

**BRAZILIAN
BUSINESS AFFAIRS**



Brussels, 18 March 2011

EU-MERCOSUR Lead Negotiators meet with the business community

The lead negotiators of the EU-MERCOSUR Free Trade Agreement (FTA), Mr Machado of the European Commission and Mr Caceres of Paraguay met with 70 business representatives of both trading blocs during a recurring event organised by BUSINESSEUROPE, EUROCHAMBRES, Brazilian Business Affairs and the MERCOSUR-EU Business Forum in Brussels to discuss the status of the negotiations.

The business community from both sides of the Atlantic reiterated its support for a balanced and ambitious Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and MERCOSUR. While business acknowledges that there are sensitivities, particularly agriculture in the EU, these concerns should not be exaggerated or allowed to endanger the negotiations.

The business community remains convinced that the EU-MERCOSUR FTA will stimulate much needed growth in EU countries and ensure faster growth in MERCOSUR countries. If ambitious and balanced, the EU-MERCOSUR FTA will create tens of thousands of jobs and billions of Euros of additional trade and investment over the next few years in both regions. A successful conclusion of the EU-MERCOSUR FTA will reduce uncertainty for companies and investors.

The EU is currently MERCOSUR's largest trading partner representing 20.7% of MERCOSUR trade as well as the largest investor in the region with a total of €165 billion investment. With fast growing trade in goods, services, agricultural products and increasing investments, the EU and MERCOSUR stand to gain tremendously from an ambitious agreement.

BUSINESSEUROPE is the main horizontal business organization at EU level. Through its 40 member federations, BUSINESSEUROPE represents 20 million companies from 34 countries.

Contact: Leander van Laerhoven, +32 (0)2 237 65 65, l.vanlaerhoven@businessseurope.eu

EUROCHAMBRES – The Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry represents over 20 million enterprises in Europe – 93% of which are SMEs – through members in 45 countries and a European network of 2000 regional and local Chambers.

Contact: Constanza Negri-Biasutti, +32 (0)2 282 08 69, negri-biasutti@eurochambres.eu

Brazilian Business Affairs is CNI's (National Confederation of Industry - Brazil) and Apex-Brasil's (Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency) representation office to the European Union. CNI represents 27 Industry Federations in the states and Federal District, over a thousand associated sectoral employers' organizations and 196,000 industrial establishments.

Contact: Rui Faria da Cunha, +32 (0)2 211 05 30, rui.cunha@apexbrasil.com.br

MERCOSUR-EU Business Forum (MEBF) aims at fostering trade and business relations between the EU and the MERCOSUR countries by establishing a permanent dialogue between the business communities and the political leaders of the two regions.