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Executive Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis
European Commission
Le Berlaymont
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels

Prime Minister Alexander De Croo
Belgian Presidency - Council of the European Union
Rue de la loi 16
1000 Brussels

President Roberta Metsola
European Parliament
Rue Wiertz 60
1000 Brussels

Brussels, 20 February 2024

We, the undersigned European organisations, representing small and family farmers, workers, environmental, human rights and animal welfare organisations, urge you to put a final stop to the negotiations around the EU-Mercosur Free Trade Agreement.

While farmers are demonstrating across Europe, we find it deplorable that the European Commission is still pushing to ratify a deal that will create unfair competition between European and South American farmers. Farmers can only survive in the long term if they get fair and stable prices for more environmentally - and animal welfare friendly produced products. In order to achieve this and reach food sovereignty, multilateral trade rules and the Common Agricultural Policy need to be changed drastically. Stopping EU-Mercosur will provide an excellent opportunity to put alternatives on the table. One of the main demands of the farmers' protests across Europe is to stop EU-Mercosur. Free-trade agreements have led to market deregulation, job insecurity and low incomes for farmers. Years of neoliberal policies have weakened and caused the destruction of thousands of small and medium-sized farmers and the local food supply. We support the demand of the farmers to definitively end negotiations on this outdated EU-Mercosur agreement.

The EU-Mercosur Free Trade Agreement poses a serious threat to people, animals and the planet. As shown in various studies, including the European Commission's own impact assessment, the FTA, instead of fighting the climate emergency, would worsen it. The deal puts economic interests above our common wellbeing.

There are intrinsic issues with the agreement that cannot be fixed with a joint or additional instrument. Indeed, even with the proposed joint instrument, the agreement would still reinforce the intensification of monocultures, animal farming and extractive models, encouraging more ultimately harmful investment in these sectors and increasing the risks of

deforestation and human rights abuses due to the EU's demand for commodities such as soya, beef, ethanol (based on sugar cane) and poultry, while driving the deindustrialisation and untenable social inequalities in South America.

The EU-Mercosur deal will boost commodities that are not covered by the EU Deforestation Regulation and will amplify the destruction of valuable ecosystems that are, for now, also left out of the Regulation. Already now, biomes in South America are at immense risk, beyond the Amazon: for instance, in 2023, [deforestation in Brazil's Cerrado increased by almost 45%](#). The FTA would worsen the situation. In addition, the FTA would set back the fight to protect public health and the environment. The deal would liberalise the export of pesticides to Mercosur countries that are banned in the EU because of their toxicity and threat to public health, and yet these dangerous substances return to the EU through food imports. The agreement would also be a disaster for the fight against plastic pollution, as it would make the trade of single use plastic products even more attractive at a time where the EU has adopted an internal ban on certain single use plastics.

Negotiations around the EU-Mercosur FTA also lack the necessary legitimacy to move forward. It is most concerning that, after the election of Javier Milei as President of Argentina, a far-right libertarian who has denied human-induced climate change, and with the European elections around the corner, the Commission is rushing to conclude an agreement away from public and parliamentary scrutiny. The lack of democratic debate and transparency around the negotiations for a joint instrument further damages the legitimacy of the EU and risks weakening European and national parliaments' ability to comprehensively debate the consequences of the trade agreement.

After nearly 25 years of negotiations, it is clear to all that the EU-Mercosur FTA is fully and irreparably outdated. We urge you to listen to farmers, citizens and organised civil society and finally drop this toxic deal once and for all.

Yours sincerely,

Name of organisations:

Altec
Eurogroup for Animals
PowerShift e.V., Germany
Friends of the Earth Europe
Anders-handeln
Entraide et Fraternité
TROCA - Plataforma por um Comércio Internacional Justo
European Coordination of La Via Campesina (ECVC)
European Trade Justice Coalition (ETJC)
Veblen Institute for economic reforms
Ecologistas en Acción
Entrepueblos/Entrepobles/Entrepobos/Herriarte
ATTAC España
Handel Anders!, Netherlands
Framtidsjorden, Sweden
Agriculture coalition for Just Trade, Netherlands
Platform Aarde Boer Consument, Netherlands
Fern
Feedback Europe, Netherlands
WIDE+
foodwatch International
ASTM Luxembourg
Fédération Artisans du Monde
Foodwatch
Attac France
Génération Futures
France Nature Environnement
Amis de la Terre France
ReAct Transnational (France)
FSU
Collectif national Stop Mercosur
ActionAid France
LDH (Ligue des droits de l'Homme)
Alternatiba
Action non-violente COP21
Netzwerk gerechter Welthandel
Umweltinstitut München e.V.
GADIP, Sweden
Fair Trade Advocacy Office
Comité Pauvreté et Politique
Bloom
Climate Action Network Europe (CAN Europe)