

Mercosur – European Union

MERCOSUR-EUROPEAN UNION MINISTERIAL MEETING Santiago, January 26, 2013 Joint communiqué

1. The Mercosur-European Union Ministerial Meeting was held in Santiago, Chile, on January 26, 2013. Mercosur was represented by Mr. Luis Almagro, Minister of External Relations of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay and Pro Tempore President of Mercosur; Mr. Eduardo Zuain, Vice Minister of External Relations and Worship of Argentina; Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Minister of External Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil; Mr. Elias Jaua of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The European Union was represented by Mr. Karel De Gucht, Commissioner for Trade of the European Commission.
2. The Ministers highlighted the importance of the economic, trade and cultural relations between both regions, taking into account the joint population of more than 780 million people, a combined GDP of USD 20,8 trillions and the birregional trade of around USD 130 billions per year.
3. In this context, the Ministers focused their discussions on their mandate to negotiate an ambitious and balanced Birregional Association Agreement.
4. The Ministers reviewed the progress of the nine technical meetings of the trade pillar of the Agreement since the negotiating process was relaunched. They recognized advances in the negotiation while also acknowledging that further work will be necessary in order to ensure the balance of the future Agreement. Ministers stressed the importance of a constructive atmosphere to ensure progress in the next stage of the negotiation.
5. Recalling the full commitment expressed by the Heads of State at the Mercosur-EU Summit in 2010 to strive for a conclusion of the negotiations without delay, the Ministers decided that both regions should start their respective internal preparatory work on the substance and the conditions for the exchange of offers which shall take place no later than the last quarter of 2013.