for an initial group of 11 or more EU member states were approved by MEPs Wednesday. The Greens have long advocated an FTT both to help curb risky financial speculation and generate much-needed revenue from an under-taxed financial sector for pressured exchequers. This enhanced cooperation is a first step. Ideally, the FTT should apply in the EU as a whole but the task at hand is now to move forward with this coalition of the willing and hopefully convince other member states to join at a later date.

- [Press Release \(EN/DE/ES\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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## Protection of animals during transport

*Legislative report (Wojciechowski report)*

*Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development*

*Plenary debate Tuesday 11th December 2012 - vote Wednesday 12th December 2012* MEPs approved a report Wednesday calling on rules governing animal transport to be strengthened. Long distance transport of animals, often in poor conditions, leads to distress for the animals involved. The Greens/EFA group believes current EU legislation needs to be improved and welcomed the vote but expressed regret that a majority of MEPs failed to clearly back calls for an 8-hour limit on transport times. The report adopted by the agriculture committee was ambiguous on this key issue and the Greens/EFA wanted to include clear language on an 8 hour limit.

- [Press Release \(EN/FR/DE\)](#)
- [Plenary speech - Bas Eickhout \(EN/NL\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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## Fundamental rights in the European Union

*Motion for resolution and Legislative report (Zdanoka, Benova reports)*

*Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs*

*Plenary debate Tuesday 11th December 2012 - votes Thursday 13th December 2012* Two important reports on fundamental rights in the EU were approved by MEPs Thursday. The report by Greens/EFA MEP Tatjana Zdanoka on the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency is overshadowed by the UK government blocking the adoption of a multiannual framework for the agency. The group condemns this populist opportunism. While supporting the annual report on fundamental rights in the EU, the Greens/EFA believe the exercise is insufficient. The group is in favour of finally creating a proper monitoring instrument on fundamental rights, including country-by-country reporting. In the meantime, we hope that the

Commission will evaluate and propose to revise tasks, areas of activity and working methods of the Fundamental Rights Agency in 2013 in order to guarantee effective monitoring and implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

- [Plenary Speech - Tatjana Zdanoka \(EN\)](#)
- [Press Release \(FR\)](#)

Texts adopted

- [Fundamental rights in the European Union \(2010 - 2011\) \(Beňová\)](#)
- [Multiannual framework for the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights \(Greens/EFA MEP Tatjana Ždanoka\)](#)

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## **New EU-Russia agreement**

*Motion for resolution (Swoboda report)*

*Committee on Foreign Affairs*

*Plenary debate Wednesday 12th December 2012 - vote Thursday 13th December 2012* With negotiations on a new EU-Russia agreement ongoing, MEPs approved a report criticising the eagerness to reach an agreement. A Greens amendment calling for the release of member of punk band Pussy Riot was also overwhelming accepted. For economic and strategic reasons, the EU is unfortunately all too ready to ignore major concerns with the Putin regime, which conflict with basic EU values. As the recent parliamentary elections revealed, Russia still fails to respect democratic norms. The rule of law and human rights also remain major problems, with high profile cases like those of Mikhail Khordorkovsky and Pussy Riot underlining this. Green MEPs also organised a reading in the European Parliament in Strasbourg to participate in a worldwide reading for Pussy Riot.

- [Press Release \(DE\)](#)
- [Plenary speech - Werner Schulz \(EN/DE\)](#)
- [Support Video - Worldwide reading for Pussy Riot](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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## **Human rights strategy and EU policy**

*Motion for resolution (Greens/EFA MEP Rui Tavares)*

*Committee on Foreign Affairs*

*Plenary debate Wednesday 12th December 2012 - vote Thursday 13th December 2012* MEPs made a clear call Thursday for a more coherent and consistent EU approach to human rights by adopting the report by Green MEP Rui Tavares on the EU's human rights action plan and strategic framework. The report makes strategic recommendations for an EU human rights policy which takes into account the effects of the current economic crisis and its influence on the perceived political clout of the EU in the world. It calls on the Commission to come forward with legislation requiring EU companies to ensure their purchases do not support perpetrators of conflicts or human rights violations. The report also critically comments on the lack of cooperation and integration between the services of the main EU institutions in the human rights

area, as well as making recommendations on how the EP works on human rights.

- [Plenary speech - Rui Tavares \(EN/PT\)](#)
- [Press release \(EN\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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## **Israeli government's decision to expand settlements in the West Bank**

*Motion for resolution*

*Plenary debate Wednesday 12th December 2012 - vote Thursday 13th December 2012* With the Israeli government having decided to expand illegal settlements in the West Bank, MEPs debated the issue and the EU's response Wednesday with the EU foreign policy high representative and adopted a resolution Thursday condemning the current Israeli government's policies. Expanding these settlements, as proposed by the Israeli government, is illegal under international law. With a halt to settlement expansion a precondition for resuming peace talks, the decision by the Israeli government is a direct act of provocation, which flies in the face of regional peace. The EU and its member states must unite in opposing this act of aggression and must effectively implement existing legislation that does not allow Israeli settlement products to be imported into the EU market under the preferential terms of the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

- [Plenary speech - Franziska Brantner \(EN\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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## **Opposing the Belo Monte dam in the Amazon Greens/EFA Press Conference**

*Tuesday 11th December 2012* Twenty-five years after his last campaign, the Cacique Raoni returned to Europe to mobilise key political leaders against major risks posed by the mammoth dam project of Belo Monte. At a press conference hosted by green MEPs in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, he highlighted especially the social disaster, ecological and economic burden that will be caused when the Belo Monte project floods more than 660km<sup>2</sup>, including 400 km<sup>2</sup> of primary forest in indigenous territories, leading to the displacement of 20,000 people, not counting the loss of unique biodiversity.

- [Photos from the Press Conference](#)
- [Recorded livestream](#)

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## **Sakharov Prize 2012**

Representatives of Iranian lawyer and human rights advocate Nasrin Sotoudeh and Iranian film director, screenwriter and film editor Jafar Panahi met with the Greens/EFA group before accepting the "Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought" this week. Nasrin Sotoudeh and Jafar Panahi are an example for all those concerned with human rights around the world. They have put the freedom of others before their own, and have refused to shy away from even the harshest repression against them.

- [Webarticle](#)
- [Photos: Meeting with representatives of Sakharov Prize winners](#)

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## **EU summit and the continuing crisis**

*Plenary debate Wednesday 12th December 2012. - European Council meeting Thursday 13th & Friday 14th December 2012* EU leaders met Thursday and Friday to agree on plans for deepening the EU's economic and monetary union, with a plenary debate on the summit the day before. The Greens warned against attempts to put Europe on ice with short term measures such as the ECB's intervention and called for a more permanent and democratic solution. Swift progress is now needed to deliver a complete Banking Union, with EU provisions on bank resolution and an EU-wide deposit guarantee scheme. The Greens also criticised the failure to agree common goals and measures to tackle the recession and growing unemployment as well as the blind eye turned to debt mutualisation.

- [Press release \(EN/DE\)](#)
- [Plenary speech - Rebecca Harms \(EN/DE/FR\)](#)

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## **Want to be kept informed?**

- [www.greens-efa.eu](http://www.greens-efa.eu)
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- [www.twitter.com/greensep](http://www.twitter.com/greensep)
- [www.stopclimatechange.net](http://www.stopclimatechange.net)

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*Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary Round-up : 18 January 2013*

## **Recommended**

Event

Picture of Budapest - Hungary © Jaap Hart



[An honest broker? The Hungarian Council presidency in ...](#)

03.07.2024

Press release



[Greens/EFA welcome Council finally adopts historic Nat...](#)

17.06.2024

Press release

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[Far-right cannot be allowed to dictate EU's future](#)

14.06.2024

Letter

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## In Defence of Democracy

08.05.2024

### **Responsible MEPs**



Jan Philipp Albrecht

Member



José Bové

Member



Philippe Lamberts

Member



Helga Trüpel

Member

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