

EU welcomes ratification of interim EPA by Seychelles

The European Commission welcomes the ratification by the Seychelles of the new trade and development partnership with the EU. The Seychelles negotiated the interim Economic Partnership Agreement in the framework of the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) regional group. The Commission hopes other members of the ESA group will follow Seychelles' steps and proceed with signature and ratification of the interim EPA.

The EU-ESA interim EPA was signed by the EU and Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar, and Zimbabwe in Mauritius on 29th August 2009. For Zambia and Comoros, which initialled the Agreement in 2007, signature is still pending. The interim EPA encompasses duty-free, quota-free access to EU markets and key provisions on development co-operation and fisheries. The Seychelles will liberalise 98% of its imports from the EU within 15 years.

The EU looks forward to moving ahead towards a comprehensive regional agreement with ESA which will go beyond trade in goods, covering services, investment, government procurement, competition etc. EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht met ESA Trade Ministers in Brussels on 14th April in Brussels, see:

<http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=551>

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