



EPA Flash News - Talks on the EU-West Africa Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA): Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), 23-24 October 2009



The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the EU and the West African region was discussed at a meeting between negotiators from the two regions in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) on 23-24 October 2009. Talks focussed on the West African market access offer. Representatives from the region presented a revised offer, after extensive consultations within West Africa itself.

Both sides remain committed to further negotiations, to come to an offer that reflects the development needs of the region and have agreed that next round of negotiations at technical level will take place in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, from 10 to 12 November followed by a meeting of Senior Officials on 13 November.

BACKGROUND

The EU-West Africa bilateral trade is represented by import-export of goods worth €43.6 billion (both ways, 2008 data), however more than half of this is in EU-Nigeria trade (oil). Excluding Nigeria, the EU mainly exports industrial goods including mechanical machinery (14%), electrical machinery (9%) and vehicles (7%) to the region. Excluding oil from Nigeria (55% of West African exports) the region's main exports to the EU are represented by cocoa (11%), iron (8%) and rubber (6%). Only two West African countries, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, initialled bilateral "stepping stone (or "interim") EPAs" with the EU at the end of 2007. The interim EPA with Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire) was signed on 26 November 2008.

For further information please log on to:

<http://ec.europa.eu/trade/wider-agenda/development/economic-partnerships/negotiations/>

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