

**DECISION ON THE REPORT ON NEGOTIATIONS OF ECONOMIC
PARTNESHIP AGREEMENTS (EPAs)
DOC. EX.CL/422(XIII)**

The Assembly:

1. **TAKES NOTE** of the progress report of the Commission on the Negotiations of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs);
2. **ENDORSES** the Declaration on the EPA Negotiations adopted by the Joint Conference of AU Ministers of Trade and Finance in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in April 2008;
3. **REQUESTS** Member States that have had to initial individual Interim EPAs to avoid disruption of their trade with the European Union (EU) after the 31st of December 2007 deadline, to pursue and finalize within their Regional Economic Communities (RECs)/Regional Groupings the negotiation and conclusion of full and comprehensive EPAs;
4. **FURTHER REQUESTS** the Member States concerned to ensure that the contentious issues in the Interim EPAs that have been identified by the AU Ministers of Trade and Finance are adequately addressed in the negotiations of full and comprehensive EPAs;
5. **URGES** the European Commission not to put pressure on African Governments to ratify the Interim Agreements without taking into account the concerns raised on the contentious issues;
6. **INVITES** the European Commission to honour the commitment made by the Council in Brussels on 27 May 2008 to make EPAs an instrument for the promotion of development ,support to regional integration, and gradual integration of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of States in the world economy, and **URGES** the European Commission to fully reflect this commitment in the negotiation and conclusion of full and comprehensive EPAs;
7. **REQUESTS** the AU Commission , in collaboration with the United Nations Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the RECs, to accelerate the elaboration of a full EPA template to be used as a guideline by all African countries / groups negotiating full EPAs;
8. **URGES** the European Union to consider providing an alternative trading arrangement, that is World Trade Organisation (WTO) – compatible but not less favourable than the Lome/Cotonou trading regime, to African countries/groups that have not initialled Interim EPAs and may not be in a position to conclude full EPAs;

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9. **CALLS ON** the AU Commission and the European Union Commission to facilitate an early convening of the high-level Africa-Europe consultations on EPAs, as agreed in Lisbon during the Second Europe – Africa Summit, held in Portugal, in December 2007;
 10. **REQUESTS** African negotiating countries and groups to remain united in their engagement with the European Union Commission on EPAs;
 11. **REQUESTS** the AU Commission to strengthen its coordination and harmonization of the positions of the countries and groups in the negotiations of full EPAs;
 12. **URGES** Member States and the RECs to take full advantage of the European Union Aid for Trade resources.

2008

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