



## **Revised EU-Morocco trade agreement: ECVC denounces this agreement which goes against the CJEU ruling and will defend the rights of European and Moroccan peasants in solidarity with the Saharawi people**

**ECVC denounces the steps taken by the European Commission and Morocco regarding the EU-Morocco trade agreement, as they try at all costs to save the interests of a minority of transnational corporations and foreign investors at the expense of the Saharawi people and Moroccan and European peasants. Given the lack of transparency in the negotiations and signing of the deal, ECVC calls on the European Parliament to not allow itself to be treated as a powerless spectator in the face of the European Council and the European Commission's actions against democracy, self-determination of peoples and food sovereignty, and thus to not ratify this agreement.**

A year ago, ECVC welcomed the CJEU's decision<sup>i</sup> to cancel EU-Morocco trade agreements regarding fisheries and agricultural products for non-compliance with European law, due to the obvious lack of consent from the Saharawi people and a fraudulent labelling system that conceals the real origin of massive imports of fruit and vegetables<sup>ii</sup>. The European peasants' movement denounced the unfair competition for EU producers, given, for example, the indecent wages (less than 1€/hour)\* paid to workers in production greenhouses and production plants, not to mention tax fraud characterised by the high volumes of imports throughout the year that are not subject to customs controls. Cancelling the fisheries and agriculture treaties also paved the way for an end to European complicity in the colonial logic of the agricultural system imposed by Morocco on Western Sahara.

The European Commission and Morocco have since reached an agreement – which has already been ratified by the Council - whereby they intend to circumvent the law and repeat the previous agreement with Morocco by taking a legal shortcut to gain time. They intend to allocate funding in the form of humanitarian aid to refugee camps and infrastructure construction in the occupied territory, further strengthening the colonialist and agro-export model. In addition, the creation of two new regions of origin, "Great Moroccan South" (which are non-existent and illegal) is being proposed in order to circumvent the ruling that requires products from Western Sahara to be labelled as such and not as produced in Morocco.

Moreover, it is important to remember that Moroccan peasants are also victims of this system, as aquifer resources are exhausted and peasants are forced to leave their land or cede it to exporting transnational corporations\*, thus jeopardising their food sovereignty.

ECVC therefore denounces this signed agreement, which once again violates the free and genuine consent of the Saharawi people, required by the CJEU in the name of their right to self-determination. This consent cannot be obtained without the direct participation of the people in the negotiations through the voice of the Polisario Front, an essential condition that the agreement concluded in 2019 already flouted. Similarly, the proposed labelling remains misleading for consumers and does not meet any of the court's requirements around transparency and clarity.

It is high time that the European Union defended the interests of its citizens and peasants while respecting the rights of peoples of the world, rather than promoting an outdated and destructive neoliberal trade model. We invite the Commission to take up the proposal for a new international trade framework based on solidarity and food sovereignty\*\*, as proposed by the global peasant movement La Via Campesina!

### **Notes for the editor**

<https://www.eurovia.org/press-releases/ending-free-trade-agreements-cjeu-ruling-on-eu-morocco-deal-shows-the-way/>

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<sup>i</sup> Link to the CJEU decision: <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2024-10/cp240170en.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> Link to Mundubat's survey [in Spanish]: <https://www.mundubat.org/proyecto/estudio-sobre-la-produccion-de-tomate-en-la-region-de-dakhla/>

\* <https://www.france.tv/france-2/journal-20h00/7605950-tomates-marocaines-la-concurrence-low-cost.html>

\*\* <https://viacampesina.org/es/es-urgente-y-necesario-un-nuevo-marco-comercial-mundial-basado-en-la-soberania-alimentaria-la-via-campesina/>