

EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



HUMAN RIGHTS, GLOBAL AND MULTILATERAL ISSUES

Human Rights Division
The Head of Division

Brussels, 17/04/218
eeas.sg.1(2018) 190185

Dear Petitioner,

On behalf of the High Representative and Vice President of the European Union, Federica Mogherini, I would like to thank you for your e-mail dated on 30 November in which you highlighted the ongoing negotiations of the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement.

The European Union and the Mercosur States have undoubtedly strong economic, historical, social, and cultural links. We share the same values and are partners in numerous multilateral instances. As such, these negotiations are more than about a Free Trade Area, they are also about strengthening the political partnership between the two regions. This is why the agreement intends to become an 'association agreement' and includes chapters on political dialogue and cooperation.

Enshrined in the EU legal and political framework, equality between men and women is a fundamental value of the European Union, and a key priority in its internal and external policy. The EU drives forward gender equality and girls' and women's empowerment, while promoting gender mainstreaming at all levels towards more equal, secure, resilient, and freer societies. In this regard, specific initiatives are undertaken to address existing inequalities and entrenched discrimination against girls and women, to contribute to eliminating all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, and to promote their empowerment and their active, free, and meaningful participation.

The EU, therefore, consistently promotes and supports the full implementation of the internationally agreed Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, as well as the Programme of Action on the International Conference on Population and Development (ICDP), and the outcomes of their review conferences. Furthermore, the EU substantially contributes to the successful achievement of the 2030 Agenda and of its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by ensuring the development and implementation of gender responsive and transformative policies.

The EU remains fully committed to the EU-Mercosur negotiations. We believe that there are important political, economic, and social gains that can be expected as a result of this agreement between two important blocs and nearly 800 million citizens in both regions.

Finally, please keep in mind that the text that will be concluded by the negotiators on both sides will pass through the Parliaments of all countries signing up to the agreement so that a fully democratic vote will endorse the policies introduced in the agreement.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mercedes García Pérez', with a large loop at the end.

Mercedes García Pérez