

## **EU-Central American Association Agreement: A sustainable foreign policy approach?**

The Association Agreements (AAs) are based on multilateral WTO agreements as well as key EU policy documents, such as the Lisbon Treaty. In other words, different expressions of the same logic can be found in EU foreign policy throughout the world. The AAs were originally set up by the EU to promote economic development and political stability in countries geographically close to the EU and they were often a first step towards membership in the EU. Later on the usage of AAs became wider and the EU begun to sign this kind of agreements with countries that are geographically far away from Europe (Kommerskollegium, 2002:9). The special characteristic for AAs is that they include more aspects than just trade and therefore require deeper commitments between countries than just pure trade relationships. Sometimes they involve no more than one country where as sometimes a whole region of countries.

The AAs with Central America and Andean Community, both signed in June 2012, include three founding pillars, namely, political dialogue, cooperation and free trade. Their combination of free trade, human rights (including women's rights and gender equality) and sustainable development makes them interesting to examine from a critical feminist perspective. This paper focuses on the AA between the EU and the Central American states and asks to what extent the EU links gender equality and sustainable development to free trade in this agreement. In this paper I argue that disconnects between policy areas within the AA to some degree undermine EU foreign policy. In relation to this question the next section offers an introductory discussion of gender equality and sustainable development in trade agreements and thereafter this paper provides a brief presentation of the case study (Guatemala). Subsequently it outlines and discusses the three AA pillars in relation to gender equality and sustainable development and concludes by drawing upon the empirical evidence and linking it to the above-mentioned question.

### **More than just trade**

*Gender, sustainable development and trade agreements*

There are multiple aspects to consider when analysing the role of gender in trade agreements. Women's participation during trade negotiations is one important aspect to highlight since it has been minimal so far (Hoskyns, 2007a:7). One example of this low participation is the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations between the EU and African and Caribbean regions of countries. These negotiations were supposed to take social consequences into account in a similar fashion to the AAs and the Cotonou Agreement (2000) that made up the legal framework for the EPA negotiations includes a wide-ranging commitment to gender mainstreaming, for example, its integration at all levels in macroeconomic policies (Article 31). Nevertheless, these policy intentions failed in practice and women's participation was in fact low, and the European Commission itself called it 'gender policy evaporation' (Hoskyns, 2007b). So, as we can see these negotiations that were supposed to take gender issues into account failed to do so. In the case of Central America the Guatemalan women's rights activist Miriam Maldonado expresses that the AA negotiations have not been a success story when it comes to women's participation and one of the reasons for this was the highly technical language that is inaccessible for the majority of the population (FMICA, 2010:31). In relation to gendered effects of trade agreements, True (2009) recognizes that for women who are primarily responsible for caring for their families, from making a livelihood in a rural and agricultural area, it is no easy transition to start working in other economic sectors, such as processing and manufacturing industries (True, 2009:727). In other words, women working in the poor rural areas and in the urban informal sector are usually not in a good position to compete on the market, and therefore have fewer assets to cope with the shocks of trade liberalization (Tran-Nguyen and Beviglia Zampetti, 2004:15).

The trade liberalization often has a negative affect on the environment as well, since the focus lies on competition and economic growth rather than solidarity and sustainability. I agree with Susan Baker when she criticises the EU for practicing ecological modernisation rather than sustainable development. The famous Brundtland Report defines sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987:43). The report also emphasises the importance of and poverty reduction in the move towards sustainable development, arguing that poverty reduction is a "precondition for environmentally sound development" (WCED, 1987:44). The ecological modernisation discourse on the other hand

recognises the structural character of environmental problems, but nevertheless argues that present economic, political and social establishments can assume the care for the environment (Hajer, 1995:25).

## A closer look at the Guatemalan case

In this section I aim to provide the necessary background information about the case study to better contextualise this research. The map below shows the location of the country in Central America.



In today's Guatemala fifty per cent of the population lives in rural areas (World Bank, 2012). This moreover signifies that the agrarian question and the lack of land distribution is one of major importance in many people's everyday lives. The Guatemalan peace accords signed by the guerrilla<sup>1</sup> and the Guatemalan state in 1996 ended the civil war but did not resolve the land issue. This is important to consider since the demand for land reform, was one of the key issues, which unified four different guerrilla groups in 1982 (Jonas, 1991:138-139). The EU – Guatemalan relations reach back in history to the Guatemalan armed conflict (1969-1996) and the following Peace Negotiations. The San José Dialogue, initiated in 1984, represented the first major involvement between the EU as a united actor and the Central American states. Essentially, the purpose of this dialogue was to create a forum for political discussion, which could enhance conflict resolution and democratisation in Central America (Karadjova, 2003:7). This initiative contributed to the fostering of the signing of Peace Accords in both El Salvador and Guatemala.

### *Trade Regime*

In its 'Trade Policy Review' to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) from December 2008 the Guatemalan government wrote that

“...Guatemala needs to further decentralize its industry and generate sufficient economic growth, but creating a larger supply of qualified labour (...) and developing a diversified industry that would enable it to offer highly competitive product, expanding its export destination markets...” (WTO, 2008:15).

In a report from 2009, World Bank rates Guatemala as 68 out of 125 countries on the Most Favoured Nation Tariff (MFN) Trade Restrictiveness Index (TTRI) with a score of 5.9 percent. This indicates that Guatemala's trade regime is more open than that of an average lower-middle income country for which the score is 8.6. Also, the average for Latin American and Caribbean countries on the same scale of trade openness is 7.6 percent (World Bank: 2009). Despite the trade liberation efforts Guatemala, only ranked 110<sup>th</sup> out of 183 countries in another World Bank index called the 'Ease of Doing Business'<sup>2</sup> the same

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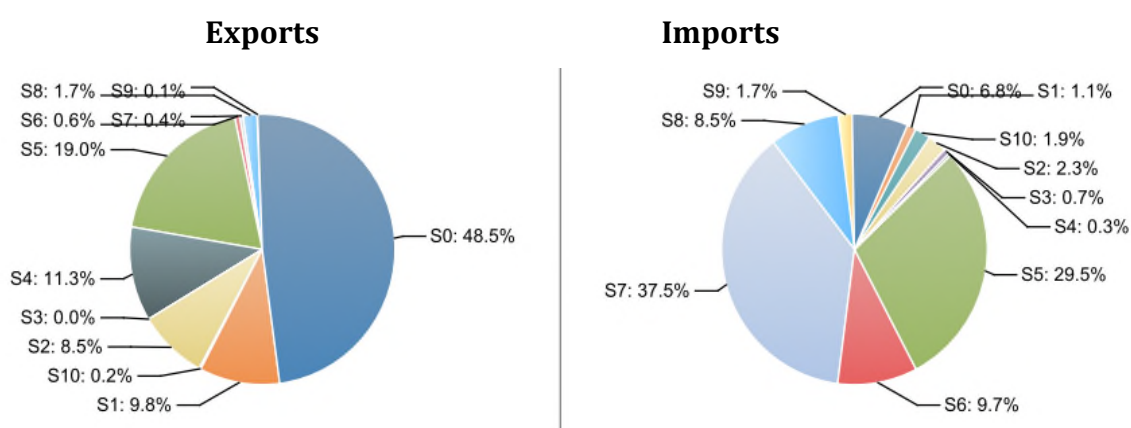
<sup>1</sup> 'Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca' (URNG)

<sup>2</sup> The index averages the country's percentage rankings on ten topics; starting a business, dealing with construction permits, getting electricity, registering property, getting credit, protecting investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts and resolving insolvency.

year (2009). In the June of 2013 version of that same index Guatemala ranked as 79 however. So, from this information we can see that the recent Guatemalan governments have done a big effort to open up the country's economy and make it a friendly environment for investors. The AA with the EU, securing the continuation of low trade barriers between the regions also after the Generalized System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) and moreover the expansion to the service sector is one example of this strategy.

The Guatemalan key export sector is the *maquila* industry and garment export makes up more than half of this. The second largest export sector is coffee, which made up 12 percent of the export goods in 2009. After this follows sugar and bananas that respectively account for 7 and 6 percent Guatemala's total export (World Bank: 2009). Guatemalan businesses do most of their trade with the US and its trade with the EU has not been substantial so far. In 2013, Guatemala exported goods such as knit as well as woven apparel, fruits, gold and coffee to a value of 3.08 billion Euros to the US. That same year Guatemala also imported US goods such as oil, machinery, and plastic for an even larger sum of 4.04 billion Euros (USTR, 2014). In other words Guatemala overall import goods worth more than the goods it exports to the US. This is not the case within the agricultural sector however, where Guatemala's export exceeds the import.

### Total goods: EU Trade flows by SITC section, annual data 2013



#### SITC Sections

Section	label	Section	label
	Total	S5	Chemicals and related prod, n.e.s.
S0	Food and live animals	S6	Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material
S1	Beverages and tobacco	S7	Machinery and transport equipment
S2	Crude materials, inedible, except fuels	S8	Miscellaneous manufactured articles
S3	Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials	S9	Commodities and transactions n.e.e.
S4	Animal and vegetable oils, fats and waxes		Other

Source: Eurostat Comext Statistical Regime 4, 2013.

The trade between Guatemala and the EU has been on the increase since 2010 but is nevertheless minor to its trade with the US. In 2013 Guatemala exported goods worth 620 million Euros to the EU and imported goods to a value of 780 million Euros (EC, 2014:3). Guatemala's key export goods for the EU market are; food and live animals, beverages and tobacco, crude materials, mineral fuels as well as animal and vegetable oils. The main goods that Guatemala imports from the EU are chemical and related products, manufactured goods, machinery and transport equipment, miscellaneous manufactured articles and commodities (Ibid:3). From this we can still see the continuing division between developing countries versus industrialised countries export goods, since Guatemala is relying heavily upon agriculture for its export economy, where as the EU does not. The President of the Exporters' Association of Guatemala (Asociacion Gremial de Exportadores de Guatemala AGEXPORT) Juan Carlos Paiz, considers that his country has a low level of trade with the European Union, and that the Agreement with Europe will encourage Guatemalan exports (Woolcock, 2012:14).

### *Sustainable development in Guatemala*

The sustainable development model that the EU promotes through the AA is in line with the ecological modernisation theory mentioned earlier and does not question the export oriented economy, nor the concentration of natural resources in the hands of few persons. The section working with Guatemala at the External Action Service (EEAS) at the EU commission does not see these issues as their concern. Since Guatemala is a democracy and the government therefore in theory represents the people, the EEAS does not see the concentration of power as well as resources as something it should take into consideration when negotiating the AAs (EEAS, interview, 13/06/12). Moreover, the Guatemalan government, the Guatemalan (CACIF) as well as the European (BusinessEurope) business sectors' interests groups and the EC all offer similar views on development and environmental protection. The focus on economic growth and exploitation of nature (primarily through mining and hydroelectric power plants) often causes conflict between indigenous communities and the state in Guatemala.

## *Gender (in)equality in Guatemala*

### *Violence against women*

In Guatemala more than 700 women were murdered in 2008 and many of these women were brutally sexually abused and tortured before getting killed (WHO, 2012: 3). A 2009 human rights campaign reported that there had been more than 500 femicides per year in Guatemala since 2001 (Ibid.:3). From the statistics there is reason to believe that these are the same kind of numbers as during the armed conflict in the early 1980s (Sandford, 2008:105). Even though there are even more men killed than women in Guatemala, it is important to look at feminicide (when women who are killed for being women) and the particular types of violence that often precedes these killings. As supposed to murdered men the majority of women murdered are not linked to gangs or other criminal groups, but nevertheless they get killed in very brutal ways.

### *Gendered economic aspects*

In Guatemala the economically active population (the fraction of a population that is either employed or actively seeking employment) in 2013 were 5.9 million people out of the total 9.7 million people above age 15 (National Institute of Statistics, 2013:5). Among people who count as part of the economically active population, women are underrepresented and only represent 40.6 per cent of the women whereas the figure for men is 83.9 per cent. For women living in rural areas the figure is even lower (35.5 per cent) (Ibid.). This does of course not mean that the rest of the women do not work. Rather, it reflects the problem of when the reproductive economy and the labour involved in social reproduction is not valued. Moreover this also affects women when they are old, since they do not get pensions without having worked in the formal economy. The socio-economic situation in Guatemala is complex to analyse and includes intersecting types of discriminations and social exclusions based on ethnicity, social class and gender.

### *Indigenous women's situation*

In 2010 indigenous women represented approximately twenty per cent of Guatemala's population (DEMI, 2011:20). These women are discriminated both for being women and for being indigenous and DEMI's study from 2011 shows how indigenous women who



work as agribusiness workers earn less than their male colleagues. In the Guatemalan highlands it is normal that women earn 25 quetzales (2.30 Euros) per day whereas men earn between 40 quetzales (2.6 Euros) and 60 quetzales (5.5 Euros). The salaries for male agribusiness workers are already very low, which means that it is difficult to survive on what these women earn. Indigenous women in rural areas often spend less time doing paid work while they spend much of their time doing reproductive work and subsistence activities, such as, taking care of domestic animals, growing medical plants as well as vegetables for family consumption. Moreover they commonly weave their own clothes (DEMI, 2011:41). In relation to environmental destruction and sustainable development, indigenous women often perceive violence against nature as violence against themselves and their communities as well (FIMI, 2006: 16).

### **The AA, gender equality and sustainable development policy**

#### *Outline*

The AA between the EU and Central America opens with a Preamble that lays out the agreement and defines key concepts. Thereafter, Part I describes the general and institutional provisions, Part II is the pillar on Political dialogue, Part III the pillar on Co-operation, Part IV is the third and final pillar on Trade and finally Part V states General and final provisions. For the question of this paper it is interesting that the Preamble states that the three pillars are interdependent and based on “mutual respect, reciprocity and common interests” (Article 2:a, Preamble of the AA). Another interesting statement for this paper is that “the Parties shall ensure that an appropriate balance is struck between the economic, social and environmental components of sustainable development” (Article 1, Preamble).

#### *Mainstreaming strategies*

Historically, the principle of formal equality has been a key value within EU internal policy since the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957. Article 119 of this treaty asks for equal pay (for the same work) for men and women. Moreover, the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) institutionalises gender mainstreaming, which means that the EU institutions aim to alter the way policy actors comprehend gender structures and norms (David, 2012:54).



Furthermore, this means that all policy areas, including foreign policy should be viewed from a gender perspective and as demonstrated later in this paper this can be seen in the different pillars of the AA between the EU and Central America.

As already mentioned, the EU intends to mainstream sustainable development principles within its policies and it has a Sustainable Development Strategy to achieve this. In a communication from the EU Commission in 2005 (COM/2005/0218 final) we find multiple 'key objectives' for this mainstreaming. Some of which are; environmental protection, social equity and cohesion, economic prosperity, meeting international responsibilities, promoting and protecting fundamental rights (fighting all forms of discrimination and contribute to poverty reduction internationally), intra- and intergenerational equity, open and democratic societies, involvement of citizens, precautionary principle and to make polluters pay.

#### *Gender mainstreaming in the AA*

In the Association Agreement, the issue of gender has the strongest presence in the cooperation pillar than in the trade pillar and political dialogue pillar. In Article 47 of the cooperation pillar the Parties agree on that co-operation

“shall help to strengthen policies, programmes and mechanisms aimed at ensuring, improving and expanding the equal participation and opportunities for men and women in all sectors of political, economic, social and cultural life, in particular in view of the effective implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women” (Article 47, Title III).

The Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is a key document for women's rights globally and was adopted in 1979. Most states of the world have signed the agreement (the USA being one of the few exceptions) and it is often described as an international bill of rights for women. The CEDAW defines discrimination against women and establishes an agenda for national action to end these forms of discrimination (OHCHR, 2013).

Moreover, Article 47 of the AA promotes affirmative action to support women “where appropriate” (Ibid.). The EU’s effort to mainstream a gender perspective also comes across in this article, when it states that co-operation shall integrate and promote a gender perspective in all its relevant fields, including development actions and strategies, public policies as well as indicators that can measure their impact. Equal access to resources and services for men and women is also mentioned as one aim which co-operation should promote. The examples given are health, education, employment opportunities, vocational training, governance structures, political decision-making as well as private undertakings. Violence against women is another concern that is highlighted in section four of Article 47 that promotes programmes to tackle this problem. Gender equality is sorely missing in the political dialogue pillar (Part II). Article 19 on migration and Article 21 on citizen security, for example cover highly gendered topics. Yet, both of these articles completely neglect gender as a variable.

‘A race to the bottom’ in the name of competition and comparative advantage, is deepened through the trade pillar of the AA (Part IV) and has a negative impact in many women’s lives because it can intensify gender inequalities, when combined with already existing inequities in access to resources, power and decision- making in society. Employment may rise among women in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala due to increased employment opportunities in the textile and clothing sector (Ecorys, 2009: 79). These jobs often involve harsh working environments and low wages however. Due to these existing inequalities, the ‘Central America Women’s Network’ (CAWN) recommended the EU Commission to support the creation of a regional centre for employment equity, in order to support the annihilation of discrimination at the work places. This discrimination includes sexual harassment, pregnancy and salary inequalities (Buzzi, 2012:4). This suggestion was brought up during the AA negotiations, but the negotiators did not include any centre for employment equity. Instead they decided that the implementation of all labour standards is to be monitored by the Board of Trade and Sustainable Development<sup>3</sup> (European Commission, p.167). This board has the overall liability for resolving disputes based on sustainable development obligations.

### *Sustainable development principles in the AA*

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<sup>3</sup> See Article 294 in the European Union Association Agreement with Central America

This section explains in which ways the three different AA pillars deal with as well as ignores the issue of sustainable development.

#### *Sustainable development and international trade*

In the Pillar on trade (Part IV) Article 288 of Title VIII establishes that the Parties 'shall endeavour', first, to consider situations in which free trade could benefit both trade and sustainable development. Secondly, to promote and assist foreign direct investment in renewable-energy and energy efficient products as well as other 'environmental technologies'. Thirdly, the parties shall make an effort to promote trade in products in line with sustainability considerations, such as, products that make up part of eco-labelling, fair and ethical trade schemes, organic production as well as corporate social responsibility schemes. Finally, Article 288 declare that the Parties aim to promote and establish programmes and practices fostering suitable economic returns through conservation and sustainable use of the environment, for example ecotourism (EC, 2010, Article 288, p.166).

#### *Sustainable development and international co-operation*

Article 63 in Part III (International Co-operation pillar) of the AA promotes the co-operation and technical assistance within the areas of trade and labour as well as trade and the environment. Moreover it is set up to complement the titles on 'Social Development and Social Cohesion' as well as the one on the 'Environment, Natural Disasters and Climate Change'. In other words Article 63 promotes both decent work conditions and environmental protection. Decent work standards are encouraged through promoting the ILO conventions and by strengthening institutional frameworks as well as implementing programs and policies that promote freedom of association and collective bargaining as well as the fight against forced labour, child labour and employment discrimination. All these labour related issues are mentioned in clause (e) of Article 63. The other clauses focus on environmental issues and sustainable management of natural resources such as forest and fish stock. Therefore the article promotes trade with products derived from sustainable managed natural sources and initiatives such as certification of legally and sustainable timber.

#### *Sustainable development and political dialogue*

In the Political Dialogue pillar (Part II), sustainable development is touched upon in Article 20, in which the Parties agree to promote dialogue in areas of sustainable development and the environment. This dialogue touches upon a diverse set of environmental issues related to environmental protection; research and “environmental governance in view of increasing efficiency” (Article 20:2, Part II). In terms of protection this dialogue shall be aimed at battling the threat of biodiversity loss and work towards biodiversity conservation. The protection of basins and wetlands, hydro and marine resources are also emphasized. Other major issues are climate change, deforestation and forest degradation. The research priorities focus on development of renewable energy technologies as well as alternative fuel (Ibid.).

Despite these efforts it is difficult to see how these will be implemented in practice. Bartel nicely summarises the role of sustainable development in the AA when he writes, “the principle of sustainable development has never been treated as a concrete obligation in itself...” and therefore does not “admit the possibility of violating the principle of sustainable development” (Bartels, 2013: 133).

### **The three AA pillars: gender equality and sustainable development in Guatemala**

#### *Trade (Part IV)*

As mentioned earlier in this paper it is difficult for rural women, who are primarily responsible for caring for their families, to start working in other economic sectors, such as processing and manufacturing industries. So, in other words, many Guatemalan and especially rural women do not count as the economically active population and are therefore not in a good position to compete on the job market, and therefore have a hard time benefiting from the free trade pillar in the AA.

From a sustainable development perspective on the other hand, the understanding of the concept provided in Title VIII is in agreement with the ecological modernisation<sup>4</sup> ideas and encourages growth as a solution to the environmental problems. This can be argued to be contradictory to sustainable development and it is certainly inconsistent with indigenous

contributions to the sustainability debate. Furthermore, this ecological modernisation oriented approach relates largely to experiences in Western industrial countries and does therefore not account for a North/South perspective or social justice. In the case of Guatemala many indigenous women produce food in a local and sustainable manner, but are not likely to benefit from the AA. These women grow food in their family allotments for subsistence and for selling on local markets (DEMI, 2011: 40). It is very difficult for small-scale producers and women's cooperatives to access the international market, since this requires access to information, language skills as well as credit (Perez, Interview, 05/09/2012, Navichoc, Interview, 04/09/2012).

### *Political Dialogue (Part II)*

This AA pillar includes a number of the areas relating to foreign affairs and governance; including regional integration, the structure and orientation of international cooperation, migration, good governance, fight against corruption and the rule of law. Other areas focus on the promotion and protection of international conventions on rights related to identity, such as the rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples and individuals (as acknowledged by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples). Note that the International Labour Convention (ILO) 169, the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples convention from 1989 is not mentioned here despite that it is signed by four of the Central American States (Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) and by Denmark and Spain (ILO, 2014).

Various areas focus on social rights, including poverty reduction and social cohesion rights, core labour standards as well as equal opportunities and gender equality. Two other closely related common ground areas are protection of the environment and the sustainable management of natural resources. The remaining areas all focus on different kinds of security issues, including; regional security and stability (including the fight against citizens' insecurity), drugs; trans-national organised crime, the trafficking of small arms, light weapons and their ammunition, the fight against terrorism as well as the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts. So, in other words the multiple areas of common ground for political dialogue between the parties cover themes of democracy, governance, political, social, economic and cultural rights, environmental concerns as well as security issues. Paragraph three in Article 13 also includes international conventions on good governance, human rights, the environment as

well as core labour standards and puts emphasis on their implementation, “in accordance with the Parties’ international commitments and raise”.

One of the articles that focuses on security is Article 21 that states that the parties include citizen security in their political dialogue, arguing that it is essential to promote human development, good governance, democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Parties moreover recognize that citizen security “transcends national and regional borders, and therefore requires the impulse of a broader dialogue and cooperation on this matter” (Article 21, Part II). Due to the severe situation of violence against women, as described earlier in this article, the recently developed legal framework (The law against Femicide and other forms of violence: 22/2008) and all the work done by Guatemalan women’s rights groups (such as Sobrevivientes) as well as international actors (such as UN Women), I find it is surprising that Article 21 in Part II does not encourage political dialogue on femicide.

#### *International co-operation (Part III)*

As we could expect, since the AA is mainly about free trade, the sustainable development model that the EU promotes through the AA does not question the export oriented economy, and the concentration of natural resources in the hands of few persons that follows. Moreover, the section working with Guatemala at the European External Action Service (EEAS) at the EU commission does not see these issues as their concern. Since Guatemala is a democracy and the government therefore in theory represents the people, the EEAS does not see the concentration of power as well as resources as something it should take into consideration when negotiating the AA (EEAS, Interview, 13/06/12).

In Guatemala we see clashes between the understanding of development between the elite and indigenous peasants. Part III of the AA is there to promote policy areas such as peace and security, gender equality and sustainable development. Nevertheless, this comes as a neoliberal free trade package, hand in hand with, economic growth, extractive activities, an industrial export-oriented agriculture, comparative advantages based on cheap labour as well as competitiveness. This capitalist ideology of commodification is promoted through the AA, and I would argue, is incompatible with a sustainable management of natural resources and gender equality as defined within feminist economics. An example of this

commodification is the carbon market mechanisms which Part III aims to reinforce through Article 50:3 (d).

Forms of indigeneity and feminist based environmentalism offer epistemologies that assume interconnection between human and nonhuman life (as well as nonlife) and avoids the construction of dualistic thinking and rational individualism. Part III of the AA stands in sharp contrast to this however and is based on rational individualism however and focuses on the rule of law and good governance. This focal point is moreover in line with liberalism and does not focus on structural injustices (including gender hierarchies and class) or on socio-economic and cultural human rights. As declared by many CSOs in a public statement on June 25, 2013, “the ratification of the AA will deepen historically rooted discrimination, exclusion, marginalisation and poverty which the majority of the Guatemalan population live in” (REDSAG, 2013).

## **Conclusions**

The EC frequently separates issues that are related in the AA, even though a stated goal is for its different policy areas to be coherent and work towards the same goals (see Article 1:2). Nevertheless, the empirical evidence points to an unbalance between the different pillars, in which the Trade Pillar (Part IV) and its primary goal of economic growth dominates over sustainability and human rights components. Gender equality is only mentioned in relation to a few topics in Article 47 of the AA International Co-operation pillar (Part III). In this way it is not mainstreamed, since issues brought up in relation to political dialogue and trade to a large extent are not viewed through a gender lens. A deeper understanding of sustainable development and gender equality would intertwine the two concepts and avoid separating people from the rest of nature and try to live in harmony with the ecosystems. Moreover, reproductive work need to be valued and since women are the ones doing this work to a large extent an inclusion of the value of this work into the economy.

Moreover, the AA marginalises issues that are of great concern for the indigenous populations, such as the respect for nature. As discussed in this paper this is a relevant issue in the case of Guatemala since it has such a big indigenous population. An example of



marginalisation of nature to be found in the AA is the example of extractive natural resources and foreign investment in this sector through the trade pillar. This can be contrasted with environmental and indigenous feminism that do not separate the Earth from humans. In fact many indigenous people view the lack of respect for nature as violence by many indigenous people in Latin America but the AA does not account for this.

Furthermore, the detachment between gender equality and sustainable development is notable within the different pillars and the policy areas are not mentioned in relation to one and another. In light of this I would also argue that the above mentioned disconnects undermine EU foreign policy since these illustrate a lack of internal coherence and inconsistency with its goals of mainstreaming sustainable development and gender equality. Linking it back to the question of this paper of the extent to which the EU links gender equality and sustainable development to free trade in the AA the conclusion is based on the disconnects found that there is not a strong link. Furthermore, the way the two concepts are used in the AA depoliticises these and thereby reduces the possibility for transformative practice within the practice of this agreement.

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