

**JOINT FCES-EESC DECLARATION
ON THE PROSPECTS FOR RESUMING THE NEGOTIATIONS
FOR AN EU-MERCOSUR ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT**

The Economic and Social Consultative Forum (FCES) and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC),

1. Express their satisfaction at the statements made by both the Spanish authorities, who will from 1 January 2010 assume the EU Presidency, and the Mercosur Common Market Council and Summit of Presidents in support of a strong commitment to resuming the negotiations for a bi-regional EU-Mercosur Association Agreement
2. Consider that the achievement of such an agreement would decisively strengthen the EU-Latin American Bi-regional Strategic Partnership and would deliver greater influence to both regions in effective multilateral governance
3. Believe that in these negotiations, both parties should take account not only of the trade, political and cooperation aspects, but also of the new world context generated by the crisis and the challenges relating to sustainable development
4. Emphasise that the existing asymmetries between the EU and Mercosur must be duly reflected in the negotiations, by means of instruments such as sustainability assessment, the principle of special and differential treatment, the establishment of exceptions and transitional periods in those sectors where they are needed, support for convergence funds and the implementation of sectoral policies that help to offset the asymmetries within Mercosur's own integration process
5. Call for the representative bodies of organised civil society from both regions – the FCES and the EESC – to be fully involved in both the negotiations and the creation, under the terms of the Agreement, of a Joint Consultative Committee comprising both interregional bodies
6. Also urge that, within the negotiations between the two blocs, the economic, social and labour aspects be taken into account
7. Agree to work together to prepare the Sixth Meeting of Civil Society Organisations to be held in Madrid on 5, 6, and 7 May 2010
8. Without prejudice to any recommendations that may be made by the Sixth Meeting of Civil Society Organisations, call for the next Summit of the Union of Latin America and the Caribbean (UALC) to determine the criteria and content of a Bi-regional Employment Pact, in order to apply the Global Jobs Pact agreed at the 98th Session of the ILO International Labour Conference
9. Agree to jointly approach the bodies preparing the next EU-LAC Summit with a view to ensuring that the Summit's final declaration includes an explicit mandate for the EESC and its counterpart bodies in Latin America for the participation of organised civil society in the Bi-regional Strategic Partnership
10. Jointly propose to the Mercosur Common Market Group and to European cooperation that funding be provided for a multiannual programme to strengthen the work of the FCES
11. Shall take joint initiatives with a view to the FCES, as a consultative institution of Mercosur organised civil society, taking part in the Euro-Lat Assembly in the same way as the EESC already does in its capacity as a Permanent Observer

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12. Agree together to draft a work programme focusing on a topic of common interest for their next annual meeting, with a view to formulating recommendations to the EU and Mercosur authorities.

Montevideo, 10 December 2009.

For the temporary FCES Coordination