



**Asamblea Parlamentaria Euro-Latinoamericana
Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée Parlementaire Euro-Latino Américaine
Assembleia Parlamentar Euro-Latino-Americana**



European Parliament Delegation for relations with the Mercosur countries

Members of Parlasur participating in the EuroLat Asseebly and theParlatino meetings

MINUTES

Extraordinary joint meeting
Friday 30 October 2009, 15.00 to 17.00
Panama City, Panama

The meeting was held in parallel with the meetings of the standing committees of the EuroLat Assembly which took place in Panama City on 29 and 30 October 2009. It opened at 15.00 on Friday, 30 October 2009, and was jointly chaired by Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García, chair of the EP Delegation for relations with the Mercosur countries, and Juan José Domínguez (Uruguay), the President of Parlasur.

1. Adoption of draft agenda

The draft agenda was adopted, with the addition, on the request of Mr Domínguez, of a new item on the current situation of the EU.

2. Current situation of the European Union

Mr Yáñez-Barnuevo outlined the current political situation in the EU and the prospects for its evolution in the near future. He mentioned aspects including the results of the elections to the EP, the impact of the international financial crisis on the Union, the events leading to the abandonment of the constitutional treaty and the signature of the Treaty of Lisbon, and the current applications for membership. He also stressed the EU's interest in closer relations with Latin America, in the context of the shared historical and cultural heritage and of shared democratic values and interests (e.g. on climate change and energy issues).

3. Current state of integration of Mercosur and other continental integration processes (especially Unasul)

Mr Yáñez-Barnuevo said that Venezuela's accession to Mercosur had been approved the previous day by the Committee on External Relations of the Brazilian Senate.

Mr Domínguez said that the candidate of his own party (the Frente Amplio) for the forthcoming presidential elections in Uruguay, José Mujica, had proposed the political deepening of Mercosur, while the opposing candidate, Luis Lacalle, believed the bloc should be purely economically oriented and had promised that, should he be elected, Uruguay would leave Parlasur.

Mr Domínguez added that Parlasur is an institution under construction, with issues still under debate including the introduction of a limited form of proportional representation of member states and the direct election of their representatives. His government was in favour of directly electing Uruguay's representatives, but it lacked the parliamentary majority needed to adopt a law on the matter.

On the issue of Mercosur's institutional components, Mr Domínguez favoured the creation of a permanent court of justice and the establishment of Structural Convergence Funds to offset the economic asymmetries between the bloc's member states.

Mariano West (Parlasur, Argentina) applauded the EP's position on prioritising relations between regional blocs and on recognising the role of the regional integration parliaments in this context. He also expressed his support for Venezuela's accession to Mercosur.

Ángel Barchini (Parlasur, Paraguay), Vice-President of the EuroLat Assembly, said he supported creating a permanent Mercosur court of justice, limited proportional representation in Parlasur and the direct election of its members (this was already the case in Paraguay).

Carlos Baraibar (Parlatino, Uruguay) said that the initial conception of Mercosur had been purely trade-oriented, and that Luis Lacalle, now a presidential candidate, had been President of Uruguay at the time.

Emilio Menéndez del Valle (PE) stressed that the EU had always supported Latin American integration: if Latin America appeared to have lost importance for Europe, this was owing to the EU's enlargement to take in central and eastern Europe and also to a degree of fatigue in Europe arising from the perception of a certain impasse in Latin America integration.

Mr Domínguez spoke on Unasul, seeing it as the outcome of an initiative of a number of South American governments aimed at pacifying the tense relations existing between some of the region's countries, notably Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela.

4. The negotiations for an EU-Mercosur Association Agreement

Mr Yáñez-Barnuevo introduced the subject, announcing that on 5 November contacts would be held in Lisbon between the negotiators on both sides, with a view to the relaunch of the negotiations on the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement.

Ilda Figueiredo (EP) said that a number of social organisations had expressed reservations over the content of the Association Agreement. If there were difficulties related to the commercial negotiations between the blocs, other forms of cooperation should be sought on the political, social and cultural levels.

Luís Capoulas Santos said that European integration had been launched with the economy as its motor: the construction of Europe had been a slow, cautious and step-by-step affair. Latin America integration was starting out with a facilitating factor in the form of the region's shared linguistic and cultural heritage.

Mr Capoulas Santos also expressed the conviction that the lack of prospects for a short-term agreement in the WTO represented an opportunity for the relaunch of the negotiations for an EU-Mercosur Association Agreement.

Adolfo Rodríguez Saá (Parlasur, Argentina) stressed the need to include the migration issue in the Mercosur-EU dialogue.

5. Planning - parliamentary meetings between the EP and Parlasur and the EP and the national parliaments of the Mercosur countries in 2010

Mr Yáñez-Barnuevo said that his delegation was planning two visits for the next year, to Brazil and Uruguay respectively. The latter would include meetings with Parlasur. A visit to Brussels was expected in the coming weeks from the Paraguayan delegation to Parlasur, in order to discuss institutional matters.

The meeting closed at 17.00.

LISTA DE ASISTENCIA / RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / LISTE DE PRÉSENCE / LISTA DE PRESENCAS

Miembros EuroLat / EuroLat Members / Membres EuroLat / Membros EuroLat	
<u>PARLASUR:</u>	Juan José Domínguez (Presidente, Uruguay), Ángel Ramón Barchini (Vice-Presidente EuroLat, Paraguay), Mariano West (Argentina), Adolfo Rodríguez Saá (Argentina), Ramón Domínguez Santacruz (Paraguay), Mercedes González Villalba (Paraguay), Isabel Viudes (Argentina), Fabio Biancalani (Argentina)
<u>PARLATINO:</u>	Carlos Baraibar (Uruguay), Sonia Escudero (Argentina)
<u>PARLAMENTO EUROPEO:</u>	Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García (Presidente), Catherine Grèze, Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou, Luís Manuel Capoulas Santos, Ilda Figueiredo, António Correia de Campos, Emilio Menéndez del Valle, Vladko Todorov Panayotov

Secretaría de los Parlamentos Latinoamericanos / Latin-American Parliaments Secretariat	
Parlasur	Gustavo Arrighi, Agustina Rodriguez Saá

Secretariado del Parlamento Europeo / European Parliament Secretariat	
Co-Secretariado EuroLat	Pedro Valente da Silva
DG Políticas Externas	Pedro Neves
Asistente	Francisco Cabral

Secretaría de los Grupos Políticos del PE / EP Political Groups Secretariat	
PPE	Piero Rizza
S&D	José Antonio Gil de Muro
ALDE	Jean-Pierre Trauffler
Verts/ALE	
ECR	
GUE/NGL	Mireia Rovira
EFD	
NI	

Otros participantes / Other participants	
Comisión Europea	
Consejo de la UE	
Parlamento Europeo	
Cuerpo Diplomático	
Otros	Isabel Recavarren (CEFIAL)