

# EPAs: To be or not to be?

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The delivery of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the European Union (EU) and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries has so far been a slow, painful and incomplete process, whose future remains most uncertain. Will most ACP countries finally rally under the EPA banner, forgetting about the bumpy road to get there? Or will EPAs continue to split regions and divide ACP policy makers on the most appropriate way to pursue sustainable development and maintain a privileged relationship with an important and traditional partner, the EU?

## 1. A long and strenuous process

The 1996 European Commission Green Paper on the relations between the European Union and the ACP countries first proposed EPAs, and the principles were enshrined in the 2000 Cotonou Agreement. After a lethargic preparatory period, the EPA negotiations started in September 2002 at the all-ACP level, and at the end of 2003 – early 2004 at the level of the 6 ACP EPA regional groupings. By the end of the 2007 deadline, according to which all agreements should have been concluded, only one region, the Caribbean, had finalised the negotiations, and more than half the ACP countries fail to reach any type of agreement with the EU.<sup>2</sup>

With the expiry as of 1 January 2008 of the unilateral Cotonou preferences, imports of ACP products have since entered the EU markets under one of the following regimes:

- (1) an EPA providing duty-free quota-free (DFQF) market access to the EU for those countries that have initialled such an agreement;
- (2) the Everything-But-Arms (EBA) initiative under the generalised system of preferences (GSP) of the EU, which also provides for DFQF access to the EU, though under less favourable rules of origin than EPAs (notably for fisheries and textiles), to all least-developed countries (LDCs);
- (3) the EU GSP available to all developing countries other than non-LDCs; or
- (4) another free-trade agreement, namely the Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) between the EU and South Africa.

To avoid having to face some newly imposed market restrictions (i.e. higher import duties or more restrictive rules of origin), several African and Pacific countries have thus opted to conclude interim EPAs that cover market access in goods only, leaving other dimensions such as trade in services and trade-related issues (investment, competition, government procurement, intellectual property rights, trade facilitations, environment, etc.) to be negotiated in a second phase, in 2008-2009. Other African and Pacific countries preferred to conclude only a single undertaking, and have thus continued negotiations with the EU as part of their initial regional EPA configuration, though without agreeing to any prior interim EPA.

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed analysis of the final process and outcome of the EPA negotiations, see Bilal, S. and C. Stevens eds. (2009), *The Interim Economic Partnership Agreements between the EU and African States: Contents, challenges and prospects*, ECDPM Policy management Report 17, with ODI, Maastricht: European Centre for Development Policy Management. [www.ecdpm.org/pmr17](http://www.ecdpm.org/pmr17)

Following the conclusion of some interim agreements by the end of 2007, EPA negotiations have continued in all African EPA regional groupings and in the Pacific in 2008 and 2009. At least formally, some countries or regions have achieved little progress since.

In parallel, the (interim) EPAs initialled at the end of 2007 had to be notified to the WTO. Before doing so, however, the EU insisted on completing first the 'legal scrubbing' of the agreements and on officially signing them. This process has taken much more time than expected. While the Caribbean EPA and the interim EPA with Cote d'Ivoire have been signed, notified to the WTO (Autumn 2008), and given assent by the European Parliament (25 March 2009), only few other countries have signed their interim EPAs, but in most cases not yet notified them at the WTO:

- in Central Africa: Cameroon on 15 January 2009 (notified to the WTO on 24 September 2009);
- in Southern African Development Community (SADC): Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland on 4 June 2009; Mozambique on 15 June 2009;
- in East and Southern Africa (ESA): Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles and Zimbabwe on 29 August 2009;
- in Pacific: Papua New Guinea on 30 August 2009.

Finally, while some other ACP countries have chosen to initial an interim EPA, they are yet to formally sign them. Table 1 summarises the situation as of the end of September 2009.

The African and Pacific regions are thus currently split between the countries that have not yet concluded any agreement with the EU, those that have concluded an interim EPA but still have to sign it more than a year-and-a-half after initialling, and those that have finally signed it.

These differences are important as they reflect not only superficial tensions, but are often symptomatic of more deeply rooted differences of approaches or concerns about the EPAs and regional integration processes. Understanding recent events is thus crucial to appreciate the possibilities of moving the EPAs forward. This is of particular relevance as all African and Pacific countries are currently engaged in on-going negotiations with the EU for the conclusion of final, regionally based EPAs.

## **2. Some major challenges**

Each country and region has its economic, political and negotiating specificities, making generalization a dangerous exercise as it can lead to serious misperception and misunderstanding. However, some challenges in the current EPA process are common to many stakeholders cutting across ACP countries. These include the elements enumerated and briefly discussed below.

### ***Negotiating final EPAs and status of interim agreements***

While all African and Pacific countries and regions have expressed the willingness to negotiate final EPAs that would supersede the interim agreements, the timeframe for concluding EPAs remains an issue. The EU has feared that in the absence of clear and binding deadlines, the negotiation process could drag on indefinitely. This is one of the prime reasons why the European Commission insisted on sticking to the end of 2007 deadline to conclude WTO-compatible trade agreements with the ACP. Over 20 months later, no final EPA has been concluded yet, and the negotiation process has stalled in several regions, such as Central Africa and Pacific. In addition, as mentioned above, several of the interim EPAs still remained to be signed, giving some credential to the European fears.

As far as African negotiators are concerned, this slow process can be explained by:

- (i) the moderate appetite if not reluctance to open up domestic markets to EU competition by concluding such a free trade agreement,
- (ii) concerns about the scope of a final EPA (see below),
- (iii) concerns about an appropriate development dimension, notably in terms of EU commitments to support accompanying measures to an EPA, a dimension missing or too weak in the current framework for some ACP stakeholders,
- (iv) concerns about some inadequate provisions in the interim EPAs (see below),
- (v) difficulties to reach common regional positions endorsed by all countries of a regional grouping, and
- (vi) numerous domestic capacity constraints, including to negotiate trade in services or some trade-related issues (e.g. investment, competition, government procurement, and intellectual property).

Should negotiations face delays, the interim agreements might be applied over a longer period than initially foreseen or even become permanent.

### *Contentious issues in the interim agreements*

Several African negotiators and politicians have voiced concerns over a number of provisions appearing within the interim agreements that they view as ‘contentious’ and which they demand to be reviewed. These issues include, among others: the definition of substantially all trade, transitional periods, export taxes, free circulation of goods, national treatment, bilateral safeguards, infant industry provisions, non-execution clause, the most favoured nation (MFN) clause and rules of origin.

The EU has acknowledged the existence of such contentious issues within the interim agreements and adopted a more flexible approach on some of the issues, already suggesting some revised provisions. Some African countries (e.g. Namibia) or regions (e.g. East African Community) would like to see the interim EPAs amended. But the EU is willing to consider revisions in the context of negotiations towards final and comprehensive EPAs only.<sup>3</sup> While the European Commission apparent flexibility has encouraged some countries to sign their interim EPA and move forward in the negotiations, it has antagonized some others who are reluctant to sign an interim agreement which they deem flawed and for which certain improvements have already been identified and some revised provisions agreed in principle with the EU. These tensions, which threaten the cohesion of regional integration processes, are best illustrated by the current situation in Southern Africa, where some members of the Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU) have recently signed their interim EPA and are actively engaged in negotiations towards a comprehensive EPA (i.e. Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland), whereas the other members continue to voice serious concerns about this process (i.e. Namibia and South Africa).<sup>4</sup>

The debate over contentious issues has crystallised tensions for two reasons. First, it reflects a divergence of view over some specific content of the agreements, which when considered of strategic importance by one of the parties may block progress in the negotiations or signing of an agreement. But it also highlights challenges related to the status of the interim agreements and the process towards a final EPA. The EU introduced interim agreements as temporary stepping-stones agreements that would bridge the gap between the loss of Cotonou preferences as of 1 January 2008 and the conclusions few months later of final EPAs. The

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<sup>3</sup> For an extensive discussion on these contentious issues, see Lui, D., and S. Bilal (2009), “Contentious Issues in the Interim EPAs: Potential flexibility in the negotiations”, ECDPM Discussion Paper 89, Maastricht: European Centre for Development Policy Management. [www.ecdpm.org/dp89](http://www.ecdpm.org/dp89)

<sup>4</sup> See Draper, P. and N. Khumalo (2009), “On the Future of the Southern African Customs Union”, *Trade Negotiations Insights* Vol.8, No.6, July-August 2009, ECDPM/ICTSD, [www.acp-eu-trade.org/tni](http://www.acp-eu-trade.org/tni)

EPA negotiations progressing at an extremely slow pace and their conclusions not yet in sight, the status of interim agreements become more prominent, as they should start being implemented by the African and Pacific countries concerned. Interim EPAs are fully-fledged free trade agreements in the sense of Article XXIV of GATT, which should thus be notified to the WTO and should be signed and ratified by the parties concerned, in line with their domestic procedures. They could be amended, in which case these amendments would have to be notified to the WTO and be signed and ratified as well by the parties. The EU is afraid that this would unduly delay the process of adoption and implementation of the interim EPAs and reduce the incentives of some countries to conclude a final EPA. On the contrary, some countries recent to have to sign and ratified an agreement they do not fully endorse, in particular on substantive issues where a compromised could or has been found with the EU.

### ***Thematic scope of final EPAs***

The rendez-vous clauses in the interim agreements specify areas to be addressed in negotiations (in particular relating to services and trade-related issues), without, however, prescribing the outcome of these talks. Accordingly, if negotiations on services and trade related issues are concluded, there are various options of how provisions may be designed in the final agreements, ranging from comprehensive rules to best endeavour language. In order to address the specificities of individual countries and sub-regions, variable geometry might be applied within a region, as some countries may undertake commitments on services liberalisation or other issues while others do not. Indeed, in the near future it seems most unlikely that any African or Pacific region will undertake common regional commitments on services and some critical trade-related issues. It is important, however, that commitments undertaken by individual countries in the context of an EPA remain coherent with their regional agenda and ambitions, to prevent regulatory fragmentation and disintegration of some regions.

### ***Harmonisation of the EPA process with regional integration initiatives***

So far, the only regions that have not been divided by the EPA process are the Caribbean<sup>5</sup> (with the exception of Haiti that has yet to sign the regional EPA) and the EAC.<sup>6</sup> Yet, the initial objective of EPAs is to foster regional integration and not to complicate it. The current challenge is thus to find sufficient common ground among regional partners and for the EU to provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate specific concerns in order for regional groupings to conclude final regional agreements, which harmonise commitments in a coherent manner among all countries within a region. However, should some countries continue to see little development benefits from concluding an EPA, it is likely that divergences over an EPA will remain in some regions, with the possibility of some EPAs *à la carte* being concluded. This outcome could seriously complicate regional integration initiatives.

### ***Development support for EPAs***

While all parties recognise the necessity of financial assistance to support the negotiation and implementation of EPAs, as well as to assist ACP countries in fully benefiting from these

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<sup>5</sup> For an assessment of the Caribbean EPA, see Stevens, C., Kennan, J., and Meyn, M. (2009), *The CARIFORUM and Pacific ACP Economic Partnership Agreements: Challenges Ahead?*, Economic Paper 87, London: Commonwealth Secretariat.

[www.odi.org.uk/resources/details.asp?id=2864&title=cariforum-pacific-acp-economic-partnership-agreements-challenges-ahead](http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/details.asp?id=2864&title=cariforum-pacific-acp-economic-partnership-agreements-challenges-ahead)

<sup>6</sup> See for instance Barabinde, O. and G. Faber (2009), "EPAs and Integration in SSA", in Faber, G. and J. Orbie eds., *Beyond Market Access for Economic Development: EU-Africa relations in transition*, Oxon and New York: Routledge, ch.6, pp.111-134; and Bilal, S. and C. Braun-Munzinger (2008), "EPA Negotiations and Regional Integration in Africa: Building or stumbling blocs". Conference Paper prepared for the 3rd trapca Annual Conference, Arusha, Tanzania, 13-14 November 2008. [www.ecdpm.org/bilal](http://www.ecdpm.org/bilal)

agreements, challenges relate both to the amounts and to the effective use of resources, which will be provided under the EU's joint Aid for Trade (AfT) strategy. While the European Commission has made clear that it will not provide any additional finance for EPA support beyond the 10<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF) currently available, EU member states have committed to increasing their AfT spending.<sup>7</sup> A challenge in implementing AfT is the translation of commitments into concrete programming and the effective assessment of needs in ACP countries and regions. The reality is that, while there is plenty of money to support trade-related initiatives in ACP countries, captured under the AfT umbrella, there is no specific additional commitment from donors to respond to the increasing needs that the implementation of an EPA would generate, in particular if ACP countries are to effectively adjust to a new competitive environment and develop their productive capacity and infrastructure accordingly.

In this respect, the case of West Africa will be particularly instructive. Indeed, the parties have agreed in June 2009 to conclude, by the autumn of 2009, a regional EPA on trade in goods and EPA-related development cooperation.<sup>8</sup> Notwithstanding the challenge of agreeing to a common market opening for Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) that complies with the minimum European requirements (currently set at 80% of the value of imports of EU products to the region), a major question remains as to how the EU will respond to the ECOWAS EPA Development Programme (EPADP/PAPED). Can the EPADP be further elaborated and used as a strategic template to programme AfT support for EPA and regional integration, in a way that promotes aid effectiveness principles as embodied in the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action (e.g. country ownership, donors alignment, coordination and harmonisation, mutual accountability)?<sup>9</sup> And can donors commit to provide sufficient support over time for this process?

### ***Impact of the global crisis***

The financial crisis, though having its origin in developed countries, has generated a global recession that has severe consequences for the prospects of economic growth and development of ACP countries, notably through a decline of trade and investment flows, lower remittances, some lower commodity prices with a greater volatility. This appears to have led already to a reduction of employment opportunities and an increase in poverty and malnutrition for the most vulnerable people. In this context, it becomes more urgent for ACP countries to unleash the potentials that regional integration processes carry to stimulate economic growth. The creation of effective regional markets, encompassing not only institutional arrangements but also physical integration, policy coordination and the pooling of resources, can be decisive to stimulate production capacities, trade and investment flows, when integrated in a broader development strategy that does not rely on an obsolete and rigid economic orthodoxy. The EPAs will be ultimately beneficial only if they can contribute to such regional objectives.

In the short run, EPAs offer little prospects of addressing the immediate consequences of the crisis. Special attention should thus be given to the scope of commitments and their sequencing, to reflect the specific current conditions and development approaches of each country and region. In particular, the difficulties resulting from the global crisis should be more explicitly taken into consideration in the EPA process. This should lead to greater flexibility in the EPA agenda, including *inter alia*:

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<sup>7</sup> The EU Aid for Trade Strategy specifies a concrete target of increasing EU trade related assistance (TRA) to €2 billion per year by 2010 (€1 billion each from the European Commission (EC) and from EU member states). As the EC is already close to providing its target, most of the increase in TRA is expected to come from member states. Around 50% of the increase is earmarked for ACP needs.

<sup>8</sup> See joint declaration available at <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/html/143819.htm>

<sup>9</sup> See [www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_3236398\\_35401554\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3343,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html)

- (i) possible revision of some EPA provisions regarding market opening, in particular by introducing, where appropriate, some flexibility in the scope and speed of trade liberalisation as well as in some other obligations (revision of schedules, safeguards, infant industry support measures, export restrictions, standstill clauses, rules of origin);
- (ii) careful services liberalisation, considering proper sequencing and regulatory requirements, notably in the sensitive sector of financial services (at the source of the financial crisis), and possible postponement of or agreement to a built-in agenda for commitments in this area when desired by the African parties;
- (iii) some flexibility and restraints in trade-related areas when the African side does not express an interest for negotiations in these areas.

In addition, the global crisis has further heightened the need for timely and appropriate level of support, notably in terms of EPA-related aid for trade, and effective delivery mechanisms. Greater effort should be made to effectively address the EPA-related loss of revenues from import duties and to support fiscal adjustment. The current crisis has made the fiscal debate extremely sensitive in some regions (notably West and Central Africa) and could even prevent the conclusion of an EPA by some African leaders. Without flexibilities, EPAs may add to the pain of the crisis.<sup>10</sup>

### **3. To be or not to be? Which way forward?**

Whether final and comprehensive EPAs will be concluded at the regional level in Africa and in the Pacific remains an open question. In the near future, however, it is unlikely that other regions will conclude Caribbean-like EPAs as only a handful of African countries remain committed to the ambitious EPA agenda initially set out under the impulse of the European Commission. Following the turbulent negotiating process of 2007, where antagonizing tactics and (at times disgraceful) power play were too common,<sup>11</sup> 2008 and 2009 have been marked by a return to a more serene atmosphere, thanks notably to the EU's Trade Commissioner Ashton, who has adopted a less confrontational approach than her predecessor, Peter Mandelson. But tensions have flared again in some instances, notably in Southern Africa, with South Africa and the EU at a deadlock. More generally, the post-2007 EPA process has been marked by a widespread apathy from most ACP actors.

Most ACP countries initially engaged in EPA negotiations with reluctance. The prime objective has been to maintain their preferential market access to the EU while making minimal commitments in terms of opening markets or regulatory reforms (including on the so-called trade-related issues). EPAs are generally not perceived as an opportunity, but as destiny, 'the price which must be paid to continue to export to Europe' - the main trading partner for many ACP countries. By concluding interim EPAs, those countries that really needed to conclude a new trade agreement with the EU to preserve preferential access to the European market have done so. Once the interim EPA signed, their market access was secured. Other countries that chose not to conclude an interim EPA and have relied instead on

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<sup>10</sup> For a discussion, see Bilal, S., P. Draper and D.W. te Welde (2009), "Global Financial and Economic Crisis: Analysis of and Implications for ACP-EU Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)", ECDPM Discussion Paper 92, Maastricht: The European Centre for Development Policy Management. [www.ecdpm.org/dp92](http://www.ecdpm.org/dp92)

<sup>11</sup> For an account, see for instance Bilal and Stevens (2009) cited in footnote 2; Elgström, O. (2009), "From Cotonou to EPA Light: A troubled negotiating process", in Faber, G. and J. Orbie eds., *Beyond Market Access for Economic Development: EU-Africa relations in transition*, Oxon and New York: Routledge, ch.2, pp.21-37; and Weller, C. and K. Ulmer (2008), "Trade and Governance: Does governance matter for trade?", November, Brussels: Aprodev. [www.aprodev.net/trade/Files/Events/Trade-and-gov.pdf](http://www.aprodev.net/trade/Files/Events/Trade-and-gov.pdf)

the EU GSP (standard or EBA) since 2008, do seem to have been negatively affected. The main driving force for pursuing regional EPA negotiations is thus the need to maintain a regionally coherent preferential regime with the EU.<sup>12</sup>

This is the case in West Africa, where the region's agenda to form a customs union is incompatible with a couple of countries (Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire) having concluded interim free trade agreements with the EU. Fostering regional integration seems thus the main traction for pursuing a regional EPA, though there is no guarantee of success. It is also worth noting that the EU seems to have implicitly lowered its ambitions, having accepted to conclude a goods-only agreement (and development cooperation at the instance of ECOWAS), the first such agreement since the end of 2007. It is doubtful that negotiations, if successfully concluded, will quickly move towards a "second phase" to include trade in services and trade-related issues. For the EU too, preserving regional coherence seems to be the paramount objective.

In Central Africa, where the situation is a priori similar to the one in West Africa, one country – Cameroon – has concluded an interim EPA. However, the state of the region's integration, the political dynamics and the institutional capacity constraints are such that EPA negotiations have gone into a sleeping mode, with no progress in sight.

In Southern Africa, the region is divided between Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, joined by Mozambique on the one side, and Namibia and South Africa, joined by Angola, on the other side, splitting SACU and SADC and threatening the existence of the current regional arrangements unless a compromise is found soon. Internal regional politics seem to have played a crucial role in the respective positions in the regions, notably between Botswana and South Africa. In this context, the EPA negotiations have further exacerbated existing tensions. While technically not out of reach, it is unclear whether diverging positions can be mended to conclude a regional EPA.

In East and Southern Africa, where countries have negotiated jointly but concluded individual interim agreements, regional coherence is not yet at stake, though the ambitions to form a COMESA-EAC-SADC free trade area and customs union will not be sustainable with heterogeneous market access commitments towards the EU. Most countries that have opted out from interim EPAs are likely to maintain their position. Those with an interim EPA are pursuing further negotiations with the EU, which are likely to lead to agreements with variable geometry, some countries accepting commitments on trade in services, for instance, while others are not willing to commit at this stage.

As for the Pacific, negotiations are also de facto frozen, with most of the attention of the region focused on their new trade negotiations with Australia and New Zealand. A regional EPA is unlikely to emerge soon.

Besides these regional considerations, two other key factors will determine the occurrence and shape of final EPAs, none of which are related to traditional technical trade and development considerations, which should arguably be guiding principles for trade negotiators. The first is the availability of additional aid related to an EPA, or at least the new packaging of existing development cooperation commitments to give the impression that fresh AfT is forthcoming. Many African countries have expressed their support for an EPA on the condition that appropriate development assistance is delivered. To the extent that new AfT programmes provide the opportunity for better needs assessments, a more strategic orientation of the support provided and greater coherence among donors, along the aid effectiveness principles of the Paris Declaration, this may result in pro-development

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<sup>12</sup> In this regard, it is interesting to note that regional negotiators are often more positive about the EPA ambitions than their national counterparts.

outcomes. But as stressed by the EU member states,<sup>13</sup> additional aid should not be the bait for ACP to conclude an EPA. However, since the EU is not able or willing to commit new funding, repackaging of old wine into new bottle is likely to be the approach followed.

The second factor is political. A major lesson of the EPA process so far is that many of the ultimate decisions are driven by politics. Some ACP Head of States have been lobbied if not pressured by the EU to conclude an EPA, and decisions have not necessarily been made on the technical merits of the EPA provisions negotiated, but on broader political and geostrategic considerations. This is unlikely to drastically change in the near future, and trade analysts should not be surprised if they are at times at a loss to explain the outcome of the negotiations and national decisions to conclude or not an EPA.

While it would be foolish to predict the outcome of the current EPA negotiations, it is fair to assume that a patchwork framework of EPAs is likely to emerge over the coming months, with some countries concluding a comprehensive EPA, some limiting their ambition to agreements covering trade in goods (most likely including a rendez-vous clause), and others abstaining altogether from sealing any deal. This should come as no surprise, though, as there is no 'one-size-fits-all' recipe for development,<sup>14</sup> and trade agreements should be tailored to the specific conditions of the parties engaged. But whatever the outcome, it is important to remember that EPAs make sense only for those countries and regions, which are seriously committed to a reform process. In these cases, the EPAs should be framed accordingly, to provide the supporting framework while preserving the necessary flexibility to actively pursue other development policy reforms and adjustments. To engage in EPAs under any other circumstances, or to contemplate signing far-reaching agreements purely on the basis of maintaining access to EU market, would be absurd and incredibly short sighted.

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<sup>13</sup> See Council Conclusions of 27 May 2008 <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/08/st09/st09629.en08.pdf> and of 11 November 2008 <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/08/st15/st15298.en08.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> See notably Rodrik, D. (2007), *One Economics, Many Recipes: Globalization, Institutions, and Economic Growth*. Princeton University Press.

**Table 1. Overview of ACP EPA status (as of September 2009)**

Regional Grouping	Members <sup>1</sup>	Trade regime <sup>2</sup>	Liberalisation commitment <sup>3</sup>	Signature	Notification to WTO
ESA EPA	<i>Comoros</i>	IEPA	81%		
	<i>Djibouti</i>	EBA			
	<i>Eritrea</i>	EBA			
	<i>Ethiopia</i>	EBA			
	<i>Madagascar</i>	IEPA	81%	29/08/09	
	<i>Malawi</i>	EBA		29/08/09	
	<i>Mauritius</i>	IEPA	96%	29/08/09	
	<i>Seychelles</i>	IEPA	98%	29/08/09	
	<i>Sudan</i>	EBA			
	<i>Zambia</i>	IEPA	80%		
	<i>Zimbabwe</i>	IEPA	80%	29/08/09	
EAC EPA	<i>Burundi</i>	IEPA			
	<i>Kenya</i>	IEPA			
	<i>Rwanda</i>	IEPA			
	<i>Tanzania</i>	IEPA			
	<i>Uganda</i>	IEPA			
SADC EPA	<i>Angola</i>	EBA			
	<i>Botswana</i>	IEPA	86%	04/06/09	
	<i>Lesotho</i>	IEPA	86%	04/06/09	
	<i>Mozambique</i>	IEPA	81%	15/06/09	
	<i>Namibia</i>	IEPA	86%	04/06/09	
	<i>South Africa</i>	TDCA	86%	11/10/99	02/11/2000
CEMAC EPA	<i>Cameroon</i>	IEPA	80%	15/01/09	24/09/2009
	<i>Chad</i>	EBA			
	<i>Cent. African Rep.</i>	EBA			
	<i>Congo</i>	Standard GSP			
	<i>DR Congo</i>	EBA			
	<i>Eq. Guinea</i>	EBA			
	<i>Gabon</i>	Standard GSP			
	<i>S. Tomé/Principe</i>	EBA			
ECOWAS EPA	<i>Benin</i>	EBA			
	<i>Burkina Faso</i>	EBA			
	<i>Cape Verde<sup>4</sup></i>	EBA			
	<i>Côte d'Ivoire</i>	IEPA	81%	26/11/08	11/12/08
	<i>Gambia</i>	EBA			
	<i>Ghana</i>	IEPA	80%		
	<i>Guinea Bissau</i>	EBA			
	<i>Liberia</i>	EBA			
	<i>Mali</i>	EBA			
	<i>Mauritania</i>	EBA			
	<i>Niger</i>	EBA			
	<i>Nigeria</i>	Standard GSP			
	<i>Senegal</i>	EBA			
	<i>Sierra Leone</i>	EBA			
<i>Togo</i>	EBA				

Regional Grouping	Members <sup>1</sup>	Trade regime <sup>2</sup>	Liberalisation commitment <sup>3</sup>	Signature	Notification to WTO
PACP EPA	Cook Islands Fed. Micronesia Fiji <i>Kiribati</i> Marshall Islands Nauru Niue Palau Papua New Guinea <i>Samoa</i> <i>Solomon Islands</i> Tonga <i>Tuvalu</i> <i>Vanuatu</i>	Standard GSP Standard GSP IEPA EBA Standard GSP Standard GSP Standard GSP Standard GSP IEPA EBA EBA Standard GSP EBA EBA		30/08/09	
CARIFORUM EPA	Antigua/Barbuda Bahamas Barbados Belize Dominica Dominican Rep. Grenada Guyana <i>Haiti</i> Jamaica St Kitts/Nevis St Lucia St Vincent/Grenadines Suriname Trinidad/Tobago	EPA EPA EPA EPA EPA EPA EPA EPA EBA EPA EPA EPA EPA EPA EPA	87% 87% 87% 87% 87% 87% 87% 87% 87% 87% 87% 87% 87% 87% 87%	15/10/08 15/10/08 15/10/08 15/10/08 15/10/08 15/10/08 15/10/08 21/10/08 15/10/08 15/10/08 15/10/08 15/10/08 15/10/08 15/10/08 15/10/08	16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08 16/10/08
<b>Notes</b> <sup>1</sup> Countries in italics are classified as LDCs <sup>2</sup> EPA: economic partnership agreement; IEPA: interim EPA; EBA: Everything-But-Arms; GSP: generalised system of preferences; TDCA: Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement <sup>3</sup> Estimates of goods trade liberalisation in EPA/IEPAs as reported by the European Commission (in percentage of value of imports from EU); for independent estimates, see Bilal and Stevens (2009) for Africa and Stevens, Kennan and Meyn (2009) for the Caribbean and Pacific countries. <sup>4</sup> Cape Verde has been classified as non-LDC since January 2008 but will be able to export to the EU under the EBA initiative for a transitional period of three years.					