

**TWELFTH MEETING OF THE
MERCOSUR - EUROPEAN UNION
BI-REGIONAL NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE**

8 – 12 March 2004

Buenos Aires - Argentina

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The twelfth meeting of the EU -MERCOSUR Bi-regional Negotiations Committee took place in Buenos Aires from 8 to 12 March 2004. Negotiators proceeded with their ongoing discussions on the political, cooperation and trade aspects of the Interregional Association Agreement between the European Union and the MERCOSUR.

Delegations were welcome by the Secretary of Trade and International Economical Relations of Argentina, Ambassador Martín REDRADO, on behalf of the Pro tempore Presidency of MERCOSUR, and, for the European Union, by Mr Hervé Jouanjean, Deputy Director-General, and Mr Karl Falkenberg, Director, representing the EU as trade negotiator.

Mr. Redrado expressed the satisfaction to open this meeting as an important step to reach an agreement between MERCOSUR and the European Union. Mr Redrado said that the next months will be crucial to comply with the aim of closing the agreement by October and called both parties to work harder, because the agreement will be a historical event in the relationship between MERCOSUR and Europe.

Mr Falkenberg echoed the cautious optimism with regard to the prospects of a timely completion to these negotiations and highlighted the importance attached to defining a set of rules that would be conducive to allowing effective market access in all areas under negotiations.

Following the opening, the Parties met at Technical Groups level to work intensively on the agenda set out in the Brussels work-programme. This agenda included the following subjects:

- Political dialogue
- Co-operation
- Trade:
 - Goods: tariffs including agricultural modalities, customs, technical barriers to trade, rules of origin, trade defense, wines and spirits and sanitary and phytosanitary measures;
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Dispute Settlement
- Competition
- Services
- Investments

- Government Procurement

- Business Facilitation:

- Customs

- E-commerce

- TBT

- SPS

Parties confirmed their commitment, as expressed in the Brussels Work Programme, to table improved offers by mid-April 2004.

The next meeting shall take place from May 3 to 7th, 2004 in Brussels .