
Press release

■ **MERCOSUR** Brussels, 18 March 2011

Statement of the EU and MERCOSUR after the 4th round of negotiations on the future Association Agreement between both regions

In the context of the XX Bi-Regional Negotiations Committee (XX BNC), MERCOSUR and the European Union held meetings in Brussels between March, 14 and March 18, 2011 for a round of negotiations on the future Association Agreement between both regions. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to negotiate a comprehensive, balanced and ambitious Association Agreement.

This was the fourth round since the official announcement of the relaunch of the bi-regional negotiations at the MERCOSUR-EU Summit in Madrid on May 17th, 2010.

Eleven Working Groups held meetings during the XX BNC. Discussions allowed progress in the normative part of several areas of the negotiations, including rules of origin, public procurement, services and investment, competition and dispute settlement, among others. It was also recognized that further intense work will be necessary in all negotiating areas.

Concerning the next steps in the negotiations, both sides will now continue their internal work to prepare improved market access offers. When this work is completed, they will then jointly decide on the date for a simultaneous exchange of offers.

Moreover it was also agreed that the next round of negotiations will be held on 2-6 May, 2011, in Asunción. Another round of negotiations will take place on 4-8 July 2011 in Brussels.