



Delegation for relations with the Mercosur countries

DMER_PV(2010)0503_1**MINUTES**

of the meeting of 3 May 2010, from 16.30 to 18.00
Brussels

The meeting opened at 16.30 on Monday, 3 May 2010, with Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García (Chair) in the chair.

1. Adoption of the draft agenda (PE 432.076v02-00)

The draft agenda was adopted.

2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 1 February 2010 (PE 432.062v01-00)

The minutes were approved.

3. Chair's announcements

The Chair informed Members that on 24 February 2010 he had held a meeting with a delegation from Argentina's Federal Audiovisual Communication Services Authority, led by its chairman, Juan Gabriel Mariotto. The meeting was organised at the request of representatives of the authority. Argentina's Ambassador to the EU, H.E. Mr Jorge Remes Lenicov, was also present. The key new elements of Argentina's recent law on audiovisual communication services were presented to the meeting.

The Chair informed Members that he had been invited by Vital Moreira, Chair of Parliament's Committee on International Trade, to join an INTA Committee delegation visit to Brazil from 7 to 9 April 2010. During the visit, meetings had been held with representatives of the Brazilian Government and Parliament, with talks focusing on bilateral EU-Brazil trade relations, and the prospects for reopening the negotiations on the WTO Doha Round and on the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement.

Lastly, the Chair informed Members that on 13 April 2010 he had held a meeting with

Mr Manuel María Cáceres, the Deputy Foreign Minister of Paraguay. The main topic for discussion during the meeting had been the prospects for reopening the negotiations on the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement.

4. Prospects for reopening negotiations on the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement following the exploratory meetings on 18-19 March 2010 in Buenos Aires and 26-27 April 2010 in Brussels

Exchange of views with:

- **Argentina's Ambassador to the European Union, H.E. Mr Jorge Remes Lenicov, on behalf of Argentina's pro tempore Mercosur Presidency**
- **the Deputy Director-General of DG TRADE at the Commission, Mr João Aguiar Machado**

Ambassador Remes Lenicov outlined Mercosur's new offer, involving an increase in trade coverage from 77% to 90% with the inclusion of the automotive and parts industries, as well as bringing more flexibility with regard to services and government procurement. He emphasised that although Mercosur had become more competitive with regard to agricultural products, the Agreement still posed a major economic risk for the region.

The Ambassador concluded by pointing out that, in the light of the recent exploratory technical meetings, Mercosur was prepared to officially reopen negotiations on the Association Agreement at the forthcoming Madrid Summit.

Mr Aguiar Machado, Deputy Director-General at DG TRADE at the Commission, emphasised that the trade-related aspects of the negotiations on the Agreement were very complicated and should not be treated as a mere trade-off between industrial and agricultural products, particularly as other very important issues were also at stake (services, government procurement, investment, intellectual property, etc.).

Mr Aguiar Machado added that Mercosur's offer of 90% trade coverage had to be seen as a starting point, as it would not be possible for the trade chapter of the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement to be less ambitious than the free-trade agreements already concluded by the EU.

He also stressed that, bearing in mind past developments in the negotiations, the EU would only reopen them if it looked highly likely that an Association Agreement could actually be concluded, as another dispute would be politically disastrous.

Mr Aguiar Machado concluded by informing Members that the following day (4 May) the College of Commissioners would be discussing the relaunch of the negotiations on the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement.

The guests and Members then held an exchange of views.

The following spoke: Silvia-Adriana Țicău, Ilda Figueiredo, Emilio Menéndez del Valle and the Chair.

5. Preparations for a working party visit to Brazil and Argentina (24-28 May 2010)

Then Chair outlined the draft programme for the working party visit and the list of participants.

He emphasised that because the visit included both Brazil and Argentina, it had been proposed that its activities should be centred around the respective capital cities, with a focus on politics in meetings with top-level representatives of the governments and parliaments of both countries.

The following spoke: Ilda Figueiredo and the Chair.

6. Other business

None.

7. Date and place of next meeting

The next meeting would take place on Monday, 13 September 2010, from 16.30 to 18.00, in Brussels.

The meeting closed at 18.00.