



EUROPEAN PARLAMENT

2009 - 2014

Delegation for relations with the Mercosur countries

**REPORT BY JEAN-PIERRE AUDY, SECOND VICE-CHAIR,
ON THE WORKING GROUP VISIT TO BRAZIL
(BRASILIA AND RECIFE)
FROM 27 TO 31 OCTOBER 2013**

I INTRODUCTION

A Working Group (WG) from the Delegation for relations with the Mercosur countries (DMER) visited Brazil (Brasilia and Recife) from 27 to 31 October 2013.

The WG was led by the second Vice-Chair of DMER, Jean-Pierre **AUDY** (PPE, France), and comprised Petru Constantin **LUHAN** (PPE, Romania), Edite **ESTRELA** (S&D, Portugal), Wolfgang **KREISSL-DORFLER** (S&D, Germany), Liam **AYLWARD** (ALDE, Ireland) and George Sabin **CUTAS** (S&D, Romania), the Committee on International Trade's rapporteur on trade negotiations in relation to the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement (AA).

II BRASILIA (27-29 October 2013)

1. Interparliamentary meetings

1.1. Meeting with Deputy Nelson Pellegrino, Chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations and National Defence of the Chamber of Deputies

The WG was welcomed by the Chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations and National Defence of the Chamber of Deputies, Mr Nelson **Pellegrino**, accompanied by fellow deputies Eduardo **Azeredo**, **Vieira da Cunha** and Jacqueline **Roriz**.

In his introduction, the leader of the WG, Jean-Pierre **Audy**, explained that, since the Chair of DMER, Luis Yáñez Barnuevo, was unable to take part in the visit for health reasons, he had the honour of leading the WG. He then introduced the remaining members of the WG. Referring to the negotiations between the European Union and Mercosur aimed at signing an Association Agreement, he welcomed the imminent exchange of offers scheduled for the end of 2013. The EP wished to establish a regular structured dialogue with the Brazilian Congress, in line with the provisions of the EU-Brazil Strategic Partnership and the corresponding Joint Action Plan. This regular dialogue forum would supervise the implementation of the Strategic Partnership's Joint Action Plan, issue recommendations to the EU-Brazil Summits and promote the exchange of parliamentary working methods.

The Brazilian parliamentarians present expressed their support for the progress of negotiations on the Association Agreement and regretted that Mercosur had not met with much success on the signing of free-trade agreements with third countries. To date, it had only signed agreements with Israel and Palestine. They also expressed their support for the establishment of the EP-Brazilian Congress structured dialogue, which would benefit from shared historical and cultural ties, and added that the Brazilian and European executives should be invited to give a progress report on the Strategic Partnership at the meetings of the future parliamentary forum.

1.2. Meeting with Senator Ana Amelia Lemos, Chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations and National Defence of the Senate

After the usual words of welcome and introduction of the members of the WG, Senator Ana Amélia **Lemos** and the MEPs present exchanged information on the composition and organisation of their respective parliaments. Senator Ana Amélia **Lemos** pointed out that both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies had the right of legislative initiative. The Chamber had 513 Deputies and the Senate comprised 81 Senators. The 2014 elections would be held to elect a new President of the Republic, a new Chamber of Deputies, one third of the Senators and the Governors of the 27 federal states.

1.3. Working lunch with Deputy Sebastião Bala Rocha, Chair of the Brazil-EU Parliamentary Friendship Group

Deputy **Bala Rocha**, Chair of the Brazil-EU Parliamentary Friendship Group, hosted a lunch for members of the DMER WG. Topics addressed during the meal included the forthcoming exchange of offers in the EU-Mercosur negotiations on the future Association Agreement (AA) and the need to establish regular structured dialogue between the Brazilian Congress and the EP, in line with the provisions of the EU-Brazil Strategic Partnership and the corresponding Joint Action Plan. Finally, Deputy Sebastião **Bala Rocha** expressed satisfaction at the forthcoming visit by senior EP officials, which would provide an opportunity to boost contacts between the administrations of the EP and the Brazilian Congress.

2. Meetings with the Brazilian executive

2.1. Meeting with the Under-Secretary for Foreign Relations, Ambassador Carlos António Paranhos

Ambassador Carlos **Paranhos** began by explaining that the Minister for Foreign Affairs was unable to attend because he was accompanying President Dilma Rousseff on a trip outside Brasilia.

The Ambassador then spoke on Brazil's domestic situation and EU-Brazil relations. Brazil had seen considerable socio-economic development over the past few years, thanks to consistent social, economic and fiscal policies. The task of recent governments was not yet complete, as could be seen from the social demands voiced in June 2013. The government had not applied any repressive measures against demonstrators, and the law enforcement action taken had always respected democratic principles and human rights.

Ambassador Carlos **Paranhos** stressed the importance of relations between Brazil and the European Union, highlighting the shared values that united both sides of the Atlantic and reiterating the Brazilian government's support for the conclusion of a balanced and mutually beneficial EU-Mercosur Association Agreement (AA). In contrast to what had occurred in the first years of negotiations on the AA, there was now a real political resolve to reach a compromise. Brazil had already established its position on the offer that Mercosur was to submit to the European Union by the end of 2013 and hoped that the EU had also drawn up its proposal, so that the scheduled exchange of offers could go ahead. Paraguay and Uruguay, which were extremely interested in the AA, were also ready, and Argentina had promised that it would make its contribution shortly. Venezuela was incorporating the Mercosur 'acquis' and

would not be taking part in the negotiations. After the exchange of offers, which was to take place by the end of 2013, there would be time to conclude the Agreement in 2014.

The following spoke: Jean-Pierre **Audy**, Liam **Aylward**, Edite **Estrela**, George **Cutaş**, Petru **Luhan** and Wolfgang **Kreissl-Dörfler**.

2.2. Meeting with the Secretary for International Affairs in the Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade, Ambassador Rubens Gama

In his introduction, Ambassador **Rubens Gama** outlined the three stages that Brazil had recently passed through: re-democratisation in the 1990s, the macroeconomic balance achieved in the 1990s and the social challenge of the first years of the 21st century. The responses of successive governments had made it possible to achieve a high level of employment (particularly among skilled workers), keep inflation under control and secure reasonable growth rates (2.5%).

The Ambassador also made a number of remarks on Brazil's position in the world and relations with the European Union. Brazil's integration into the world economy would be achieved through trade and direct investment. Brazil's relationship with the EU was at a highly auspicious stage. Nevertheless, any Association Agreement with the EU would have to be reached in the Mercosur framework. Brazil's contribution to the exchange of offers was ready, and the government was aware that it would have to make concessions. There would be some dissenting voices in the EU, Brazil and the remaining Mercosur countries. Governments would have to demonstrate political will and engage in the necessary arbitration.

Finally, the Ambassador referred to the European Union-Brazil Strategic Partnership and the fact that Brazil needed access to technological cooperation as well as new markets.

The following spoke: Jean-Pierre **Audy**, Edite **Estrela**, George **Cutaş**, Petru **Luhan** and Liam **Aylward**.

3. Meetings with other bodies

3.1. Meeting with representatives of the academic world

The WG held a meeting with three leading academic figures: Professor Leila **Bijos** from the Catholic University of Brasilia, Professor Eiti **Sato**, Director of the Department of International Relations at the University of Brasilia, and Professor Mansueto **Almeida**, researcher at the Institute of Economics. The three academics focused on two topics: the political, economic and social situation in Brazil, and the European Union-Mercosur negotiations aimed at reaching an Association Agreement.

The first topic centred on the following points:

- the Brazilian Federation was less effective than the American equivalent;
- in political terms, Brazil was better off than the other BRICs (China, India and Russia);
- there were still serious socio-economic disparities between the north and south of Brazil;
- the future Brazilian government should be more business friendly and less protectionist;

- Brazil could not carry on growing without making reforms;
- Brazil would not achieve further growth through consumer lending;
- Brazil's declining population meant that labour would have to be imported;
- Brazil was seeing the rise of a lower middle class that would not hesitate to make demands.

The second topic centred on the following points:

- business people attached great importance to the EU-Mercosur AA;
- the 2014 elections would not affect the AA negotiations;
- it was more difficult to reach an agreement in a group than at bilateral level;
- in spite of its importance, Mercosur had signed agreements with only two states: Israel and Palestine.

The following spoke: Jean-Pierre **Audy**, Edite **Estrela**, George **Cutaş** and Petru **Luhan**.

3.2. Meeting with Brazilian civil society organisations

The members of the WG met representatives of various Brazilian civil society organisations: Ms Andrea **Azevedo** and Mr Rodrigo **Zanella** (Amazon Environmental Research Institute), Mr Wellington **Pereira** (Brazilian NGO Association), Mr Cléber **Buzatto** (Indigenous Missionary Council), Ms Aldiza **Soares** (Esquel Group Foundation Brazil) and Mr Raul **Telles do Valle**, Coordinator of the socio-environmental policy and law programme (ISA).

Participants protested at growing state intervention in civil society (in contravention of the Brazilian Constitution) and failure to respect the rights of indigenous peoples (also enshrined in the Constitution). With regard to the future EU-Mercosur Association Agreement, the representatives present expressed the wish that respect for human rights should also be enshrined in the AA.

3.3. Working lunch with representatives of the National Confederation of Industry (CNI) and the Brazilian Agency for the Promotion of Trade and Investment (APEX)

The DMER WG had a working lunch with Mr Carlos Eduardo **Abijaodi**, Director of the CNI, and Ms Tatiana **Martins Porto**, representing APEX, on Monday, 28 October 2013. The hosts, Mr Abijaodi and Ms Martins Porto, took the view that relations with the EU were a priority for the CNI and APEX. They both attached importance to the EU-Brazil Strategic Partnership, whose next summit would be held in Brussels in February 2014, in parallel with the seventh EU-Brazil Business Summit. Finally, they reiterated their support for the negotiations between the EU and Mercosur with a view to the signing of the AA.

The following spoke: Jean-Pierre **Audy**, George **Cutaş**, Edite **Estrela** and Wolfgang **Kreissl-Dörfler**

III RECIFE (30 and 31 October 2013)

1. Meeting with representatives of the regional executive

1.1. Meeting with Mr Gustavo Couto, Executive Secretary of the International Department at Recife City Council, and Mr Rodolfo Ramires, Executive Secretary for International Relations in Pernambuco State

The WG discussed a range of topics with its interlocutors at this meeting, including the growing importance of Pernambuco State, which has a higher rate of economic growth than many other Brazilian states, the success of the state's policy to attract foreign investment, the increasingly significant role played by Brazilian states and municipalities in the country's external relations, the cosmopolitan and dynamic character of the city of Recife, the potential for business and cultural cooperation between Pernambuco State and the EU, and the outlook for the negotiations on the EU-Mercosur AA.

The following spoke: Jean-Pierre **Audy**, Edite **Estrela** and George **Cutaş**.

2. Meeting with representatives of the regional legislature

2.1. Meeting with the President of the Legislative Assembly of Pernambuco State, Deputy Guilherme Uchoa

Deputy Guillermo Uchoa spoke on Brazil's long-standing geographical inequality, with the country being split between poverty in the north and wealth in the south, and took the view that this situation was not unalterable. Over the past six years, the economic reforms proposed by the Pernambuco state executive, and in particular by Governor Eduardo de Campos, had borne fruit: a considerable increase in foreign investment, the construction of a large number of schools and hospitals, a 40% drop in crime over the past six years, etc. He also referred to the economic potential that the AA would open up in this context.

The following spoke: Jean-Pierre **Audy**, Liam **Aylward**, George **Cutaş**, Edite **Estrela**, Wolfgang **Kreissl-Dörfler** and Petru **Luhan**.

3. Meetings with other local actors

3.1. Visit to the port of Suape

The WG visited the industrial complex at the port of Suape, one of Brazil's main ports. Pernambuco is one of the fastest-growing Brazilian states, with results above the national average, and the industrial complex at the port of Suape is spearheading Pernambuco state's economic growth.

As well as having the best infrastructure of any public port in Brazil, the Suape complex brings together more than 100 firms currently operating there and, through the Suape Global Project, aims to become a world hub for the supply of goods and services for the oil, gas, offshore and shipbuilding industries. Suape offers a strategic location for oil and gas companies operating in the international market. It is situated at the logistics hub of three significant oil-producing regions in the Atlantic Ocean: South-East Brazil, the Gulf of Mexico and West Africa. Suape has a differentiated tax incentive policy aimed at attracting new undertakings. There are tax breaks of up to 75%. Other incentives are also being applied at federal, state and municipal level, to the benefit of firms which are coming to the complex from all over the world.

3.2. Meeting with leaders of Fundação Abrinq - Save the Children

The WG visited the regional headquarters of Fundação Abrinq - Save the Children in Recife. Ms Daniela **Florio**, regional director, explained the foundation's aims. As a not-for-profit organisation, it worked to protect the rights of children and adolescents in a wide range of areas. It was a pioneer in this field and was now the largest such organisation in Brazil. The foundation acted through local partners and worked with the public authorities, social organisations, businesses and communities to carry out programmes and projects aimed at improving the quality of life for children and adolescents and helping them to exercise their rights. The foundation had developed to a stage which had allowed it to set up a partnership with Save the Children, the world's largest and oldest non-governmental organisation working to protect the rights of children and adolescents, leading to gains for all involved. Save the Children had been active since 1919, working both to provide urgent humanitarian aid and to foster long-term development by sponsoring children. Humanitarian sponsoring involved ensuring that children's needs were met while enabling them to carry on living in their family environment in their own culture and country.

Fundação Abrinq - Save the Children had three main lines of action:

- raising awareness among governments, civil society organisations and business to ensure that more attention was paid to issues affecting children and adolescents in Brazil;
- protecting children and adolescents whose rights were being violated, who were at risk, or who were victims of child labour or various forms of violence;
- helping to provide access to education, health, culture, recreation, vocational training and digital inclusion.

Over the past 22 years, Fundação Abrinq - Save the Children had helped 7 078 844 children and adolescents in Brazil. The Fundação Abrinq project 'Criança com todos os seus direitos' received European Union funding. This project aimed to reach 50 400 children from birth up to the age of five years living in poverty and exclusion in north-eastern Brazil and the Altiplano region of Peru.

3.4. Visit to FUNASE

Care for personally and socially vulnerable children and adolescents in Pernambuco State has its roots in the Children's Social Service. The 'Fundação de Atendimento Socioeducativo' (FUNASE – Foundation for Social and Educational Residential Care) was set up in December 2008 with the aim of building on the progress made in state legislation and helping to offer active citizenship for adolescents who have come into conflict with the law. It seeks to promote a policy at state level to provide residential care for adolescents who are involved in and/or have committed offences leading to restrictions on liberty and deprivation of liberty, and to guarantee their fundamental rights through activities coordinated with other public institutions and organised civil society, as provided for in the Statute on the Child and Adolescent.

The DMER WG ended its trip to Pernambuco state with a visit to one of the eight residential centres run by FUNASE in the state: the social and educational residential centre (CASE) for boys from the age of 12 up to their 15th birthday, located in Jaboatão dos Guararapes.

IV MAIN CONCLUSIONS

EU-Brazil bilateral relations and negotiations on the EU-Mercosur AA dominated the agenda for the cordial meetings which the DMER WG held with its Brazilian counterparts. With regard to bilateral relations, the focus was on the significance of the Strategic Partnership as an instrument for bringing together two influential actors in the multipolar world, that had a common historical and cultural background and shared the same principles and values.

At the meetings, the WG members stressed the need to move ahead with negotiations on the AA, in order to reach a balanced and far-reaching agreement respecting the principle of reciprocity, as recommended by the January 2013 EU-ECLAC summit in Santiago de Chile, which proposed that the exchange of offers be made at the end of 2013. The EU is well aware of the political and economic importance of Brazil, a leading player on the world stage, and of Mercosur and its Member States, as well as its own position in the global context. With this in mind, the EU considers Brazil's 'leadership' within the bloc to be crucially important.

In a globalised world, it has become more necessary than ever for the various regional groups to build bi-regional alliances with which they can successfully meet the challenges facing their peoples. It should also be recalled that the EU has launched negotiations towards signing a free trade and investment agreement not only with the United States, but also with Canada, Japan, Singapore and other countries. It would be a pity if the EU were to complete association agreements with the whole American continent except Mercosur, particularly as such an agreement would be of benefit to both sides.

The WG members appreciated the fact that Brazil has already drawn up its proposal for the exchange of offers within the context of the Association Agreement negotiations. The European proposal will soon be unveiled. The WG welcomes the Brazilian authorities' positive attitude towards the AA and sees it as an encouraging sign of imminent consensus.

The WG is grateful for the excellent cooperation and help provided by the Brazilian Embassy in Brussels and the EU Delegation in Brasilia. The WG members also express their thanks for the magnificent welcome they received from the Brazilian authorities in both Brasilia and Pernambuco, which contributed enormously to the success of the visit.



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Delegation for relations with the Mercosur countries

Visit of a Working Group to Brazil from 27 to 31 October 2013

Programme – Brasilia/Recife

final version

Sunday, 27 October 2013

Brasília

Arrival of the EP Delegation at Juscelino Kubitschek International Airport, Brasilia and transfer to

Hotel Meliá Brasil 21

*SHS Quadra 6 - Bl. B, D e F- Asa Sul
70.316-000, Brasilia
Tel.: (55) 61 3218 4700
Fax: (55) 61 3218-4705*

Monday, 28 October 2013

Brasília

8.45 Transfer from the Meliá Brasil 21 Hotel to the EU Delegation

9.00-10.00 Meeting with the **Head of the EU Delegation** and **Ambassadors of Member countries**

Place: EU Delegation
*SHIS QI 07 Bloco A - Lago Sul – Brasilia
71615-205 - Brazil
Telephone: +55 (61) 2104 3122*

10.00-11.00 Meeting with representatives from University

Place: EU Delegation
SHIS QI 07 Bloco A - Lago Sul – Brasília
71615-205 - Brazil
Telephone: +55 (61) 2104 3122

11.00-12.00 Meeting with Representatives of civil society

Place: EU Delegation
SHIS QI 07 Bloco A - Lago Sul – Brasília
71615-205 - Brazil
Telephone: +55 (61) 2104 3122

12.15-12.45 Visit of the exhibition: "Serra da Capivara: Brazilians over 50,000 Years"

Place: Espaço Israel Pinheiro
Praça dos Três Poderes

13.00-15.00 Lunch

**National Confederation of Industry - Brazil) (CNI) and APEX-Brasil
(Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency)**

Restaurante Aquinos - CNI Building S1
Unidade de Comércio Exterior - COMEX
SBN Quadra 01, Bloco C, 12º andar
70.040-903 - Brasília/DF - Brasil
Tel. (+55 61) 3317-8854

15.30-17.00 Interview of the chairman of the working group with the International Press

Place: EU Delegation
SHIS QI 07 Bloco A - Lago Sul – Brasília
71615-205 - Brazil
Telephone: +55 (61) 2104 3122

18.00-19.00 Back to the hotel Meliá

19.00 Reception at the Embassy of the Czech Republic on the occasion of the National Day

Place: Avenida das Nações
SES 805 Lote 21A Via L3 Sul, Asa Sul
70200-901 - Brasília - DF Brazil
(+55) 61 3242 7785 (+55) 61 3242 7905
+55 61 3248 2053

- 09.45** Meeting with **H.E. Ambassador Carlos Antonio Paranhos**, Deputy Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Foreign Ministry
- Place: Palácio Itamaraty
Esplanada dos Ministérios
Bloco H -Brasília/DF - Brasil - CEP 70.170-900
Phone: +55 61 2030-8721
- 10.45** Meeting with **H.E. Ambassador Rubens Gama**, Secretary of International Relations, Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade (MDIC)
- Place: Esplanada dos Ministérios Bloco J
Brasília - DF, 70053-900, Brazil
Phone: +55 61 2027-7000
- 12.00** Working lunch chaired by **H.E Deputy Sebastião Bala Rocha**, President of the Parliamentary Friendship Group Brazil-European Union
- Place: Palácio do Congresso Nacional
Praça dos Três Poderes - Brasília - DF - CEP 70160-900
Phone: +55 (61) 3216-0000
- 14.00** Meeting with **H.E. Senator Ana Amelia Lemos** and other members of the Parliamentarian **Committee for External Relations and National Security of the Federal Senate** (Plenary hall of the Senate)
- Place: Palácio do Congresso Nacional
Praça dos Três Poderes - Brasília - DF - CEP 70160-900
Phone: +55 (61) 3216-0000
- 15.00** Meeting with **Mr Nelson Pellegrino**, Chairman of the Parliamentarian **Committee for External Relations and National Security of the Chamber of Deputies**
- Place: Palácio do Congresso Nacional
Praça dos Três Poderes - Brasília - DF - CEP 70160-900
Phone: +55 (61) 3216-0000
- 18.00** Meeting with Representative from the International Press
- 19.00** Transport to the airport
- 20.53-22.23** Flight JJ3546 to Recife and transfer to
- Hotel Atlante Plaza**
Avenida Boa Viagem, 5426
Boa Viagem, Recife, CEP 51030-000
Phone: +55 81 3302-3333

- 8.30** Transfer from the hotel to **Ipojuca**
(60 km South of Recife)
- 10.00** **Visit of SUAPE Port**
*Av. Portuária, s/n, Rod PE 60, KM 10, Engenho Massangana,
Ipojuca - PE, 55590-000*
- 12.30** Back to the hotel Atlante Plaza
- 12.45** Lunch / Recife
- 14.30-16.00** Meeting with **Mr Gustavo Couto**, Executive Secretary of the International Department at Recife City Council, and **Mr Rodolfo Ramires**, Executive Secretary for International Relations in Pernambuco State
- 17.00** Centro de Artesanato de Olinda (**Social Project**)
- 18.30** Meeting with press – **Jornal de Comercio**
Place: Hotel Atlante Plaza

09.30 Foundation Abrinq - Save the Children

*Escritório Pernambuco:
Rua Ernesto Paula Santos, 1260, - 4º andar
Boa Viagem 51021-330
Recife - PE 55 81 3033-1282*

11.00 Meeting with Mr Guilherme Uchoa, President of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Pernambuco (tbc)

*Rua da União, 439, Boa Vista,
Recife, Pernambuco,
Brasil, CEP: 50050-010*

15.00 Funase (Foundation for the protection of youth)

*Av. Rosa e Silva, 773, Aflitos, Recife, PE, CEP: 52020-220
Phone: +55 (81) 3184.5416*

Afternoon/
evening Transfer to airport and return to Europe



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Delegation for relations with the Mercosur countries

**Visit of a Working Group to Brazil
28 -31 October 2013
Participants' List**



Jean-Pierre **AUDY**
President of the Delegation
PPE - France



Petru Constantin **Luhan**
PPE -Romania



Edite **Estrela**
S&D - Portugal



Wolfgang **Kreissl-Dörfler**
S&D - Germany



George Sabin **Cutaş**
S&D - Romania



Liam Aylward
ALDE - Ireland

EP Secretariat:

Mr Pedro NEVES (Administrator)

Ms Anneli KÖNIG (Administrative assistant)

Interpreters:

Mr Pascal PIGNOT

Mr Garry MULLENDER

Ms Tereza SAYEG

Ms Margarida ALVIM

French booth (team leader)

English booth

Portuguese booth

Portuguese booth

Abbreviation for Political Groups:

PPE: Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)

S&D: Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament

ALDE: Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe



Press Release

Visit of a Working Group to Brazil from 27 to 31 October 2013: prospects for an EU-Mercosur Association Agreement

A Working Group of the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with the Mercosur countries (DMER), chaired by the Delegation's second Vice-Chair Jean-Pierre Audy (Group of the European People's Party (EPP), France), made an official visit to Brazil from 28 to 31 October 2013. The main aim of the visit was to assess the outlook for the future EU-Mercosur Association Agreement.

The Working Group, which included members of different political groups and nationalities, comprised DMER's second Vice-Chair, Jean-Pierre Audy (EPP, France), in the absence of the DMER Chair, Luis Yañez García-Barnuevo; Petru Constantin Luhan (EPP, Romania); Edite Estrela (Socialist Group (S&D), Portugal); Wolfgang Kreissl-Dörfler (S&D, Germany); George Sabin Cutaş (S&D, Romania), INTA standing rapporteur for Mercosur; and Liam Aylward (Liberal Group (ALDE), Ireland).

The delegation followed with great interest the progress of negotiations on the future EU-Mercosur Association Agreement, which was the main topic discussed at the various meetings, along with the evolution of the EU-Brazil Strategic Partnership.

During the visit, members met with representatives of the Brazilian Government and Congress. At government level, meetings were held with Ambassador Carlos António Paranhos, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs at the Foreign Ministry, and with Rubens Gama, Secretary for International Affairs at the Ministry of Industry and Foreign Trade (MDIC).

The DMER Working Group went on to meet the following members of the Brazilian Congress: Sebastião Bala Rocha, Chair of the parliamentary EU-Brazil Friendship Group, Ana Amélia Lemos (member of the Senate's Committee on Foreign Affairs and National Defence) and Nelson Pellegrino, Chair of the Chamber of Deputies' Committee on Foreign Affairs and National Defence. The Working Group's visit to the Brazilian Congress coincided with the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Brazilian constitution. Delegation members were also able to briefly meet with former Brazilian President Luíz Inácio Lula da Silva.

While still in Brasilia, the working group met with representatives of civil society and the academic world, and the ambassadors of the EU Member States represented in Brasilia. The DMER Working Group attended a working breakfast hosted by Carlos Abijaodi, operations director of the Brazilian National Confederation of Industry (CNI), who expressed his full support for the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement.

On 30-31 October 2013, the Working Group visited the State of Pernambuco and the city of Recife, where it met with Gustavo Couto, executive secretary of the city council's international department and Rodolfo Ramirez, Secretary for international relations for the Pernambuco State Government. Since the Governor of the State of Pernambuco was absent at the time, it was arranged that he would hold a telephone conversation with the Chair of the Working Group as soon as possible.

At parliamentary level, the Working Group met with Guilherme Uchoa, President of the Bureau of the Pernambuco State Legislative Assembly. Finally, delegation members visited the port facilities and the SUAPE petrochemical complex, the Abrinq Foundation (an EU-funded child protection project), the Foundation for the Social Protection of Minors (FUNASE) and Olinda Craft Centre.

At the meetings, Members stressed the need to move ahead with negotiations on the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement, in order to reach a balanced and far-reaching agreement respecting the principle of reciprocity, as recommended by the January 2013 EU-ECLAC summit in Santiago de Chile, which proposed that the exchange of offers be made at the end of 2013. The EU is well aware of the political and economic importance of Brazil, in particular, and Mercosur and its Member States in general, as well as its own position in the global context. With this in mind, it considers Brazil's leadership within the bloc to be crucially important.

In a globalised world, it has become more necessary than ever for the various regional groups to build bi-regional alliances with which to successfully meet the challenges facing their peoples. It should also be recalled that the EU has launched negotiations towards signing a free trade and investment agreement not only with the United States, but also with Canada, Japan, Singapore and other countries. It would be a pity if the EU were to complete free trade agreements with the whole American continent except Mercosur, particularly as such an agreement would be of benefit to both sides.

The delegation members appreciated the fact that Brazil has already drawn up its proposal for the exchange of offers within the context of the Association Agreement negotiations. The European proposal will soon be unveiled. The Working Group welcomes the Brazilian authorities' positive attitude towards the Association Agreement and sees it as an encouraging sign of imminent consensus.

"Não devemos perder a ocasião"

Autor(es): Silvio Queiroz

Correio Braziliense - 02/11/2013

Os europeus não dizem explicitamente, mas deixam entrever que o escândalo da espionagem americana contra cidadãos e governantes do continente pode dar o empurrão que faltava para um acordo de livre comércio entre a União Europeia (UE) e o Mercosul. As primeiras notícias sobre os grampos da Agência de Segurança Nacional (NSA) dos EUA coincidiram com a abertura formal de negociações entre europeus e americanos, um momento no qual o bloco sul-americano parecia jogado para escanteio no tabuleiro mundial. Na semana passada, porém, a revelação de que até o celular da chanceler alemã, Angela Merkel, foi alvo de escuta cobriu com uma nuvem de desconfiança as relações entre os parceiros do Atlântico Norte.

"Não se pode tratar com um governo quando não se tem confiança mútua, quando se é espionado no nível de chefes de Estado", disse ao Correio o francês Jean-Pierre Audy, vice-presidente da delegação do Parlamento Europeu encarregada das relações com o Mercosul. No início desta semana, ele encabeçou uma missão de euro deputados que veio ao Brasil sondar as perspectivas para um avanço em dezembro, quando os dois blocos devem trocar ofertas para um acordo de associação.

A seguir, leia os principais trechos da entrevista.

As negociações como Mercosul finalmente vão deslançar, depois de tantos anos de paralisação?

Eu não diria que houve paralisação. Houve etapas de negociação, e entre elas houve eleições — no Brasil, na Argentina, em países da Europa. Nossa convicção, como delegação, é de que existe um destino comum para a Europa e a América Latina, e, dentro dela, o Mercosul se estrutura. A UE está mais estruturada que o Mercosul, mas não chega a ser um Estado federativo, como é o Brasil. Eu diria que o que houve foi uma aceleração dos tratados bilaterais nos quais a UE está envolvida.

Recebemos um mandato para negociar com o Canada e os Estados Unidos, que, por sua vez, negociam uma parceria transpacífico com o México e com os países asiáticos. E o Brasil não deve ficar isolado. Com o Mercosul — e com o Brasil,

que é o principal integrante do bloco, ao lado da Argentina — o que nós sugerimos é manter o diálogo e dizer que, no interesse dos nossos povos, das economias, do social, não devemos perder a ocasião. Sem precipitação, devemos evitar a qualquer preço um segundo fracasso — isso poderia ser fatal para as relações entre as nossas regiões.

O mal-estar causado com os EUA pelo escândalo da espionagem pode ter um papel nesse processo?

Nós, como a presidente Dilma Rousseff, ficamos muito incomodados. Não se pode tratar com um governo quando não se tem confiança. Não é admissível ser espionado no nível de chefes de Estado. Esse é um elemento de desconfiança que precisa ser esclarecido. Foi o que exigiram tanto os dirigentes da UE quanto a presidente. Dito isso, os líderes europeus solicitaram aos responsáveis americanos que seja firmado um acordo definindo um código de conduta sobre esse assunto. É necessário que a espionagem cesse imediatamente. Mas não é por isso que se deve paralisar tudo na economia — ela nos une, a política é que nos divide. Nós somos sensíveis aos argumentos do Brasil, mas não achamos que seja o caso de bloquear totalmente as negociações: o povo americano não é responsável pela espionagem.

No ano que vem, teremos a eleição presidencial no Brasil, em outubro, e já em maio a eleição do Parlamento Europeu. É esta a janela de oportunidade?

As negociações UE-Mercosul estão muito avançadas, estamos perto de trocar as ofertas para um acordo. A conclusão das negociações precede a redação de um tratado, que algo como ir ao tabelião. Caberá aos negociadores dos dois lados dizer se as ofertas que serão trocadas estão muito distanciadas. Caso contrário, o processo poderá ser concluído antes das eleições europeias. Mas, antes de me pronunciar, prefiro examinar as propostas e avaliar o quanto elas se distanciam. Isso é o que determinará o tempo necessário para concluir as negociações. O que eu posso dizer, com certeza, é que a nossa delegação prefere que se evite de, em nome de alguma precipitação, arriscar um fracasso. Todos os grupos políticos representados no Parlamento Europeu devem examinar as propostas, provavelmente em janeiro. Sabemos que o calendário é apertado e, embora eu mesmo tenha dito que o ritmo dos acordos comerciais bilaterais está se acelerando, queremos evitar a todo custo uma precipitação e, com isso, o fracasso desse processo.



Nota de Imprensa

Visita de deputados europeus ao Brasil: perspectivas para o Acordo de Associação União Europeia-Mercosul

Brasília, 25 de outubro de 2013

Um grupo de trabalho da Delegação do Parlamento Europeu para as relações com os países do Mercosul, chefiada pelo seu Vice-Presidente, Jean-Pierre AUDY (Partido Popular Europeu (PPE, França), realizará de 28 a 31 de outubro de 2013 uma visita oficial ao Brasil. Esta visita terá como principal objetivo analisar as perspectivas do futuro acordo de Associação União Europeia-Mercosul, atualmente em discussão.

A delegação do Parlamento Europeu, formada por deputados europeus de diferentes grupos políticos e nacionalidades, membros da Delegação do Parlamento Europeu para as Relações com os Países do Mercosul, está composta pelo Vice-Presidente, Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE), Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE, Romênia), Edite Estrela (Grupo Socialista - S&D, Portugal), Wolfgang Kreissl-Dörfler (S&D, Alemanha), George Sabin Cutas (S&D, Romênia) e Liam Aylward (Grupo Liberal - ALDE, Irlanda).

A Delegação tem seguido com grande interesse a evolução das negociações relativas ao futuro acordo de associação União Europeia-Mercosul. Assim, este tema juntamente com o desenvolvimento da Parceria Estratégica Brasil-União Europeia serão os assuntos dominantes dos encontros.

Durante a visita ao Brasil, os deputados europeus vão se reunir com representantes do Executivo e do Legislativo brasileiros. No Executivo estão previstos encontros com os Embaixadores Carlos Antonio Paranhos, Subsecretário-Geral de Assuntos Políticos do Ministério das Relações Exteriores e Rubens Gama, Secretário de Assuntos Internacionais do Ministério de Desenvolvimento, Indústria e Comércio Exterior (MDIC).

O grupo de trabalho da Delegação do Parlamento Europeu terá encontros com os deputados Nelson Pellegrino, Presidente da Comissão de Relações Exteriores e de Defesa Nacional da Câmara de Deputados, Sebastião Bala Rocha, Presidente do Grupo Parlamentar de Amizade Brasil-União

Europeia, Newton Lima, Presidente da Delegação Brasileira no Parlamento do Mercosul (Parlasur) e membros da Comissão de Relações Exteriores e de Defesa Nacional do Senado. Em Brasília, os deputados europeus terão igualmente reuniões com representantes da sociedade civil e do mundo acadêmico.

A delegação do Parlamento Europeu visitará também o estado de Pernambuco e na cidade do Recife deverá encontrar-se com o Governador Eduardo Campos, o Prefeito Geraldo Júlio e Guilherme Uchoa, Presidente da Mesa Diretiva da Assembleia Legislativa do Estado de Pernambuco. Finalmente, os deputados europeus visitarão o complexo Portuário Industrial de SUAPE, bem como a Petroquímica, a Fundação Abrinq, Fundação de Atendimento Socioeducativo (Funase) e o Centro de Artesanato de Olinda.

Durante os encontros, os deputados europeus insistirão na necessidade de concluir com êxito as negociações com vista ao acordo de associação União Europeia-Mercosul. A União Europeia está consciente da importância política e econômica crescente do Brasil no contexto mundial. Nesse sentido, a UE considera primordial o referido acordo com o Mercosul dada a liderança do Brasil no bloco. Num mundo dominado pela globalização é mais do que nunca necessário que os distintos grupos regionais constituam alianças birregionais que permitirão enfrentar com êxito os desafios que aquela implica.

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