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1704 Working group News on Trade – April 2017

1. ACP countries to negotiate as a unified entity with EU

ACP countries will negotiate with one voice a major partnership framework with the EU which will cover trade, development cooperation and political dialogue between the two parties after 2020. There is a common interest in aligning future ACP-EU cooperation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. The protracted negotiations of EPAs are generating tensions between ACP countries and regions, as well as negative consequences on regional integration processes. Thus, the post-Cotonou ACP-EU Partnership must avoid discrimination on the basis of economic status of the Parties, safeguard the cohesion and development needs of the ACP group. Read more

2. EU-Tanzania seal $205m investment deal

The European Union has agreed to provide the Tanzanian government with $205m in budget support till 2020. The money will be used to finance priority expenditure in agriculture, energy, health and industrial development sectors. The two sides have managed to separate the grant from their long-running dispute over the proposed Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). The partnership has enabled the government to implement its development strategies.Tanzania's relations with Brussels over the past year have been punctuated by negotiations over the EPA. In November last year, Tanzania's parliament voted for the country not to sign the EPA. Read more

3. East Africa: UN body warns region against signing trade deal with EU

A United Nations think-tank has warned the East African Community against entering into an EPA with the EU arguing that it will neither spur economic growth nor bring wealth to the region's citizens. If the EPA is signed, local industries will struggle to withstand competitive pressures from EU firms, while the region will be stuck in its position as a low value-added commodity exporter. Moreover, the removal of taxes on capital goods from Europe will cause the EAC accumulated revenue losses of $1.15 billion per year. The market would be opened up over a 25-year period and capped at 80 per cent market access.

Read more

4. Implementation of the interim EPA between the EU and Ivory Coast

The signing committee of the interim EPA between the EU and Ivory Coast began the implementation of the agreement on April. This working group follows on the ineffectiveness of the implementation of the Regional Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) in which 3 countries have not yet signed, notably the Gambia, Mauritania and Nigeria. Ivory Coast, the second export after Nigeria, is fighting for its companies not losing market in Africa and Europe, without compromising the dynamics of regional integration. Read more