

# *Brazil expresses concern over added EU demands to MERCOSUR deal*

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Brasilia, June 13 (RHC)-- Brazilian President Lula da Silva expressed concern over additional demands made by the European Union (EU) regarding its trade agreement with the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR).

"I expressed to European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen Brazil's concern about the additional instrument to the agreement presented by the European Union in March of this year, which expands Brazil's obligations and establishes sanctions in case of non-compliance," Lula said in a press release after meeting the EU envoy in Brasilia.

This is the first visit to Brazil by a head of the European Commission in 10 years, with an agenda focusing on the trade agreement with MERCOSUR, which gathers Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

The two blocs reached a trade agreement in 2019 following 20 years of negotiations, but European governments now say the environmental safeguards of the deal fall short of guaranteeing that stepped-up

transatlantic trade won't further destroy the environment.

The agreement still needs to be ratified by the parliaments of the signatory countries. "The premise that must exist between strategic partners is mutual trust, not mistrust and sanctions," the Brazilian president said and criticized the European laws that have extraterritorial effects since they modify the conditions agreed in the EU-MERCOSUR trade agreement.

"The EU has approved its own laws with extraterritorial effects that modify the balance of the agreement. These initiatives represent potential restrictions on agricultural and industrial exports from Brazil."

For example, a European law approved in April prohibits the importation of products such as cocoa, coffee, wood or soybeans that come from deforested lands. Von der Leyen will next travel to Argentina, Chile and Mexico to meet with presidents of those countries.

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