Press release **22 September 2023**

EU-MERCOSUR FTA: a political agreement at the expense of farmers?

A leaked version of the Mercosur response to the EU's FTA joint instrument proposal suggests there are increasing negotiation differences between the two blocks. Despite this, negotiators are set to meet physically at the beginning of October to find a political solution to conclude this unstainable trade deal.

Farmers and farmer organisations from both continents have strongly criticised the use of agriculture as a bargaining chip in the negotiations to close the deal, a trend we see happen regularly in international trade negotiations.

According to a leak, the Mercosur counterproposal is lacking in detail and includes requests for a mechanism to balance trade concessions. Some sources believe the Mercosur block would like to have higher quotas for agricultural products that are not included in the Regulation on deforestation-free products (EUDR) (such as sugar or poultry) to make up for the impact of decreased beef and soy exports linked to the implementation of the EUDR.

This is yet another example of policy makers putting export-oriented trade and profit for the few above the rights and needs of farmers and local populations.

As ECVC stated back in January in a declaration with farmers from both continents, this FTA is based on an obsolete paradigm in which agricultural products are treated like any other commodity, disregarding human rights, the climate and biodiversity crises, food sovereignty and the rights of food producers to a fair income.

This is why we ask our governments to:

- Reject this new attempt to revive this obsolete and dangerous agreement.

- Stop any attempt by the EC to undemocratically fast track the finalisation of the agreement via splitting or an interim agreement.

- Support and foster debate at international level to radically reform international food and agricultural trade.

Notes to editor

See more about ECVC work on trade here

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