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MERCOSUR: A STATUS REPORT AND PROSPECTS FOR CANADA-MERCOSUR RELATIONS

FINAL REPORT¹

March 2005

1. Background

This is a report on discussions held, and conclusions reached, at the FOCAL Roundtable “*Mercosur: A Status Report and Prospects for Canada-MERCOSUR Relations*” that took place on March 14, 2005 in Ottawa. The event was co-sponsored by the Canadian Council for the Americas and the Red MERCOSUR de Investigaciones Económicas. Private sector representatives, ambassadors from the MERCOSUR countries, Canadian officials from several departments and academics representing a variety of policy and research institutes actively participated in roundtable debates. Contributions were on a not-for-attribution basis, unless otherwise indicated by participants.

The report also draws on a series of activities, meetings and publications on the topic of MERCOSUR and Canada-MERCOSUR relations undertaken by FOCAL over 2004-2005.² These activities are framed in an ongoing Canada-MERCOSUR Dialogue, launched in 2001 in Ottawa with partners from the Canadian Council for the Americas, the Red MERCOSUR de Investigaciones Económicas, and York University. The purpose of the Canada-MERCOSUR Dialogue is to provide a space for cross-pollination and policy dialogue for government officials, private sector and scholars from Canada and the MERCOSUR countries, as well as to promote joint, policy-relevant research, between academic and policy institutes from the five countries on concrete ways to further Canada-MERCOSUR relations.

¹ This report was prepared by Florencia Jubany, FOCAL.

² Special Edition of Focal Point Spotlight on the Americas on Brazil and Canada, November 2004
<http://www.focal.ca/pdf/Special-Edition-November-2004.pdf>

Red Mercosur Conference “Encontro Regional Mercosur”, November 20-30, 2004, Rio de Janeiro
<http://www.redmercotur.net/encuentro2004/index.html>

Roundtable Mercosur: A Status Report and Prospects for Canada-Mercosur Relations, March 14, 2005, Ottawa
FOCAL Policy Paper “Mercosur: An experience in sustainable institutions?”, forthcoming.

2. MERCOSUR: the internal agenda

At FOCAL's Roundtable "*MERCOSUR: A Status Report and Prospects for Canada-MERCOSUR Relations*" (March 14, 2005, Ottawa), keynote speaker Ricardo Rozemberg, Executive Director of the Centro de Estudios para la Producción of Argentina, argued that much of the sectoral conflicts and political disputes that trouble MERCOSUR today are grounded on fundamental asymmetries among the four members—Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

He noted that since the beginning of the integration process, MERCOSUR countries have shown marked asymmetries that are "structural" such as the extent and degree of economic development and different resource endowment, and "artificial", referring to those associated to regulatory frameworks and incentive mechanisms. At the creation of MERCOSUR it was assumed that "artificial" asymmetries would be eliminated or harmonized and that "structural" differences would be managed and taken advantaged of.

In spite of limited advances in both areas, integration overall was balanced during most of the 1990s and the various asymmetries remained hidden or they did not erupt to their full extent. This was possible because the region's members enjoyed exceptional conditions: out-of-sync economic cycles (or common upturns), abundant input of international capital and favourable terms of exchange. In this environment, intra-zone trade grew in both absolute and relative terms, and a significant number of joint ventures prospered.

In 1998 the favourable context was reversed. The economies of the two main members entered a recession, less capital was invested and the prices for exportable products fell in international markets. The change of context brought back into view the pending subjects and underlying asymmetries from the beginning of the process as well as problems that had been "swept under the rug" in previous years. Brazil's devaluation in January 1999 changed the map of relative profitability between the countries in the region. Though it was not reflected in short-term generalized trade imbalances, it did alter the plan for investment/production decisions within MERCOSUR. The different macro-economic performance of member countries during the 1999-2004 period contributed to the exacerbation of the significant natural differences in their economies and propelled an increase in sectoral conflicts.³

Developing Mercosur

Coinciding with the election of left-of-centre governments in the MERCOSUR capitals in 2002-2004, discussions begun regarding tools for achieving an integral, systemic and balanced development of participating economies. Some these tools include competitiveness forums, safeguards, codes of conduct for international companies, differential treatment for smaller economies, and joint trade promotion. Within this process there are now discussions on how to improve the MERCOSUR Customs Union by addressing some of the pending issues of the Treaty of Asuncion (1991) and Protocol of Ouro Preto (1994). The challenge is to work towards the consolidation of the common external tariff, the elimination of unilateral restrictions, the initiation of trade discipline cases, and the co-ordination of macro-economic policies, while adopting policies that enable regional productive complementarities and specialization.⁴

³ See presentation by Ricardo Rozemberg, *Mercosur: A Status Report and Prospects for Canada-Mercosur-Relations* (14/03/05) for more details on Mercosur's internal dynamics.

⁴ Our partner The Red Mercosur of Economic Research has produced a wealth of research and analysis on each of these challenges as well as policies to tackle them. <http://www.redmercosur.net/>

Recent events in the internal agenda further illustrate MERCOSUR's new philosophy, which is grounded on a more active role for governments in the bloc's internal economic development. At the Ouro Preto Summit in December 2004, the four MERCOSUR countries decided to create a structural convergence fund to reduce imbalances in the least productive sectors (US\$72 million) as well as to finance the growing institutional structure of the trade bloc (US\$ 8 million). A formula based on GDP was negotiated to establish each member's contributions to the fund by which Brazil will contribute 60%, Argentina 30%, and Uruguay and Paraguay 5% each. The model for the new fund was the structural convergence fund of the European Union.

Paraguay and Uruguay, the two smaller partners of MERCOSUR, have been the driving force behind this initiative. So far benefits from the MERCOSUR integration process have mostly been reaped by the two larger members, Argentina and Brazil. The expectation is that with policies to deal with adjustment costs and issues of competitiveness the smaller countries will be able to better profit from opportunities of an expanded market.

Building political institutions

A second development relates to MERCOSUR's increasing institutionalization, notion long resisted by Brazil in the past. At the June 2004, the Common Market Council granted support for the formation of the **MERCOSUR Parliament**. The parliament could potentially serve five major functions that are normally attributed to legislative bodies: popular representation, serving as the locus for political debate, serving as a check and balance to the executive and judicial branches, jurisdiction over approval of treaties and declaration of war, and general legislative processes. The parliament would also help to harmonize legislation from each member state.

The MERCOSUR parliament would need to establish internal and external credibility, as well as have a very clear mandate before it could be recognized as a legitimate institution. Several proposals have been tabled with regards to the mechanics of the parliament such as its size and membership structure. The structure is expected to be finalized before the proposed opening of the parliament in December 2006.

At the same time that MERCOSUR is consolidating as a political entity, it is becoming an increasingly influential player in the region. Regional activism driven by Brazil resulted in the launching of the Comunidad Sudamericana de Naciones in December 2004. This initiative combines elements of geopolitics, infrastructure, energy and trade, engulfing the entire South American sub-continent. While potentially relevant to future Canada-MERCOSUR dynamics a more detailed analysis of MERCOSUR's internal agenda and foreign policy initiatives exceed the scope of this report.

3. MERCOSUR: the external agenda

Since its creation MERCOSUR has showed a desire to become an open bloc. Early on Chile and Bolivia were incorporated as associate members, and associations with the rest of Latin America followed. In 2004 MERCOSUR succeeded in completing the association with the Andean Community of Nations with the incorporation of Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela. Peru had previously joined. MERCOSUR is currently in negotiations with Mexico for its incorporation as an associate member and exploratory talks have been recently launched with the Central American countries (Central American Integration System–SICA) and the Caribbean countries in CARICOM.

Simultaneously, MERCOSUR has been an active participant in hemispheric negotiations for a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). MERCOSUR has also been engaged in inter-regional negotiations with the European Union (E.U.) for several years, as well as with other countries and regions of the world.

MERCOSUR has also pursued a number of South-South accords including preferential trade agreements with the South Africa Customs Union (preferences for some 1000 products) and with India (preferences for under 500 products). Brazil is promoting the concept of a triangular trade alliance with India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA). In 2004, MERCOSUR signed framework agreement with Egypt and Morocco, which foresee the creation of free trade areas with an initial phase of fixed preferences. MERCOSUR sees Egypt and Morocco as gateways to the rest of Africa.

The MERCOSUR countries have placed a great deal of importance on trade and investment relations with China. China has increasingly become a market for MERCOSUR exports, it is Brazil's fastest growing trade relation and it accounted for the lion share of Brazil's export growth in 2004. So far, MERCOSUR and China have agreed to work on bilateral agreements on preferential tariffs on specific goods, and to implement mechanisms that will increase integration and facilitate an eventual all-encompassing trade agreement. Trade talks are also underway with Korea and Japan.

In February 2005, MERCOSUR and Canada launched the Canada-MERCOSUR Dialogue consisting of exploratory talks to pursue bilateral market access negotiations in goods, services and investment, within the framework of the FTAA. The Canada-MERCOSUR Dialogue added to the plethora of initiatives in MERCOSUR's external agenda.

In recent years, this desire to negotiate with the rest of the world has met with MERCOSUR's own limitations and those of multilateral trade negotiations. Negotiating *en bloc* has often proved challenging for MERCOSUR given divergent interests and bilateral histories, as well as weaknesses of its own internal agenda. These realities have at times gotten in the way of negotiations with third parties. Some observers have argued that that has been the case with the European Union, with which MERCOSUR has the longest running external negotiations.

The international context has also put limits to MERCOSUR's trade ambitions. The reluctance of developed countries to advance in the liberalization of agricultural markets and the dismantling of pernicious subsidy structures while increasing pressure to include "new" issues (intellectual property rights, services, government procurement) in the WTO Doha Round has delayed progress in multilateral trade negotiations on which inter and intra-regional negotiations are dependent.

In any event, MERCOSUR's external agenda has shown an extraordinary dynamism backed by a noteworthy negotiating and technical effort. The same can be said of MERCOSUR's internal agenda. MERCOSUR is after all a unique integration process linking developing countries around a multidimensional-economic, political and social- agenda.

4. Canada-MERCOSUR Relations

There is a prevailing sense that Prime Minister Paul Martin's visit to Brazil in November 2004 marked a turning point in Canada's relations with Brazil and MERCOSUR. Exploratory talks towards a trade agreement on goods, services and investment, between Canada and the MERCOSUR countries launched three months later underscored this new phase in relations. Plans for President Luiz Inácio da Silva to visit Canada in 2005 further attest to the new climate in relations.⁵

These developments provided a timely opportunity to discuss recent events in MERCOSUR, Canada's own priorities towards MERCOSUR, and prospects for Canada-MERCOSUR relations, at the roundtable "*MERCOSUR: A Status Report and Prospects for Canada-MERCOSUR Relations*" organized by FOCAL in March 2005. The remaining of this report deals with discussions and conclusions at the roundtable.

MERCOSUR in Canada's emerging markets strategy

MERCOSUR fits prominently in Canada's emerging markets strategy. Brazil, MERCOSUR's predominant economy, is one of three countries identified by the Canadian government to be central to its strategy of market diversification along with China and India. The strategy calls for engaging with the rapidly growing emerging markets of the world, as well as with their neighbours.

MERCOSUR is Canada's largest export market in South America and home to significant Canadian investment. Canadian FDI into Mercosur has been increasing and in 2003 was estimated to be at \$12.7 billion (accumulated/stock). Canadian investment into this region is concentrated in the aluminium, oil and gas, mining and energy, power generation and telecommunications equipment and services sectors. Two-way trade between Canada and the four Mercosur countries was around \$3.5 billion in 2003. While Canada's exports to MERCOSUR are higher than those to other emerging markets such as India and Russia, Canada-MERCOSUR trade relations are considered to be well below their potential.

Canada, MERCOSUR and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)

Canada's commitment to the FTAA as the cornerstone of its hemispheric strategy despite over a year's hiatus in negotiations was at the center of discussions on Canadian trade policy for the region. Several participants claimed to be perplexed at Canada's "attachment" to the FTAA when learning that the Canadian government had declined MERCOSUR's offer to negotiate a free trade agreement arguing a preexisting commitment to a hemispheric-wide arrangement.

Participants contended that Canada's trade agenda for the Americas has been premised on the virtuous co-existence of bilateral (United States (U.S., Chile, Costa Rica), plurilateral (NAFTA, Central American 4, CARICOM) and multilateral free trade negotiations. Pursuing these avenues simultaneously has more often than not proved to be mutually supportive. Canada's strategic interests vis-à-vis the FTAA would not be affected by engaging in free trade negotiations with MERCOSUR. Quite on the contrary, a Canada-MERCOSUR deal could be another building bloc towards an FTAA.

⁵ For background on Canada-Brazil relations, refer to FOCAL Policy papers "Canada-Brazil: what is to be done?", "Getting over the Jetlag: Canada-Brazil in 2001", and "Shall we Samba: Canada-Brazil relations in the 1990s" at www.focal.ca

Concern was expressed by government representatives over consistence of format with other trade agreements signed by Canada. The scope of the agreement favoured by MERCOSUR does not include topics such as government procurement and intellectual property rights but rather focuses on traditional trade issues of goods and investment. The former are areas covered in FTAA negotiations and in most of Canada's bilateral agreements with other countries in Latin America.

Several private sector representatives present at the meeting urged the Canadian government to "stop negotiating agreements that are not relevant to the private sector" and to "put all eggs in the Canada-MERCOSUR basket rather than disperse through Latin America." It was also noted that even if the FTAA is not defunct it has been a divisive rather than a cohesive initiative, particularly for Canada-MERCOSUR relations as well as within MERCOSUR.

A Canada-MERCOSUR Trade Agreement

Canada agreed to explore ways to deepen trade and investment in the framework of the Canada-MERCOSUR Dialogue. MERCOSUR countries expect that these talks will lead to a free trade agreement. The outcome of the first meeting on February 7-8, 2005 in Ottawa was the creation of three working groups and the decision to meet again to exchange questions and further information in Asunción, Paraguay in April 2005. The spirit prevailing in the MERCOSUR delegation seemed to be one of pragmatism, crystallized by Gustavo Vanerio's statement (Chief of the Uruguayan delegation): "If the FTAA moves forward we will have this in advance, if it does not move forward we can advance this." Venerio's remarks were brought up a couple of times at the roundtable as expressive of MERCOSUR's attitude towards negotiations with Canada.

Political benefits

There was consensus that the main benefit of a free trade agreement between Canada and MERCOSUR would most likely be political, especially for Brazil and Canada. A free trade agreement with a G-8 country like Canada would be a considerable political victory for the government of President da Silva. Little over a year before presidential elections in Brazil, the government is under significant pressure from the private sector to show results in its trade agenda. The government has been criticized for neglecting negotiating improved access to the largest and traditional markets for Brazilian goods—the United States (U.S.) and the E.U.—in favour of negotiating South-South agreements.

Moreover, Canada is considered a relatively easy country to negotiate trade with. Canada does not present the challenges of agricultural export and production support subsidies that do negotiations with the E.U. and the U.S. Canada is also considered a less demanding partner than the U.S. on sensitive issues such as intellectual property rights, for example. Finally, an agreement with Canada could be politically useful to Brazil to put pressure on ongoing negotiations with the E.U. and the U.S. within the FTAA.

For Canada, a free trade agreement (FTA) with Brazil-led MERCOSUR would reassert its position as a mid-level power and valued interlocutor in international trade matters. Brazil has become a respected actor at the World Trade Organization (WTO), status that was cemented by its inclusion as one of the "Five Interested Parties" that provided the leadership necessary to revive the Doha Round Negotiations. Furthermore, a free trade agreement with MERCOSUR would increase the amount of Canada's trade in the Americas covered by free trade agreements to approximately 96%.

MERCOSUR is also an influential political actor in the regional and multilateral scene, whether it is at the South American Community of Nations, FTAA negotiations, WTO or United Nations (U.N.) peacekeeping operations. Moreover, member countries of MERCOSUR share many of Canada's foreign policy priorities and values: a strong commitment to multilateralism, the peaceful settlement of disputes and collective security, adherence of democratic values and protection of the environment, to mention some.

For Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay a Canada-MERCOSUR agreement would provide a useful framework for increased trade and investment. "It would give US context... a framework. It would be much more difficult to do this bilaterally," explained Paraguay's Ambassador to Canada, Juan Esteban Aguirre, in an interview with Embassy Magazine in February 2005. At the same time, for Paraguay's Foreign Affairs Minister Leila Rachid de Cowles an agreement with Canada could help open the door to other North American markets and make an impression on G-8 nations. "MERCOSUR is really pleased to start talking with a very huge and important country in the continent as Canada, a member of the G-8, that is important to us," she said in the same interview. "Canada for us is a bridge." (*Embassy Magazine*, February 9, 2005)

At any rate, free trade agreements are a signal of real interest and they are often precursors of deeper and broader cooperation at the political level. This has certainly been the case with Canada's relations with Mexico and Chile, as well as within MERCOSUR.

Economic benefits

While the benefits of a trade agreement between MERCOSUR and Canada are bound to be mostly political, there are gains to be made at the level of investment, services and in some specific sectors. Canadian business present at the roundtable were urged to focus on services that distinguish Canada from other suppliers as well as to seriously consider investing in MERCOSUR rather than selling to MERCOSUR.

Understandably, most of the attention that Canadian business are paying to MERCOSUR is focused on Brazil. President da Silva's administration is planning a massive expansion of strategic sectors, which will open considerable opportunities for investment. Brazilian priorities mesh nicely with the sectors in which Canadian enterprises have experience, whether they are industries considered part of the traditional or the "new economy."

Sectors in the traditional economy include infrastructure, energy, mining, agrifood, and tourism. Potential areas for investment in infrastructure are roads, railways, ports, bulk goods-handling and airport upgrades. The energy sector requires large new cash inflows as well as a daunting list of infrastructure upgrades in hydro, as well as in oil and gas. Mining is also promising in non-ferrous metals; Brazil is already the world's largest iron ore producer and boasts the world's second largest-and largest in the hemisphere- mining group. In agrifood, areas of interest are both livestock (especially beef) and crops. Finally, tourism is a sector where opportunities remain untapped. In sectors of the "new economy," Brazil intends to attract large investments into in communications and semi-conductors and other related technology-based sectors. In all of the above, there will also be enormous "horizontal" opportunities, in environmental controls, processing, measuring and control systems, among others.

A participant raised the point that should current talks lead to free trade negotiations Canada's supply management policy for poultry and dairy would be a contentious area as it would affect two of Mercosur's main exports-Brazilian chickens and Argentinean milk. This said, most countries protect certain industries and in the case of Canada, the preservation of these

protected areas has not prevented the country from negotiating trade liberalization in other areas and products. It was also noted that Canadian tariffs for most of Mercosur's agricultural exports are already low.

Beyond trade agreements

There is potential to produce a mutually beneficial agenda of cooperation between Canada and MERCOSUR. President da Silva and Prime Minister Martin's decision to send a joint mission of technical experts in the area of public health and to examine other areas for joint partnership with Haiti is an example of the kind of activities that the two countries could do in the area of U.N. peacekeeping/peacebuilding. Multilateral trade negotiations in agriculture is another area than lends itself to joint action between Canada and Brazil-led MERCOSUR. Some specific issues around which to build an agenda of cooperation at the WTO include anti-dumping, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, services and biotechnology. These and other ideas for a broader cooperative relationship between Canada and MERCOSUR are developed in a FOCAL document that serves as background to this project

<http://www.focal.ca/pdf/Special-Edition-November-2004.pdf>

Views from the Canadian private sector

In his remarks Tim Plumtre, Chairman of the Canadian Council for the Americas (CCA) and Vice-Chairman of the Brazil-Canada Chamber of Commerce (BCCC), pointed out that the CCA and the BCCC had jointly written to Minister Peterson last year recommending that Canada should initiate discussions on a free trade agreement with Mercosur, in parallel with ongoing negotiations on the FTAA.

However there was real concern among private sector representatives at the Roundtable that, as previously, a Canada-MERCOSUR trade agreement and relations generally would be frustrated by the reopening of the aerospace dispute if Bombardier were to proceed with a new, larger aircraft, requiring substantial government of Canada financial support for its development.

Tim Plumtre noted that as the export sales of both Bombardier and Embraer were considerably bigger than bilateral trade between the two countries, there were not the usual restraining factors; therefore the official position that such a dispute should not again be allowed to take over the political and economic agenda between Brazil and Canada, seemed based more on hope than experience. He echoed the feeling of many in the private sector that until a permanent solution were found, relations with Brazil would not be on a secure long-term footing.

One possible solution advanced by Plumtre was for one manufacturer to buy the other, or, if in the case of Embraer being the purchaser, which was the only viable option, of Bombardier's aerospace division. He pointed out that unlike Embraer, Bombardier was not solely an aerospace company and indeed this was not its original business. Plumtre suggested that, if all parties were interested and willing to look at this, long-term financing might be arranged by Export Development Canada (EDC) (given the breadth of EDC's powers under its revised Act), together with the Canadian banks, with Political Risk Insurance and a charge over the Canadian assets to reduce the country risk and make the financing affordable and commercially attractive.

Tim Plumtre argued that this solution would probably be countenanced by government stakeholders (i.e. International Trade Canada and Finance), given the manifest Canadian benefits that would accrue from such an outcome, compared to the near certain negative reactions from many quarters should the interests of one company prevail over those of many Canadian investors. This solution would provide for greater long-term stability to the Canadian

aerospace sector while significantly improving the prospects for trade and investment to grow across the board in the future.

5. Prospects for Canada's relations with MERCOSUR

The materialization of a Canada-MERCOSUR agreement will depend primarily on governments and bureaucracies, but also on the interest of the private sector. Already, the Canadian private sector has unambiguously expressed interest and commitment through the Canadian Council for the Americas and the Canada-Brazil Chamber of Commerce. While the productive sectors of the MERCOSUR countries are currently being consulted, there are indications that a majority favours negotiations with Canada.

The Canadian private sector has also expressed concerns about the heating up of the Bombardier-Embraer file and possible spillover into bilateral relations. After all, one of the factors that has made this new positive phase in relations possible is the expectation of a prompt conclusion to the three-year-old bilateral negotiations to settle the subsidies dispute. A month after launching exploratory talks, the aircraft dispute looms on the horizon as a black cloud that threatens to upset the new optimism surrounding Canada-MERCOSUR relations.

This said, there are enough new elements in the Canada-Brazil equation to hope that even a resurgence of the old subsidy dispute might not derail the overall improving trend in relations. There are exploratory talks towards a trade agreement under way, and more importantly, this time the *demandeur* of a MERCOSUR-Canada trade deal is Brazil. The fact that there is something at stake for Brazil, beyond Embraer, should make the Brazilian government less inclined to play linkage politics as was the case in the 1990s.

Also, there is now the possibility of isolating the dispute from other, more positive aspects of bilateral relations by multilateralizing negotiations on aircraft subsidies. Disputes over subsidies to the aerospace industry have also been a recurrent issue between the European Union (Airbus) and the United States (Boeing). They are at present in tense negotiations to replace an obsolete 1992 bilateral agreement on government financing rules to the industry.

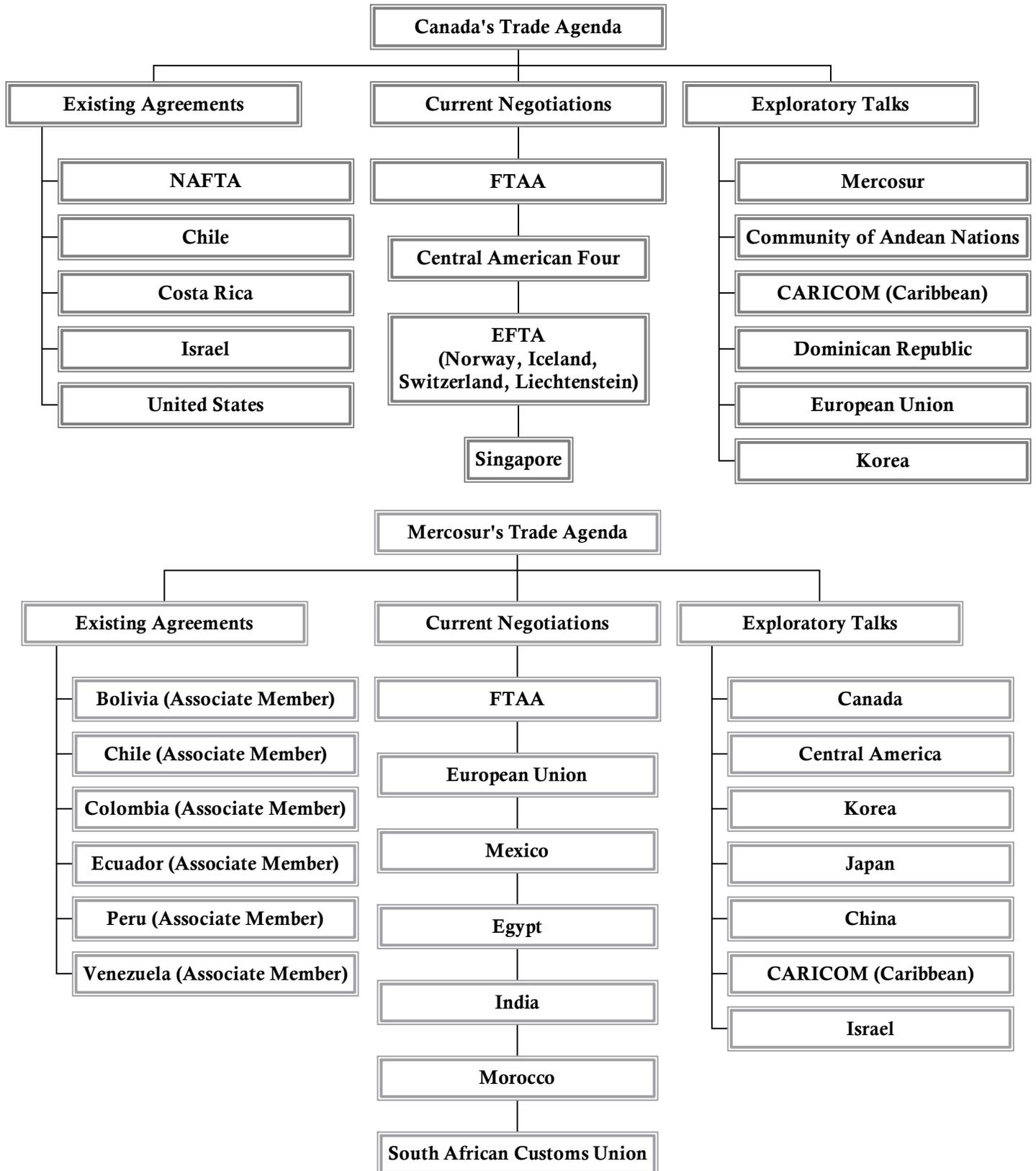
While Bombardier and Embraer are not currently in direct competition with Airbus and Boeing, both are now producing jets of over 100 passengers, which has raised European interest in developing common disciplines on subsidies for planes of that size. The European Union suggested in March 2005 the possibility of negotiating a joint agreement on aircraft subsidies together with the United States, Brazil and Canada-the world's four largest producers of planes. Canada should seize this opportunity to de-link the question of aircraft subsidies from bilateral relations.

In any event, the benefits of an agreement on goods, services and investment between Canada and MERCOSUR would be far greater if it were part of a broader political understanding, reflective of affinities of values and interests among Canada and MERCOSUR countries. Canada should draw from its experiences with Mexico and Chile, where the establishment of free trade agreements was a first step to building more mature, comprehensive, and mutually beneficial relations.

ANNEX 1: Canada and Mercosur's External Agendas

ANNEX 2: List of participants at Roundtable "Mercosur: A Status Report and Prospects for Canada-Mercosur relations."

ANNEX 1: CANADA AND MERCOSUR'S EXTERNAL AGENDAS



Annex 2: List of participants to Roundtable “MERCOSUR: A Status Report and Prospects for Canada-MERCOSUR Relations”, March 14, 2005, Ottawa.

Eduardo del Buey, Executive Director,
FOCAL

Sharon O'Regan, Deputy Director, FOCAL

Florencia Jubany, Senior Analyst, FOCAL

Nadine Bussman, Senior Analyst, FOCAL,

Ricardo Rozemberg, Executive Director,
Centro de Estudios para la Producción

Tim Plumptre, Chairman, Canadian Council
for the Americas

Ambassador Valdemar Carneiro Leão Neto,
Embassy of Brazil in Canada

Ambassador Alvaro Moertzinger, Embassy
of Uruguay in Canada

Ambassador Arturo Bothamley, Embassy of
Argentina in Canada

Helena Felip Salazar, Minister Counsellor,
Embassy of Paraguay in Canada

Ambassador José Miguel Cruz, Embassy of
Chile in Canada

Laura Loppacher, Associate, Estey Centre
for Law and Economics in International
Trade

Anthony Eaton, President, Canadian
Council for the Americas, Ottawa Chapter

Bob Armstrong, President and CEO,
I.E.Canada, Canadian Association of
Importers and Exporters

Jean Daudelin, Associate Professor, The
Norman Paterson School of International
Affairs

Martin Loken, Director, Regional Trade
Policy Division, International Trade Canada

Douglas A. Holland, Senior Analyst,
Regional Policy, Inter-American Affairs
Division (LIA), Foreign Affairs Canada

Céline Boies, Trade Commissioner (Chile
and Argentina) South America Division
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Marcel Belec, Trade Officer, Brazil Division,
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Carol Wise, Associate Professor, University
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Ramon De Freitas, Senior-Economist,
Market Opportunities Development,
Canadian Commercial Corporation

Jean-Paul Ruszkowski, Senior Advisor,
Northstar Trade Finance Inc.

Olivia Quesnel, Senior Economist,
International Affairs, Industry Canada

Laura Ritchie Dawson, Program Director –
Americas, Centre for Trade Policy and Law

Ana Maria Cruz-Valderrama, Agriculture
and Agri-Food Canada

Shelley Burke, Senior Analyst, Office for
Inter-American Labour Cooperation, Human
Resources Skills and Development Canada

Marie-France Paquet, Chief, Economic Studies and Policy Analysis Division, Economic and Fiscal Policy Branch, Finance Canada

Yolanda Banks, Corporate Social Responsibility Advisor, Export Development Canada

Division, Foreign Affairs Canada*

Paul Labbe

Eduardo Bouzout, Minister Counsellor, Embassy of Uruguay

Gustavo Infante, Counsellor, Embassy of the Argentine Republic

Guillermo Mejia-Castillo, Minister Counsellor, Embassy of Colombia in Canada

Eduardo Tapia, Counsellor, Embassy of Chile in Canada

Mehdi Abdelwahab, Senior Program Officer, Partnership Programs, Association of Canadian Community Colleges

Barbara Grinfeld, Political Risk Analyst, Export Development Canada

Mario Gonzalez, Canadian International Development Agency

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Maria Eugenia Otarola, Programme Officer for Latin America, MATCH International Centre

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Leiva, Elizabeth, Chief Advisor, Transport Canada

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Sergio Cappuccio, Corporation de développement économique

Noel Waghorn, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs

Irina de Alba, Arthur Kruegger School of Management

Jean Pierre Chabot, Carleton University

Paulo George, Consultant

George Wright, Consultant