

**COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF SOUTHERN CONE TRADE UNION
CONFEDERATIONS (CCSCS)
EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC)**

**JOINT COMMUNICATION ON THE REOPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS
BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND MERCOSUR**

Since it is possible that negotiations between the European Union and Mercosur, which were suspended in 2005, will be reopened at the EU-CELAC Summit of Heads of State, ETUC and CCSCS want to make the respective Community authorities aware of our demand that these negotiations not serve as a front for the aim of securing a free trade agreement and nothing more, despite the expression of good intentions through two short chapters on political dialogue and cooperation.

We are following the same line as that adopted and approved in the Appeal issued by the European/Latin American Trade Union Meeting held by international organisations TUCA, ITUC and ETUC in Santiago de Chile on 3 and 4 December 2012. The meeting clearly indicated its wish to change the neoliberal orientation of the trade negotiations, which are even now resulting in agreements that "do not take into account the imbalances between the signatory countries or regions and fail to consider social, employment and environmental aspects, which exacerbates dependence".

ETUC and CCSCS demand that if a new round of negotiations is opened, it be characterised by transparency in terms of informing the public and by real, effective dialogue between the negotiating teams and bodies representing civil society, particularly the EESC and the FCES, and other social representatives.

We would like to place particular emphasis on the importance of listening to the trade union movement from the two regions, represented by CCSCS and ETUC respectively, during the negotiations.

We would like to remind the EU and Mercosur authorities that when negotiations were suspended, a consensus had already been reached around the negotiating table with regard to a number of points put forward by the trade unions:

- a) inclusion of a section referring to the ILO's fundamental conventions, and especially decent work;
- b) creation of a Joint Consultative Committee composed of representatives of the EESC and the FCES;
- c) recognition in the future Agreement of a Labour Forum dedicated to work-related issues. This point was also endorsed by the European Parliament (Resolution of 12 October 2006 on EU-Mercosur relations).

In future negotiations, we will reiterate the applicability and pertinence of most of the points contained in our proposal for a Social and Labour Chapter, which was also presented to the negotiating committee at the time.

ETUC and CCSCS, with the support of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA), will defend the trade union demands, and also the principle that relations between the EU and Mercosur should contribute to building development models that are more economically balanced, offer better social justice and cohesion and guarantee respect for the environment.