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1705 Working group News on Trade – May 2017

1. East Africa: Regional Bloc Strikes Common Accord On EPA

East African heads of state have jointly agreed that the EAC members that have not signed the European Union-EAC economic partnership agreement (EPA) will not do so pending clarification of outstanding issues. Moreover, they consider that Kenya should not be disadvantaged for already signing the agreement. Any agreement would only be reached with all members of EAC, and not just certain countries. EAC countries expressed their concern about the declining intra-EAC trade and directed the EU to resolve the outstanding non-tariff barriers. [Read more](#)

2. Nigerian government adopts trade measures against tomato imports

The Nigerian government announced new trade measures in support of the local tomato sector. Such measures would fall foul of the provisions of the EU-West Africa EPA related to tariff standstill commitments and the 'prohibition of quantitative restrictions'. Trade policy tools can only be effective in supporting agricultural development if they are deployed as an integral part of wider government programmes aimed at comprehensively addressing infrastructural, policy and logistical constraints on the efficient functioning of local agri-food sector supply chains. [Read more](#)

3. The effects of EPAs on agriculture in the ACP countries

Agricultural products were at the origin of the EPAs and remain their stumbling block. The EPAs have several types of effects on ACP agriculture, including financial and other constraints limiting their political space. The EPAs will only aggravate the three challenges already facing ACP agriculture: the agricultural and rural employment challenges linked to their demographic explosion, a growing food deficit and a reduction in ways to combat climate change. And the EPAs will exacerbate the negative impact of other EU policies in the WTO and its bilateral Free Trade Agreements (FTAs).

[Read more](#)

4. Mauritania, Nigeria and Gambia called to ratify EPAs with the European Union

The European Union's ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire has invited countries such as Mauritania, Nigeria and Gambia to ratify the Economic Partnership Agreement to make it a regional agreement. Last week, Mauritania signed an association agreement with ECOWAS aimed at its reintegration by 2019.