

Question for written answer E-016046/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Hilde Vautmans (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - relations between the EU and India

Prime Minister Modi of India is adopting a bilateral approach to EU Member States, meeting major countries as part of his geopolitical campaign while systematically avoiding the EU, because it is politically irrelevant in his eyes. On the other hand, we know that, because a contact was mismanaged in Mogherini's office, a significant opportunity for a meeting was missed at the end of 2014. Meanwhile, the EU-India summit is constantly being postponed. After more than eight years of negotiations, major stumbling blocks still remain with regard to the draft free trade agreement (FTA) with India. At the beginning of 2015, EUEL New Delhi was reasonably optimistic that an agreement would be reached, but little more has been communicated since then.

India should be a major partner, not only commercially but also, inter alia, for defence, the fight against terrorism, and combating trafficking in persons and illegal migration, including in a regional context. On the other hand, India is a wayward and atypical negotiating partner in multilateral fora.

What position does India occupy in the determination of priorities, in view of its enormous geopolitical importance? What action is being taken to persuade Prime Minister Modi of the political added value of a trade agreement between the EU and India? What action is the EEAS taking in India to underline the importance of closer ties in all fields? What scope does the VP/HR see for trying to persuade India also to cooperate more in multilateral fora?