



## **GHANA-EU Interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)**

### **2<sup>nd</sup> GHANA-EU EPA Committee**

**29<sup>th</sup> November 2019**  
**Brussels, Charlemagne Building**

### **AGREED MINUTES**

The second meeting of the EPA Committee under the Interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between Ghana and the EU was held in Brussels on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

#### **Opening ceremony**

1. In her opening remarks, Ms Helena König, Deputy-Director General of Trade, European Commission, emphasized her satisfaction that EPA implementation was now picking up steam and that the Parties were making progress with regard to key provisions such as liberalisation and Rules of Origin. Ms König also expressed her hope that the EPA will become a platform for dialogue between the parties, on all matters related to trade and sustainable development.
2. In his opening remarks, Hon. Alan Kyerematen, Minister of Trade and Industry of Ghana, explained that Ghana and the EU were entering into a new phase of their partnership, now that effective liberalization under the EPA will start in Ghana. The Minister also highlighted that under the Ghana Beyond Aid strategy, Ghana was looking to mobilize aid more strategically, towards diversifying its economy and increasingly shifting to trade and investment instead of aid.

#### **Adoption of the Agenda**

3. The Agenda was adopted.

#### **Presentation of the final market access offer and liberalisation schedule and update on internal preparation for first round of liberalisation in 2020**

4. Ghana presented its market access offer and schedule to the meeting. The EU confirmed that the liberalisation schedule is in line with the options discussed during the technical discussions between the EU and Ghana. The EPA committee endorsed the full market access offer and schedule. The Market Access Offer is annexed to the minutes. Liberalisation will start in the first quarter in 2020. Starting with 2021, liberalisation will take place on 1<sup>st</sup> of January of each year indicated in the schedule.

5. The parties agreed to publish the revised offer and schedule as follows:
- Ghana will publish the market access offer and schedule on the website of the Ministry of Trade and Industry and on the website of the Ghana Revenue Authority.
  - The EU will publish the offer and schedule on its website Market Access Database (MADB).
6. Ghana also presented the next steps in terms of legislative procedure to implement the schedule:
- The Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) will formalise the liberalisation schedule;
  - The Customs Division of the GRA will generate an administrative notice to instruct its agents to start its implementation;
  - GRA will create a transaction status in its system with a customs procedure code (CPC) identifying the products benefiting from Ghana's preference;
  - Ghana informed that this process will be finalised by the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2020 to start implementation by the end of the first quarter 2020;
7. The EU stated that on their side, no further action is needed to implement the EPA preferences, as these are already fully applied.

**Update on respective internal processes to adopt the reciprocal rules of origin of the interim EPA**

8. The Parties considered the outcome of the legal scrubbing of the Rules of Origin. A factual mistake in Article 7 was corrected. The reference to the ECOWAS Commission was replaced with a reference to The Ministry of Trade and Industry of The Republic of Ghana. The Parties agreed on the changes resulting from the legal scrubbing and agreed on the final version of the Rules of Origin, which are annexed to these minutes. The parties agreed to adopt formally the Rules of Origin through written procedure.

**Bilateral meeting: between Hon. Alan Kyerematen, Minister of Trade and Industry, Ghana with the EU Trade Commissioner, Mr Hogan, and Ms Sabine Weyand, Director General for Trade, European Commission.**

9. A constructive and friendly bilateral meeting took place with Hon. Alan Kyerematen, Minister of Trade and Industry, Ghana the EU Trade Commissioner, Mr Hogan, and Ms Sabine Weyand, Director General for Trade, European Commission. Main point of discussions concerned the linkage between the EPA and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), as well as the strategy "Ghana Beyond Aid" which aims at promoting industrialisation of the country. Furthermore, both sides exchanged views on the reform of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

**Signature of the decision on Croatia Accession**

10. The Committee agreed to sign the EPA committee decision 1/2019 on Croatia Accession. There was an agreement to sign the decision on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2019.

### **State of play on EPAs and Brexit (EU) and ACFTA (Ghana)**

11. The EU informed the meeting about recent developments with regard to the implementation of Economic Partnership Agreements with Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), as well as on the Brexit.
12. Ghana provided an update on recent developments with regard to the negotiations and implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

### **Debrief on discussions with Côte d'Ivoire on Sustainability in the Cocoa value chain (EU)**

13. The EU debriefed the Committee on recent discussions with Côte d'Ivoire on Sustainability in the Cocoa value chain. The EU Government of Côte d'Ivoire is pursuing multiple initiatives in the cocoa sector, aiming to stop deforestation, resettle small holder farmers working in protected forest and fight against child labour. EU also debriefed the meeting on a recent meeting with the Ghana Cocoa Board where the Cocoa Board showed a strong interest to dialogue with the EU on these issues. As a result, an agreement was reached to organise a joint ministerial mission (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana) to Brussels early 2020 to discuss on cocoa and sustainability with interested stakeholders (including the European Commission, Member States and the Parliament).

### **Discussion of revised Rules of Procedures for the EPA Committee**

14. The EU introduced an updated version of the rules of procedures, which seeks to reinforce and strengthen the text. Parties reviewed the revised text and the Committee endorsed the text of the rules of procedures, which is annexed to the minutes. The parties agreed that after legal scrubbing, the rules of procedures will be adopted by written procedure.

### **Debrief on the results of the study "Impact of the interim EPAs with Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire on regional integration in West Africa" (EU)**

15. The EU debriefed the Committee on the results of the study "Impact of the interim EPAs on regional integration". Ghana expressed a great interest in the study. Ghana informed the EU side that it will study the report and identify areas for possible cooperation. .

### **Update on the EPA- related EU-Ghana development programmes (EU)**

16. The EU provided an update on EU-Ghana trade-related cooperation programmes, including the External Investment Plan.

### **Conclusion and working plan for 2020**

17. The parties expressed their satisfaction with the progress achieved during the meeting. Both sides agreed to the next steps as follows:
  - To publish Ghana's Market Access Offer and Schedule in the first quarter of 2020;
  - To adopt the Rules of Origin through written procedure in the first quarter of 2020;
  - To start the process of adoption of the Rules of Procedure;
  - To hold a Videoconference within the first quarter of 2020 in order to agree on the next deliverables and timelines for those;
  - To hold the next EPA Committee in the second quarter of 2020 in Accra.

