

**DECISION ON THE STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS OF ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION – DOC. EX.CL/358 (XI)**

**The Executive Council:**

1. **TAKES NOTE** of the Report of the Commission on the Status of Negotiations of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with the European Union (EU);
2. **ALSO TAKES NOTE** of the Decision of the 85<sup>th</sup> Session of the ACP Council of Ministers, held in Brussels on 21 – 24 May 2007, on the EPA Negotiations;
3. **RECALLS** the Declaration on EPA that was adopted by the Assembly of the African Union at its 8<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session, held in Addis Ababa in January 2007;
4. **EXPRESSES DEEP CONCERN** at the slow progress in the EPAs negotiations on the development dimension, such as additional resources for meeting adjustment costs and building and strengthening of the production and supply capacities, that are vital to making EPAs effective instruments for the achievement of sustainable economic growth and eradication of poverty in African countries;
5. **WELCOMES** the political commitment of EU Member States to ensure that EPAs will serve as development instruments for ACP countries;
6. **CALLS ON** the European Commission to reflect in their negotiating positions the political commitment of EU Member States to make EPAs instruments of development;
7. **RECOMMENDS** that the Chairperson of the African Union and/or Chairperson of the Commission engage the political leadership of the European Union at the highest level on the concerns and difficulties of African countries in the EPA negotiations;
8. **URGES** the EU to consider putting in place transitional measures that will safeguard the continued entry of African exports to the EU market beyond December 2007, given the low likelihood of satisfactorily addressing all outstanding EPA issues as well as the impossibility of completing EPA ratification process by the end of 2007;
9. **REQUESTS** the Commission and the African negotiating RECs/Regional Groups to prepare and submit for the consideration of the AU Ministers of Trade and other policy organs of the AU a comprehensive report on the progress, problems and the way forward in trade and economic cooperation with the EU.

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