

■ **MERCOSUR** Asuncion, May 6, 2011

## Statement of the EU and MERCOSUR after the 5th round of negotiations on the future Association Agreement between both regions

*In the context of the XXI Bi-Regional Negotiations Committee (BNC), delegations from MERCOSUR and the European Union held working meetings from May 2 to May 6, 2011, for the negotiation of a future Bi-Regional Association Agreement.*

This was the fifth round after negotiations were re-launched in Madrid on May 17th, 2010, in the context of the MERCOSUR – EU Summit.

At the XXI BNC, Chief Negotiators of both sides reaffirmed their commitment to move negotiations forward to reach a comprehensive, balanced and ambitious Association Agreement. Negotiations were held in the Political, Cooperation and Trade pillars of the Agreement.

With regard to the Political and Cooperation pillars, regulatory texts were reviewed and points of view were exchanged on a number of issues. Substantial progress was achieved in the negotiation of texts.

Eleven Working Groups of the Trade pillar held meetings during the XXI BNC and achieved considerable progress in the regulatory texts of the Bi-Regional Agreement. At the XXII BNC, both sides will take stock of the progress in all Working Groups in order to set priorities among the relevant pending issues, with a view to finalizing the normative framework of the Agreement. Moreover, both sides agreed to continue the internal work to present their improved market access offers.

Finally, it was confirmed that the next rounds of negotiations of the BNC will be held this year in Brussels (July 4 – 8) and in Uruguay (November 7 – 11).