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**1<sup>st</sup> EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY – EUROPEAN COMMISSION MEETING  
ON NEGOTIATIONS OF AN ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT  
14<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2007, BRUSSELS**

**Joint Conclusions**

1. Ministers from the East African Community (EAC) and Commissioners from the European Union (EU) met in Brussels on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007. The EAC delegation was led by Rt. Hon. Eriya Kategaya, Chairman of the EAC Council of Ministers and 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for East African Community Affairs of the Republic of Uganda. The EAC delegation also included Ministers from the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Republic of Uganda; and Plenipotentiaries from the Republic of Kenya, and Republic of Rwanda. The EU Commissioner for Trade, Peter Mandelson, and the Commissioner for Development, Louis Michel, represented the EU.
2. The main purpose of the meeting was to take stock of the EPA negotiations in view of the impending expiry of the trade regime set out in the ACP-EC Partnership (Cotonou) Agreement, and to provide political impetus and guidance for next steps in the negotiations process.
3. The Parties acknowledged that the EAC is a Customs Union and would therefore engage in the EPAs process as one entity and that the interim agreement will be concluded as a separate configuration. They therefore agreed to conclude an EAC-EC EPA text.
4. The Ministers and Commissioners noted that within the very short time remaining until the expiry of the Cotonou Agreement trade regime on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007, it would not be possible to conclude a comprehensive EPA that fully addresses the aspirations of all Parties. They, therefore, resolved to work towards a framework agreement as a stepping stone towards an EAC-EC EPA that will comprise of Trade in Goods/Market Access, Development Cooperation, and Fisheries. The framework agreement will also provide a mechanism for continuation of negotiations beyond. 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007.
5. The framework agreement will be applied provisionally from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008. In this respect, the Parties will put in place necessary regulations and procedures, including the adoption of transitional arrangements by the EC, in order to avoid any disruption in the flow of trade between the Parties. The Ministers and Commissioners reaffirmed their commitment to conclude a comprehensive EPA as a tool for, inter alia, development, promotion and consolidation of regional integration, and integration of the EAC into the global economy.

## **Market Access**

6. The EAC welcomed the EC Market Access offer that consists of duty free and quota free Market Access, with transitional arrangements for rice and sugar.

7. The EC welcomed the EAC Market Access offer consisting of liberalization of 81% of her imports from the EU over a transitional period of twenty five years and noted that it meets most of the parameters of WTO compatibility. They mandated technical experts to undertake further work in refining the EAC Market Access offer.

## **Development Cooperation**

8. The Ministers and Commissioners agreed that on the basis of text already agreed by the EC with configurations in the region and the already existing Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC), EAC and EC will conclude a joint text on how to address development issues, during the time span of the framework agreement. They therefore directed technical experts to adapt the texts to reflect the EAC context for the full EPA, taking into account, inter alia, EAC Development Strategies.

9. The Parties further agreed that the EU would contribute towards the necessary resources to finance necessary adjustments and to give effect to an EPA as a development tool. They acknowledged that this would require additional resources, and resolved to jointly mobilize the resources.

## **Built-in Agenda/Way Forward**

10. On the way forward, the Ministers and Commissioners agreed that:
- a) Technical experts finalize the framework agreement
  - b) Further work be undertaken on finalization of the EAC Market Access offer
  - c) Prepare for the initialing of the framework agreement as soon as possible, but no later than 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2007 to enable the EC move the framework agreement through internal processes so that it enters into force as scheduled on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008
  - d) Continue with negotiations on remaining issues as per the framework agreement

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**Rt. Hon. Eriya Kategaya**  
**Chairman, EAC Council of Ministers**

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**Peter Mandelson**  
**EU Commissioner for Trade**

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**Louis Michel**  
**EU Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Assistance**