



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**

**Madrid, 17 May 2010
PCE 95/10**

**Remarks by Herman Van Rompuy,
President of the European Council,
at the EU-Mercosur Summit
Madrid**

I am pleased that we have seized the opportunity of the Madrid Summit with Mercosur to give new impetus to our relation. The Association Agreement has tremendous economic potential and will boost our political relations.

We agreed on a joint communiqué which underlines in particular the following:

At the occasion of the relaunch of the negotiations for an EU Mercosur Association Agreement, the Heads of State and Government recalled their importance in view of reaching an ambitious and balanced agreement between the two regions, which would deepen relations and offer great political and economic benefits to both sides. The leaders are aware that substantial efforts will have to be made, and underlined their full commitment to engage in these negotiations. Both sides stressed their commitment to strive for a conclusion of the negotiations without delay. A first negotiating round will take place by early July at the latest.

The EU and Mercosur leaders expressed their commitment to rapidly reach an ambitious, comprehensive and balanced conclusion of the Doha Development Round, and keeping in mind the crucial role of international trade as an engine of economic growth and development, reaffirmed their commitment to avoid protectionism in all its forms.

Also the other issues to be discussed today are extremely important. Our integration processes are the foundations of the Association Agreement. An enhanced coordination of our positions on global issues such as climate change, on which we have very similar positions, will allow us to be more effective in multilateral negotiations.

I congratulate Mercosur for the skilful management of the global economic crisis and their excellent growth perspectives for 2010.

I praise the President of Argentina for steering the EU LAC process for the last two years.

P R E S S

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