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1709 Working group News on Trade – September 2017

1. East Africa: Uganda's ratification of the Tripartite Free Trade Area

Uganda has approved the ratification of the EAC-COMESA-SADC Tripartite Free Area Agreement (FTA), paving way for the implementation of the Agreement. The Cabinet agreed that Uganda was ready to start the implementation of the Tripartite FTA which will open up a wider market for Uganda's products and services in 26 African countries. The products for export will include agricultural products, sugar, tea, coffee and livestock products. During the same meeting, South Africa signed the Tripartite Agreement, bringing the total number of countries that have signed to 19 out of 26 that represent a population of 632 million people. [Read more](#)

2. Gambia to sign free trade deal with EU

The Gambia government and European Union have restarted the process of signing a free trade deal, dubbed Economic Partnership Agreement – EU's flagship trade agreement. The signing and ratification of the deal would see products from The Gambia enter the European market duty free and European products given similar access to the Gambian market over a period of time. In West Africa, ECOWAS led the regional EPA discussion as a bloc with the EU and so far, all member states, except The Gambia and Nigeria, have signed the deal. [Read more](#)

3. SADC, EU Launch Implementation of Trade Projects

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the European Union (EU) have formally launched the implementation of projects valued at 31.6 million Euros. The projects were launched under the Trade Related Facility (TRF) which was established through a contribution agreement between the EU and SADC in 2014. The objective of the TRF is to improve the participation of SADC Member States in regional and international trade in order to contribute to sustainable development within the SADC region. [Read more](#)

4. Colonialism's new clothes: The EU's Economic Partnership Agreements with Africa

Since 2002, African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries have negotiated a reciprocal free trade agreement known as the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU). It is in fact an unfair agreement that is anchored in a colonial framework. Though not highly publicised, the EPA has faced continued opposition from across the ACP countries. [Read more](#)