



CONSELHO DE DESENVOLVIMENTO ECONÔMICO E
SOCIAL



European Economic and Social Committee

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE EU-BRAZIL CIVIL SOCIETY ROUND TABLE

Brussels, 22 and 23 January 2012

Final Declaration

The EU-Brazil Civil Society Round Table is a permanent body for dialogue and cooperation between the civil societies of Brazil and the EU, as represented by the Brazilian Council for Economic and Social Development (CDES) and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). It contributes to the consolidation of relations between Brazil and the European Union within the EU-Brazil Strategic Partnership established in 2007.

The Round Table held its seventh meeting in Brussels on 22-23 January 2013. At this meeting, an exchange of views was held on the political, economic and social situation of the EU and Brazil. In keeping with the commitment undertaken at the previous meeting, an assessment of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) was made. The issue of economic and social mobility was also examined, and a preliminary debate was held on the mobility of knowledge.

On the current political, economic and social situation in the EU and in Brazil

The Round Table

1. is concerned at the social and economic consequences of the global crisis and calls for the political authorities of the EU and Brazil to take every possible measure to avoid a further deepening of the crisis, which would bring even worse economic, social and human consequences;
2. remains worried about the economic situation in the EU and its social consequences and notes that measures taken recently by the EU have contributed to improved financial stability, but points out that the problems of the real economy, especially unemployment among young people and women, are still unresolved;
3. expresses its worry about the possible impact that a persistent crisis in Europe could have on the world economy and trade, and particularly in Brazil;

4. underlines the need for the EU to promote economic recovery by reinforcing the economic union, including a financial and banking union, re-launching the single market, and promoting innovation and sustainable growth, particularly by striking a better balance between keeping public finances under control and fostering economic growth;
5. welcomes the stability of the Brazilian economy despite the global crisis, and the social policies that were implemented in recent years, which have allowed the country to improve its results in terms of employment and income and have lifted millions of people out of poverty;
6. encourages the Brazilian Government to pursue its efforts in order to reduce inequality levels which remain very high; and expresses its hope that the unsatisfactory economic results of 2012 in terms of GDP growth can be avoided in the future, and that, in order to improve on these results, measures to stimulate investment and increase trade are strengthened.

Assessment of joint work carried out for the United Nations Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development and perspectives

The Round Table

7. considers the outcome of Rio+20, as set out in the final document *The Future We Want*, to be less ambitious than we would have liked; in particular, the urgency of the crisis situation on our planet and the need for a paradigm shift have not been sufficiently taken into account;
8. welcomes, however, the agreement on some important aspects, such as the global agreement on a "green economy" as an important tool for sustainable development, including the social dimension, and the agreement on a process that is intended to lead to global Sustainable Development Goals in close coordination with the Millennium Development Goals;
9. also welcomes the establishment of a high-level political forum for sustainable development, the universal membership in the Governing Council of UNEP, the adoption of the 10 Year Framework Programme on sustainable consumption and production, and the programme to develop indicators beyond GDP;
10. calls for the effective involvement and participation of civil society in the Rio+20 follow-up process and implementation; in this context, it expresses its concern at the ongoing follow-up process at UN level and calls on governments to ensure civil society involvement at all levels;
11. considers that the process leading to Sustainable Development Goals has to be integrated into the overall discussion on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals up to 2015 and on the post-2015 development agenda;

12. agrees to actively contribute to (1) the establishment of new development indicators that go beyond GDP and incorporate social and environmental dimensions, and (2) the establishment of Sustainable Development Goals by promoting, as it did prior to the Rio+20 Conference, civil society dialogue on these issues, and also to continue monitoring the process at our next Round Table.

On mobility between the EU and Brazil from a social and economic point of view

The Round Table

13. welcomes the continuous migration flow from the EU to Brazil and vice-versa, not only as a positive element in terms of exchanges of people, but also as a beneficial factor for economic and social development;
14. suggests analysing and proposing improvements to migration policies and legislation, targeting shortcomings and opportunities in the various sectors, in order to promote migration flows between the EU and Brazil;
15. welcomes and supports the recent proposal by the European Commission on the external dimension of social security coordination, which opens up new possibilities for the international coordination of EU social security provisions and could benefit, among others, EU and Brazilian migrant workers and companies setting up branches;
16. considers that, if implemented, an agreement between the EU and Brazil on social security could contribute to help prevent Brazilian workers in the EU being discriminated against in terms of social security rights and facilitate company mobility;
17. also welcomes and supports the Commission's proposal to reach a fully bi-regional agreement between the EU and Latin America on social security, along the lines of the existing Ibero-American Social Security Agreement;
18. notes that tourism will very likely increase in Brazil in the coming years, as a consequence of both the growth of the Brazilian middle class and the international sports events to be organised by Brazil in 2014 and 2016, and stresses the importance of these events in facilitating people-to-people contacts between the EU and Brazil;
19. supports the Commission's "50 000 tourists" initiative, in which Brazil is involved, aiming to foster tourism between the two areas outside the peak tourist seasons, which could be beneficial for companies and for the preservation of jobs in the tourism sector;

20. welcomes the progress achieved by the EU-Brazil dialogue on air transport, hoping that this will greatly facilitate mobility between both sides and will benefit both passengers and airlines; expects that these agreements will result in improved passenger safety and in a reduction in air fares, and that this will all be achieved with due regard to the impact on the environment;
21. welcomes the November 2010 agreement on visa waivers for short-term stays, and calls for improved cooperation on consular issues, including the right to consular protection;
22. underlines the importance of strengthening the economic links between Brazil and the EU, at both the EU-Mercosur and bilateral levels, in order to cope with the current international economic context and the increase in trade barriers, fostering employment and inclusive growth;
23. at multilateral level, calls on the EU and Brazil to strive to step up their cooperation at the WTO in order to ensure a satisfactory conclusion of the DDA, and stresses the importance of permanent dialogue as a tool which has already proven to be effective in resolving trade disagreements;
24. at bi-regional level, considers that an EU-Mercosur Association Agreement would bring opportunities and benefits of all kinds for both sides, and stresses the need for the Agreement to include a chapter on sustainable development, and mechanisms to ensure the participation of civil society;
25. at bilateral level, calls on the EU and Brazilian authorities to enhance and strengthen their sectoral dialogue, especially in the areas of energy, education, science and technology and the environment;
26. regrets the scarce involvement of civil society in this dialogue, except on human rights, and emphasises the important contribution that both the CDES and the EESC could make to some of the dialogue, as occurred in the past;
27. calls for a special effort to be made by the EU and Brazil to foster the development and internationalisation of small and medium-sized enterprises and cooperatives through new ways of providing assistance, credit and training;
28. considers that the EU and Brazil should seek to reinforce their cooperation in areas such as SPS standards, energy, agro-business and air transport; and set joint priorities on three issues: sustainable development, the international presence of SMEs and technological innovation;
29. proposes to look at again the issue of economic and trade measures taken by Brazil and the European Union in order to increase the level of mutual understanding;

30. considers that increased flows of people, goods and capital, together with better TIC and infrastructures, must contribute to a development model which is sustainable, enhances and benefits from diversity, promotes equality at world level and recognises the planet's limitations in terms of human production and consumption;
31. the Round Table would recommend that the EU and Brazil undertake to push ahead the process of improving political, financial, trade and environmental world governance.

This final declaration will be presented to the Brazilian and EU political authorities and forwarded to the next EU-Brazil Summit.

The Round Table has decided to hold its eighth meeting in Brazil in the second half of 2013.

The main items on the agenda will be the mobility of knowledge, the establishment of development indicators beyond GDP, and the Sustainable Development Goals.