

Press release

[Mercosur](#) Brussels, March 16, 2012

Statement of the EU and MERCOSUR after the 8th round of negotiations on the future Association Agreement between both regions

In the context of the XXIV Bi-Regional Negotiations Committee (BNC), delegations from the EU and MERCOSUR held working meetings from March 12 to 16 2012, for the negotiation of a future Bi-Regional Association Agreement between both regions.

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, progress was achieved in a number of areas and there was fruitful exchange of views on many issues, which contributed to a better understanding of each other's positions.

With regard to the Trade Pillar Working Groups met and continued their work, clarifying positions and presenting new proposals. Progress continued to be registered in several Working Groups, in particular Services and Establishment, Dispute Settlement Mechanism, Public Procurement and Rules of Origin. Trade in Goods related issues, Trade Defense Instruments and Sustainable Development were discussed at Chief Negotiators' level with both sides clarifying positions and expectations.

Finally, it was decided that the next round of negotiations in the framework of the BNC will be held in Brazil in July 2012.