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1710 Working group News on Trade – October 2017

1. Alarm bells as more developing countries become commodity-dependent

Sustainable management of the commodity sector can fuel global economic growth. However, Commodity dependence can negatively affect human development indicators like life expectancy, education, and per capita income. Two thirds of commodity-dependent developing countries recorded a low or medium human development index. The rise in commodity dependence was most noticeable in Africa. Regarding the type of exports, dependence was predominantly on agricultural goods for 41% of the countries, 30% depended on fuel exports and 23% on minerals, ores and metals. Read more

2. Nigeria: EU, Nigeria Collaborate to Upgrade Banned Exports

The EU has begun collaboration with Nigerian authorities to improve the quality of some exports from the country, which had been banned in Europe due to the products' deficiency in meeting European specifications. The banned export items included beans and some fish products. Nigerian authorities try to improve the quality of exports that are concerned. Unfortunately for some Nigerian exporters, these EU standards have to be met. So, that means that they have to upgrade the quality of the Nigerian products. This improvement will lead to better access to the European market in the next years.

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3. **South Africa fails to exploit free trade agreement access to massive EU market**

One year after the free trade agreement which significantly increased access to the world's largest market, South Africa has fallen far short of exploiting its full new quotas of duty-free agricultural exports to the EU. Trade Minister promised to tackle problems that have prevented agricultural exporters from meeting quotas negotiated by South Africa as part of the SADC-EPA. These included a quota of 150,000 tons of sugar exports, 80,000 tons of ethanol, 111 million litres of wine as well as increases in quotas on exports of raw and canned fruits and fruit juices. But only 44.4% of the increased wine export quota, only 7.8% of the new sugar quota and only 11.4% of the ethanol quota had been used. Read more

4. **Kenya in last-ditch effort to persuade Tanzania to sign EPA**

Kenya and Rwanda signed the EPA in August 2015. The move by Kenya was aimed at securing Kenya's duty-free, quota-free market access in the EU as Kenya along with other EAC partner states seek a solution for all to sign the EPA. Kenya has put up a spirited fight to have all EAC countries support the EPA as a way of safeguarding unlimited duty-free access of its exports to Europe. Tanzania, the main opposer of the deal, has cited the economic and constitutional uncertainties arising from Brexit as the main reason for rejecting it. Read more