

Generalised scheme of tariff preferences (GSP): reinstatement of tariff preferences for Myanmar/Burma

2012/0251(COD) - 12/06/2013 - Final act

PURPOSE: to repeal [Council Regulation \(EC\) No 552/97](#) temporarily withdrawing access to generalised tariff preferences from Myanmar/Burma.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) no 607/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 552/97 temporarily withdrawing access to generalised tariff preferences from Myanmar/Burma.

CONTENT: [Council Regulation \(EC\) No 732/2008](#) applying the current scheme of generalised tariff preferences provides that the preferential arrangements may be withdrawn temporarily, in respect of all or of certain products originating in a beneficiary country, for the serious and systematic violation of principles laid down in 15 of the 27 international conventions listed in its annex, on the basis of the conclusions of the relevant monitoring bodies. The conventions in question also cover fundamental rights of workers and forced or compulsory labour, in particular.

Myanmar/Burma's access to the GSP tariff preferences was temporarily withdrawn by Council Regulation (EC) No 552/97 due to routine and widespread practice of forced labour, confirmed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), in a special procedure of its Commission of Inquiry.

Since 2011, Myanmar/Burma has been undertaking a historic programme of openness and reform and the Council is now in favour of reinstating the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) for Myanmar/Burma once the required conditions are fulfilled, following the assessment of the International Labour Organisation.

On 13 June 2012, the International Labour Conference (ILC) lifted restrictions, which excluded the Government of Myanmar/Burma from receiving ILO technical cooperation and assistance. Accordingly, the violations cannot be any longer considered as "serious and systematic" and it is thus appropriate that Myanmar/Burmas access to generalized tariff preferences is reinstated.

Moreover, in a specific report, published on 17 September 2012, the Commission itself recognised the progress made by Burma/Myanmar in satisfying the ILOs recommendations and recommended that the generalised tariff preferences should be reinstated in its case.

As a result, the European Parliament and the Council decided to repeal Council Regulation No 552/97 to take into account the new situation.

The Commission shall continue to monitor developments in Myanmar/Burma with respect to forced labour and react to them in accordance with the procedures in force, including, if necessary, with renewed withdrawal procedures.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: the Regulation enters into force on 19.07.2013. It is retroactively applicable from 13 June 2012.