



EU Domestic Advisory Group under  
the EU-Vietnam FTA

## **Statement from the European Union Domestic Advisory Group of the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement**

1 June 2021

It is with deep regret and concern that the Members of the EU Domestic Advisory Group (DAG), established under the Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) Chapter (Chapter 13) of the Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (EVFTA), note the late cancellation of the first Trade and Sustainable Development Committee and the first Joint forum between European and Vietnamese civil society, due to take place this week.

The Trade and Sustainable Development Chapter of the EVFTA is an integral part of the agreement. Civil society engagement and scrutiny of the EVFTA is not an optional element of the agreement, but should be ensured and applied as a matter of urgency. We therefore call on the Vietnamese authorities to swiftly establish a counterpart for the EU DAG in order to enable the organisation of the joint meetings, and urge the European Commission to provide any technical assistance needed to achieve this. We recall that the EVFTA explicitly stipulates that DAGs be composed of “independent representative organisations” (Article 13.15.4).

The economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development are as equally fundamental to the effective implementation of the FTA as the preferential trade aspects. The DAGs have an essential role in advising on the implementation of the agreement.

In particular, we underline the importance of the DAGs’ ability to comment and make recommendations on the implementation of this TSD chapter. This especially includes the opportunity for each DAG to make recommendations through the right of own initiative, as specifically outlined in Article 13.15.4.

In light of the commitments undertaken by the Government of Viet Nam on the ratification of ILO fundamental conventions and the reform of the labour code ahead of the European Parliament’s ratification of the EVFTA, EU DAG members reiterate the importance of a timely implementation of the so-called ‘roadmap’.

We encourage the formation of the Vietnam DAG and look forward to the opportunity to engage with our Vietnamese counterparts in the near future.