

GHANA-EU Interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)

2nd GHANA-EU EPA Committee, 29th November 2019, Brussels, Charlemagne Building

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

The second meeting of the EPA Committee under the Interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between Ghana and the EU was held in Brussels on 29th November 2019. The EPA provides duty-free and quota-free access to all Ghana's exports, agricultural or manufactured, to the EU market, while Ghana will gradually and partially liberalize imports from the EU.

During the opening ceremony, Hon. Alan Kyerematen, Minister of Trade and Industry of Ghana, stressed that Ghana and the EU were entering into a new phase of their partnership, with the start of liberalization under the EPA 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 boosting trade and investment.

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 good progress. Ms König also expressed her hope that the EPA will become a platform for dialogue between the parties, on matters related to trade and sustainable development.

The Parties endorsed the full market access offer and market access schedule of Ghana. Ghana will start to liberalise its market for EU products by the first quarter of 2020. The liberalisation schedule would be concluded by 2029.

The Parties agreed on the final version of the Protocol on Rules of Origin and would adopt it officially through a written procedure in the first quarter of 2020.

The EPA Committee also agreed on the rules of procedures for the EPA Committee.

The Parties exchanged views on the implementation of Economic Partnership Agreements with other African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. The EU debriefed the Ghanaian side on Brexit. Ghana highlighted recent progress on the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The parties exchanged views on sustainability in the cocoa value chain. The EU informed the Committee that there are currently discussions in the EU on the challenges related to social and environmental sustainability in the cocoa industry. The parties agreed to organise, as a first step, a joint high-level mission including Côte d'Ivoire and to work together to find solutions to the challenges.

The parties expressed their satisfaction with the progress achieved during the meeting. Both sides agreed to hold a Videoconference in the first quarter of 2020 in order to agree on the next deliverables and timelines. Both sides agreed to hold the next EPA Committee in the second quarter of 2020.

**