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*Delegation for relations with Mercosur*

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**DMER\_PV(2017)3003**

**MINUTES**  
of the meeting of 30 March 2017, 11.00-12.30  
Brussels

The meeting opened at 11.05 on Thursday, 30 March 2017, with Francisco Assis (Chair) presiding.

**1. Adoption of draft agenda (PE 585.201v02\_00)**

The draft agenda was adopted.

**2. Chair's announcements**

The Chair announced that Rolf **Linkohr**, a former Socialist MEP, had died on 5 January 2017.

Mr Linkohr had represented Germany in Parliament for five terms (1979-2004) and, among other offices held, had headed the Delegation for relations with the countries of South America and Mercosur.

The members paid tribute to him by observing a minute's silence.

The Chair said that a report on the visit to Argentina in November 2016 could be found in the papers for the meeting. Also included were two communiqués from the Paraguayan Ministry of Foreign Relations concerning Venezuela (according to the first, issued on 2 December 2016, Venezuela had been notified that it had been suspended from Mercosur and could therefore no longer exercise the rights attaching to membership; the second, issued on 16 December 2016, had listed the Mercosur instruments already ratified and deposited by Venezuela).

### **3. Report on the visit to Argentina (31 October –3 November 2016)**

The Chair, Francisco **Assis**, said that a six-member group from the Delegation for relations with Mercosur (DMER) had visited Argentina (Buenos Aires and San Luis) from 31 October to 3 November 2016.

The group had been headed by the **DMER Chair** and also comprised the delegation Vice-Chair, Xabier **Benito Ziluaga** (GUE/NGL, Spain), and Lambert **van Nistelrooij** (PPE, Netherlands), Clara Eugenia **Aguilera García** (S&D, Spain), Ashley **Fox** (ECR, United Kingdom), and António **Marinho e Pinto** (ALDE, Portugal).

In the opinion of the participants, the DMER visit to Buenos Aires and San Luis had been very well timed and productive, coming as it had a year after President Mauricio Macri had taken office, a few weeks after the EU-Mercosur negotiating round, and just when Argentina had been preparing to take over WTO and G-20 rotating presidencies.

Out of all their activities during the visit (meetings with the Government, Congress members, etc.), what the participants had found particularly satisfying was the time spent in San Luis, which had enabled them to gain a first-hand insight into sectors and products (biodiesel, bioethanol, meat, etc.) that were central to the ongoing negotiations on the future EU-Mercosur association agreement.

### **4. State of play in EU-Mercosur relations**

Exchange of views with Matthias Jørgensen, Head of Unit, Latin America, DG Trade, Commission, and Adrianus Koetsenruijter, Head of Division, South America, European External Action Service

Mr **Jørgensen** welcomed the fact that the EU-Mercosur negotiations had been progressing well since the Buenos Aires round, the 26th round of talks, which was generally considered to have been a success. The subjects covered had included technical barriers to trade, rules of origin, customs checks, sanitary and phytosanitary inspections, subsidies and grants, sustainable development, environmental protection, and SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises).

The outcome of this negotiating round, which, as already mentioned, had been very satisfactory, had been helped by the excellent preparations by the Argentine hosts; and the Mercosur countries had shown a clear willingness to negotiate. For all the above reasons, the negotiations had achieved their aim of producing agreements in many areas, and the discussions had been virtually completed on some points, for example sanitary and phytosanitary inspections. These steps forward would all help to maintain continuity and the momentum at the next round of negotiations, due to take place in Brussels in July.

The Commission was determined to make the negotiating process as transparent as possible and would therefore publish a report on every topic being discussed. The proposals initially put forward for negotiation would also be published, thus making it possible to check on developments.

The Commission was seeking to ensure that the negotiations could be considered concluded towards the end of the year, round about November. It would accordingly continue to work with the EP and was hoping for the EP's support at every stage of the negotiating process.

Replying to members' questions about health inspections of agri-food products, Mr Jørgensen gave an assurance that current and future imports would conform exactly to the requirements laid down in EU legislation. As far as PGIs (protected geographical indications) were concerned, EU legislation would likewise be complied with. Finally, he restated the Commission's view that it was vital for civil society to be involved in the negotiating process. Last year the Argentine hosts had organised public consultations with members of civil society in order to pinpoint their interests and priorities, and negotiators representing the two parties had held meetings with trade unions and other civil society stakeholders.

**Mr Koetsenruijter** appealed to all political leaders to make the negotiating process as transparent as possible, with the proviso that, given the nature of the negotiations, not everything could be dealt with in public. The Buenos Aires negotiating round had produced very good results, and all the discussion topics had been on the table.

Because the negotiations had been stalled for five years, the text agreed in 2012 would need to be updated, since the challenges, interests, and the general context had changed profoundly, as could be seen from the Paris Agreement on climate change and the examples of crime (organised or otherwise), cybercrime, migration, and environmental protection. It was thus essential to revise the 2012 text, although the Mercosur countries would, to that end, have to carry out their own consultations on the new negotiating chapters.

The scope of the negotiations had been widened considerably, encompassing as it now did not just trade, but also other necessary areas, including organised crime, emigration and immigration, and sustainable development: that was a point which had also been accepted by the Mercosur countries. As regards political dialogue and cooperation, it was hoped that a text could be agreed for the forthcoming July negotiations and the proceedings concluded by the end of the year.

**The following spoke:** Francisco Assis (S&D, Portugal), Clara Aguilera (S&D, Spain), Xabier Benito (GUE/NGL, Spain), Massimo Castaldo (EFDD, Italy), Fernando Ruas (PPE, Portugal), and Carlos Zorrinho (S&D, Portugal).

## **5. Exchange of views with the Brazilian Ambassador, HE Mr Everton Vargas, on the Brazilian meat issue**

The Ambassador said that the Brazilian police had on 17 March launched an operation called 'Carne Fraca' (Weak Flesh) in order to shed light on the accusations of fraud in the issue of health certificates for meat and of influence peddling by meat industry executives. In all there were 21 processing plants and 33 Agriculture Department officials implicated in the scandal.

The Brazilian Government had taken the following measures:

- All the plants under investigation were currently being audited, and samples were being taken for analysis by the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Out of the 21 plants being investigated, 3 had been closed.
- The 33 officials involved in the investigation had been suspended.

Only 4 out of the 21 plants under investigation had a licence to export meat to the EU. The Brazilian Government had suspended those licences, and there was no possibility that products from the plants concerned could have been exported to the EU.

Brazil was the leading supplier of agricultural products to the EU, and the relationship between the two sides was based on trust. The Brazilian Government and other authorities were therefore endeavouring both to establish the facts as quickly as possible and to avoid damage to the special relationship between Brazil and the EU. Although the problem was serious, as it involved a key sector of the Brazilian economy, its impact was confined to a handful of small-scale suppliers, and the Brazilian police and authorities were acting swiftly and decisively. There was thus no reason to fear that the public would be put at risk.

Lastly, the Ambassador pointed out that the present situation would in no way affect the negotiations on the EU-Mercosur Agreement.

**The following spoke:** Francisco Assis (S&D, Portugal), Clara Aguilera (S&D, Spain), Xabier Benito (GUE/NGL, Spain), and Fernando Ruas (PPE, Portugal).

## **6. Date and place of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Delegation for relations with Mercosur would be held on 22 June 2017, from 14.30 to 15.30, in Brussels.

The meeting closed at 12.35.

**ПРИСЪСТВЕН ЛИСТ/LISTA DE ASISTENCIA/PREZENČNÍ LISTINA/DELTAGERLISTE/  
 ANWESENHEITSLISTE/KOHALOLIJATE NIMEKIRI/ΚΑΤΑΣΤΑΣΗ ΠΑΡΟΝΤΩΝ/RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/  
 LISTE DE PRÉSENCE/POPIS NAZOČNIH/ELENCO DI PRESENZA/APMEKLĒJUMU REĢISTRS/DALVIU SĀRAŠS/  
 JELENLÉTI ÍV/REĢISTRU TA' ATTENDENZA/PRESENTIELIJST/LISTA OBECNOŚCI/LISTA DE PRESENÇAS/  
 LISTÁ DE PREZENTĀ/PREZENČNÁ LISTINA/SEZNAM NAVZOČIH/LÄSNÄOLOLISTA/DELTAGARLISTA**

Бюро/Меса/Председниство/Formandskabet/Vorstand/Juhatus/Προεδρείο/Bureau/Predsjedništvo/Ufficio di presidenza/Prezidijs/ Biuras/Elnökség/Prezydium/Birou/Predsednictvo/Predsedstvo/Puheenjohtajisto/Presidet (*)
Francisco Assis (P); Xabier Benito Ziluaga
Членове/Diputados/Poslanci/Medlemmer/Mitglieder/Parlamendiliikmed/Μέλη/Members/Députés/Zastupnici/Deputati/Deputāti/Nariai/ Képviselők/Membri/Leden/Posłowie/Deputados/Deputati/Jäsenet/Ledamöter
Clara Eugenia Aguilera García; Fabio Massimo Castaldo; Nicola Danti; Fernando Ruas
Заместници/Suplentes/Náhradníci/Stedfortrædere/Stellvertreter/Asendusliikmed/Αναπληρωτές/Substitutes/Suppléants/Zamjenici/ Supplenti/Aizstājēji/Pavaduojantysnariai/Póttagok/Sostituti/Plaatsvervangers/Zastępcy/Membros suplentes/Supleanți/Náhradníci/ Namestniki/Varajäsenet/Suppleanter
Javi López; Carlos Zorrinho Excuse : António Marinho e Pinto

200 (2)
Marco Zullo
206 (3)
53 (6) (Точка от дневния ред/Punto del orden del día/Bod pořadu jednání (OJ)/Punkt på dagsordenen/Tagesordnungspunkt/ Päevakorra punkt/Ημερήσια Διάταξη Σημείο/Agenda item/Point OJ/Točka dnevnog reda/Punto all'ordine del giorno/Darba kārtības punkts/Darbotvarkēs punktas/Napirendi pont/Punt Agenda/Agendapunt/Punkt porządku dziennego/Ponto OD/Punct de pe ordinea de zi/Bod programu schôdze/Točka UL/Eesityslistan kohta/Föredragningslista punkt)

Наблюдатели/Observadores/Pozorovatelé/Observatører/Beobachter/Vaatilejad/Παρατηρητές/Observers/Observateurs/Promatrači/Osservatori/Novērotāji/Stebētojai/Megfigyelők/Osservaturi/Waarnemers/Obserwatorzy/Observadores/Observatori/Pozorovatelja/Opozovalci/Tarkkailijat/Observatörer

S.E. Embajador Mario Verron Guerra (Argentina); S.E. Embajador Carlos Pérez del Castillo (Uruguay); Valeria Csukasi (Embajada Uruguay); Enrique Franco (Embajada Paraguay); Tatiana Gomes Bustamante (Embajada Brasil); Luciana Varela Farnesi (Embajada Brasil); José María Arbilla (Embajada Argentina); Adrian Daniel Serra (Embajada Argentina); Ramiro Veloso (Embajada Argentina); Orlando Rossi (Parlatino); Mario Resende (Misión Brasil); André Odenbrecht (Misión Brasil); Helena Massote (Misión Brasil); Henrique Choer Moraes (Misión Brasil); Enrique Campoverde (Embajada de Venezuela)

По покана на председателя/Por invitación del presidente/Na pozvání předsedy/Efter indbydelse fra formanden/Auf Einladung des Vorsitzenden/Esimehe kutsel/Mε πρόσκληση του Προέδρου/At the invitation of the Chair(wo)man/Sur l'invitation du président/  
Na poziv predsjednika/Su invito del presidente/Pēc priekšsēdētāja uzaicinājuma/Pírmininkui pakvietus/Az elnök meghívására/  
Fuq stedina tač-'Chairman'/Op uitnodiging van de voorzitter/Na zaproszenie Przewodniczącego/A convite do Presidente/La invitación  
președintelui/Na pozvanie predsedu/Na povabilo predsednika/Puheenjohtajan kutsusta/På ordförandens inbjudan

S.E. Everton Vargas, Embaixador do Brasil; Adrianus Koetsenruijter (EEAS); Matthias Jorgensen (DG Trade - EC)

Съвет/Consejo/Rada/Rådet/Rat/Nõukogu/Συμβούλιο/Council/Conseil/Vijeće/Consiglio/Padome/Taryba/Tanács/Kunsill/Raad/  
Conselho/Consiliu/Svet/Neuvosto/Rådet (\*)

Комисия/Comisión/Komise/Kommissionen/Kommision/Euroopa Komisjon/Επιτροπή/Commission/Komisija/Commissione/Bizottság/  
Kummissjoni/Commissie/Komisja/Comissão/Comisie/Komisia/Komissio/Kommissionen (\*)

Abraham Zachary

Европейска служба за външна дейност/Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior/Evropská služba pro vnější činnost/ EU-Udenrigstjenesten/Europäischer Auswärtiger Dienst/Europa välisteenistus/Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Εξωτερικής Δράσης/European External Action service/Service européen pour l'action extérieure/Europiska služba za vanjsko djelovanje/Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna/Eiropas Ārējās darbības dienests/Europos išorės veiksmų tarnyba/Európai Külügyi Szolgálat/Servizz Ewropew ghall-Azzjoni Esterna/Europeiske dienst voor extern optreden/Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych/Serviço Europeu para a Ação Externa/Serviciul european pentru acțiune externă/Európska služba pre vonkajšiu činnosť/Europska služba za zunanje delovanje/Euroopan ulkosuhdehallinto/Europeiska avdelningen för yttrre åtgärd (\*)

Maria Villota;

Други институции/Otras instituciones/Ostatní orgány a instituce/Andre institutioner/Andere Organe/Muud institutsioonid/Αλλα θεσμικά όργανα/Other institutions/Autres institutions/Druge instytucije/Altre istituzioni/Citas iestādes/Kitos institucijos/Más intézmények/Istituzzjonijiet oħra/Andere instellingen/Inne instytucje/Outras Instituições/Alte instituijii/Iné inštitúcie/Muut toimielimet/Andra institutioner/organ

Други участници/Otros participantes/Ostatní účastníci/Endvidere deltog/Andere Teilnehmer/Muud osalejad/Επίσης Παρόντες/Other participants/Autres participants/Drugi sudionici/Altri partecipanti/Citi klátesošie/Kiti dalyviai/Más résztvevők/Parteicipanti ohra/Andere aanwezigen/Inni uczestnicy/Outros participantes/Alți participanți/Iní účastníci/Drugi udeleženci/Muut osallistujat/Övriga deltagare

Секретариат на политическите групи/Secretaría de los Grupos políticos/Sekretariát politických skupin/Gruppernes sekretariat/Sekretariat der Fraktionen/Fraktsioonide sekretariaat/Γραμματεία των Πολιτικών Ομάδων/Secretariats of political groups/Secrétaire des groupes politiques/Tajništvo klubova zastupnika/Segreteria gruppi politici/Politisko grupu sekretariáts/Frakcijų sekretoriai/Képviselőcsoporthoz titkársága/Segretariat gruppi politici/Fractiesecretariaten/Sekretariat Grup Politycznych/Secr. dos grupos políticos/Secretariate grupuri politice/Sekretariát politických skupín/Sekretariat političnih skupin/Poliittisten ryhmien sihteeristöt/Gruppernas sekretariat	
PPE	Pier Rizza; Analia Glogowsky
S&D	Pilar Ruiz ; Podegorean Miron; Muniz de Urquiza
ECR	Machaj-Branca; Cepova Fourtoy; Ludovica Martinez;
ALDE	Dominike Kirch.
Verts/ALE	Gaby Küppers
GUE/NGL	Carlos Villota; Luis Miguel Moreno, Paul Duprez
EFDD	
ENF	Lopez Kujatic
NI	

Кабинет на председателя/Gabinete del Presidente/Kancelář předsedy/Formandens Kabinet/Kabinett des Präsidenten/Presidendi kantselei/Γραφείο Προέδρου/President's Office/Cabinet du Président/Ured predsjednika/Gabinetto del Presidente/Priekšsēdētāja kabinets/Pirmininko kabinetas/Elnöki hivatal/Kabinet tal-President/Kabinet van de Voorzitter/Gabinet Przewodniczącego/Gabinete do Presidente/Cabinet Președinte/Kancelária predsedu/Urad predsednika/Puhemiehen kabinetti/Talmannens kansli

Кабинет на генералния секретар/Gabinete del Secretario General/Kancelář generálního tajemníka/Generalsekretærens Kabinet/Kabinett des Generalsekretärs/Peasekretäribüro/Γραφείο Γενικού Γραμματέα/Secretary-General's Office/Cabinet du Secrétaire général/Ured glavnog tajnika/Gabinetto del Segretario generale/Generalsekretära kabinets/Generalinio sekretoriaus kabinetas/Főtitkári hivatal/Kabinet tas-Segretarju Ĝeneral/Kabinet van de secretaris-generaal/Gabinet Sekretarza Generalnego/Gabinete do Secretário-Geral/Cabinet Secretar General/Kancelária generálneho tajomníka/Urad generalnega sekretarja/Pääsihteerin kabinetti/Generalsekretärerens kansli

Генерална дирекция/Dirección General/Generální ředitelství/Generaldirektorat/Generaldirektion/Peadirektoraat/Γενική Διεύθυνση/ Directorate-General/Direction générale/Glavna uprava/Direzione generale/Generaldirektorāts/Generalinis direktoratas/Főigazgatóság/ Direktorat Generali/Directorate-general/Dyrekcja Generalna/Direcção-Geral/Direcții Generale/Generálne riaditeľstvo/Generalni direktorat/Pääsasto/Generaldirektorat	
DG PRES DG IPOL DG EXPO DG EPRS DG COMM DG PERS DG INLO DG TRAD DG INTE DG FINS DG ITEC DG SAFE	Flavia Bernardini; Susana Mendonça
Правна служба/Servicio Jurídico/Právní služba/Juridisk Tjeneste/Juristischer Dienst/Õigusteenistus/Νομική Υπηρεσία/Legal Service/ Service juridique/Pravna služba/Servizio giuridico/Juridiskais dienests/Teisė tarnyba/Jogi szolgálat/Servizz legali/Juridische Dienst/ Wydział prawny/Serviço Jurídico/Serviciu Juridic/Právny servis/Oikeudellinen yksikkö/Rättstjänsten	
Секретариат на комисията/Secretaría de la comisión/Sekretariát výboru/Udvalgssekretariatet/Ausschussekretariat/Komisjoni sekretariaat/Гραμματεία επιτροπής/Committee secretariat/Secrétaire de la commission/Tajništvo odbora/Segreteria della commissione/ Komitejas sekretariäts/Komiteto sekretoriatas/A bizottság titkársága/Segretarjat tal-kumitat/Commissie secretariaat/Sekretariat komisji/ Secretariado da comissão/Secretariat comisie/Sekretariat odbora/Valiokunnan sihteeristö/Utskottsssekretariatet	
Javier Fernandez, "Pedro Neves	
Сътрудник/Asistente/Asistent/Assistent/Assistenz/Βοηθός/Assistant/Assistente/Palīgs/Padējējas/Asszisztens/Asystent/Pomočník/ Avustaja/Assistenter	
Francisco Cabral	

- \* (P) = Председател/Presidente/Předseda/Formand/Vorsitzender/Esimees/Πρόεδρος/Chair(wo)man/Président/Predsjednik/Priekšsēdētājs/ Pirminkas/Elnök/'Chairman'/Voorzitter/Przewodniczący/Președinte/Predsednik/Puheenjohtaja/Ordförande
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- (M) = Член/Miembro/Clen/Medlem./Mitglied/Parlamendiilige/Méλος/Member/Membre/Član/Membro/Deputāts/Narys/Képviselő/ Membru/Lid/Czlonek/Membro/Membru/Člen/Poslanec/Jäsen/Ledamot
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