

# *MERCOSUR Trade Deal is a Priority for EU under Italian Presidency*

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Santiago de Chile, August 8 (Mercopress-RHC) – Italian Foreign Minister Federica Mogherini pledged that under the current Italian presidency of the European Union, top priority will be given to signing the pending trade agreements, among which that with MERCOSUR is still under discussion.

The Italian minister is on an official visit to Chile where she gave a magister conference at the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), in Santiago de Chile in which she underlined the importance for Europe of having closer trade and political links with other regions of the world.

MERCOSUR, in its latest meeting in Caracas, also agreed that the priority for the group was to conclude negotiations with the EU.

Discussions by the two entities, with the purpose of establishing a major free trade area, started in 1999 and have been going on and off for years.

"The EU is committed to revitalizing the EU and Celac (Community of Latin American and Caribbean

States) links in anticipation of the coming joint summit to be held next year in Brussels, which is one of the purposes of my trip and other visits planned further on to other countries of the region“, said Mogherini.

Before her conference at ECLAC headquarters, the Italian foreign minister met with President Michelle Bachelet and her peer Heraldo Muñoz.

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