

AFRICAN UNION
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AU CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF TRADE
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KIGALI DECLARATION ON THE ECONOMIC
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

KIGALI DECLARATION ON THE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

We, Ministers of Trade of the Member States of the African Union, meeting on 1-2 November 2010 at the Sixth Ordinary Session of the AU Conference of Ministers of Trade, in Kigali, Republic of Rwanda

Having undertaken a critical review and assessment of the current state of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations between the various African negotiating groups and the European Commission;

Reaffirming the Decisions and Declarations adopted on the EPA negotiations by the previous Sessions of our Conference and the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government;

Also reaffirming the principle that no country should be worse off when concluding the EPA negotiations;

Also Recalling the set objectives for EPAs in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) which, among others, are the achievement of sustainable development and eradication of poverty, reinforcement of ACP countries' regional integration initiatives, and the gradual integration of the countries into the global economy;

Welcoming the Report of the AUC-RECs Coordination Meeting on the EPA negotiations, held in Lusaka, Zambia on 7-8 October 2010 as well as the Position Paper on EPAs that was prepared by the Coordination Meeting;

Taking into account the significant amount of resources (time, financial and human) that has been expended by African countries on the EPA negotiations;

Taking note of the conclusions of the Joint ACP-EU Ministerial Trade Committee Meeting in Brussels on 22 October 2010, particularly the need to speed up the negotiations processes with a view to concluding a development friendly Agreement as quickly as possible;

Bearing in mind that the Third Africa-EU Summit scheduled for 29 to 30 November 2010 in Tripoli, Libya, provides a good opportunity for Africa and Europe to engage in political dialogue at the highest level, and together find solutions to common concerns on the EPAs;

Hereby:

1. **Express** our concern at the current loss of dynamism in the EPA negotiations that has been due to the lack of progress in resolving the differences between the parties on a number of contentious issues;
2. **Reaffirm** that the construction of the trade regime in the EPAs must respect the objectives set for it in the CPA.
3. **Reiterate** our commitment to concluding development-friendly EPAs that will contribute meaningfully to reducing and ultimately eradicating poverty in our countries. In this regard, we urge the EU to dedicate additional, predictable and sustainable resources to specifically address EPA-related adjustment costs and build productive capacities;
4. **Take note** of the undertaking by the EC at the last Meeting of the Joint Ministerial Trade Committee on 20 to 21 October 2010 in Brussels, to display flexibility in the EPA negotiations and look forward to concrete proposals from EC negotiators in this regard;
5. **Also Reaffirm** our conviction that EPAs can serve as instruments for growth and the promotion of development of African countries if the contentious issues in the negotiations are satisfactorily addressed;
6. **Further Reaffirm** our commitment to the proposals by the ACP Group that the objective criteria which form part of the political objectives agreed by the international community, at the multilateral level, are retained to determine the parameters that have to be met to enable the conclusion of the EPAs.

7. **Call** on the EU Party to clearly show greater appreciation for this central issue and concern of Africa and therefore to display more sense of understanding and flexibility in the EPA negotiations so that EPAs can achieve the development objectives, including the maintenance of adequate policy space, the need to sustain and deepen regional integration and the non-acceptance of WTO-plus commitments
8. **Urge** the EU to extend and maintain Regulation 1528 to all countries that are negotiating EPAs until the completion of the full EPA negotiations and its implementation to ensure that there is no disruption of trade;
9. **Express** our deep concern about the pressure exerted by the European Commission on some countries and Regions to sign the interim EPAs, thus prejudicing the progress made in the negotiation process;
10. **Commend** the AUC-RECs Coordination Meeting on the development of the Position Paper on EPAs and agree to take into account the Position Paper's Recommendations and Options for Africa on the EPAs, as a basis for the political engagement with the EU Party at the highest political level;
11. **Call upon** the Chairperson of the AU Commission, in collaboration with the ACP Secretariat, to engage politically at highest level with the EC prior to the Africa-Europe Summit; and
12. **Also call upon** our Heads of State and Government to bring their individual and collective influence to bear towards resolving the impasse on the EPA negotiations.

Done in Kigali, 2nd November 2010