



Trade Policy Training Centre for Southern Africa

3rd Trade Policy Research Forum:
Proposed Theme: Trade Policy for Growth in Africa
29 – 30 July 2010

Proposed List of Discussion Topics

1. *Trade Policy and Trade Facilitation for African Economic Growth: an Overview*

Despite years of efforts, Africa still faces severe challenges towards achieving productive regional economic integration and enhancing trade at all levels: intra-regional, inter-regional and international. It remains important that the issues of trade reforms and trade facilitation be positioned within a broader framework of engineering economic and social change. The first presentation of the Forum should provide a broad overview of the current state of play and effects of trade policy and trade facilitation efforts in Africa, and initiate a general discussion based on a proposed way forward. This topic will:

- a) Present an overview of the situation of continental and international trade in Africa, as well as the key regional trade facilitation efforts and domestic trade policies of selected African countries. This should include case studies of failure and success experiences.
- b) Provide an evidence-based assessment of the factors accounting for successes recorded, and/or the key challenges responsible for poor results arising from the implementation of previous and existing trade policies and trade facilitation initiatives.
- c) Propose a pragmatic conceptual approach towards more productive trade facilitation initiatives and trade policies required for the successful implementation of regional integration schemes and multilateral trade arrangements, with the view to promoting Africa's economic growth and development.

2. *Export Markets Diversification for Growth and Structural Change in Africa: Lessons Learned from the Recent Global Recession.*

The lead presentation and subsequent discussion on this topic should focus on exploring new potential destinations for African exports besides the USA and EU, which were among the hardest hit markets by the recent Global Recession. The following research questions can be addressed:

- a) What has been the effect of the recent Global Recession on African countries exports to USA and EU markets?

- b) Do emerging LDC and Asian economies have rising demand for African exports? If so, which ones? What are the implications for African Growth?
- c) What is the potential for increasing exports through the African continental market? How can such potential be tapped?
- d) Diversification through value added products

3. *Services Trade in Africa: Unilateral Reforms, Multilateral Commitments and Economic Growth*

The lead presentation and subsequent discussion on this topic should explore the impacts of unilateral reforms and multilateral commitments under GATS on economic growth in Africa. Although all services sectors may be considered, focus can be restricted to those sectors where most liberalisation has occurred over the past two decades, notably financial and telecommunication sectors. Issues to be addressed may include the following:

- a) What unilateral trade-related reforms and multilateral commitments have been implemented in Africa's (selected) services sectors. What has been the relation between these two?
- b) How have the reforms and/or commitments impacted on economic growth among African countries? How does this compare with the impacts of similar initiatives internationally?
- c) Is there a case for further reforms? In which sectors would this be necessary? What national, regional or continental goals still require such further reforms?
- d) What has been the nature and extent of services trade integration initiatives among African regional economic communities (e.g., WAEMU, CEMAC, SADC, COMESA, EAC),
- e) Based on the evidence, have these regional integration initiatives achieved intended objectives across all countries? What is the evidence based on a winner-loser analysis of the benefits and costs?
- f) To what extent have these initiatives been consistent with multilateralism?
- g) Is there a case and/or scope for further integration? In which areas, and in pursuit of which goals?

4. *Towards Reciprocity between the EU and African EPAs*

While *reciprocity* has been sternly resisted by many Africa countries in ACP-EU negotiations, it is apparent that this could ultimately emerge as the principle to replace *preferences* that are not

compatible with the WTO. As such, research towards the appropriate design of a *Reciprocal Package between the EU and African EPAs* is a necessity. The lead presentation and discussion on this topic should propose a carefully designed reciprocal package, with focus on the following issues:

- a) What realistic options exist for Africa regarding the preferences-versus-reciprocity debate in ACP-EU trade negotiations?
- b) Is Africa not missing an opportunity, by each country negotiating its own EPA with the EU (except EAC)?
- c) What lessons can SSA learn from EAC EPA, the Negotiating Frameworks for the Eastern and Southern African States' EPA and/or the Caribbean EPA? Can any or a combination of the elements of these initiatives illuminate the process of designing a reciprocity package for SSA or the Tripartite (SADC, EAC, COMESA) arrangement?
- d) What would be the appropriate strategy in designing an Africa EPA reciprocity package? E.g., should it be at the sectoral level (like infrastructure)?

5. *Enhancing the Tradability of Agriculture in SSA*

Starting with the *MAPUTO* call to invest at least 10% of the African government budgets in Agriculture, how should we devise “ex-ante” trade policies that increase the tradability of Agricultural products in SSA? The lead presentation and subsequent discussion should address the following issues:

- a) What potential exists for increasing comparative advantages in and tradability of agricultural products among SSA countries?
- b) What barriers exist against the realisation of these further comparative advantages and trade potential? What trade policies (and related policies) are required to address these bottlenecks?
- c) Are there any regional, continental or global best practices from which lessons can be derived? Which are these?