

TITLE I

OBJECTIVES

ARTICLE 1

Interim Agreement

This Agreement establishes an initial framework for an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

By "initial framework", the Parties mean an Interim Agreement comprising, on the one hand, actual and enforceable commitments according to the provisions of this Agreement and, on the other hand, negotiations on incorporating additional elements in order to arrive at a full EPA in accordance with the Cotonou Agreement.

ARTICLE 2

General objectives and scope

The general objectives of this Agreement are to:

- (a) contribute to the reduction and eventual eradication of poverty by establishing a trade partnership consistent with the objective of sustainable development, the Millennium Development Goals and the Cotonou Agreement;

- (b) promote a regional economy in Central Africa that is more competitive and diversified, and stronger growth;
- (c) foster regional integration, economic cooperation and good governance in the Central African region;
- (d) promote the gradual integration of the Central Africa Party into the global economy, in accordance with its political choices and its development priorities;
- (e) improve the capacities of the Central Africa Party in terms of trade policy and trade-related issues;
- (f) establish and implement an effective, predictable and transparent regulatory framework for trade and investment in the Central African region, thus supporting the conditions for increasing investment and private-sector initiatives, and enhance capacity for the supply of products and services, competitiveness and economic growth in the region;
- (g) strengthen existing relations between the Parties on the basis of solidarity and mutual interest. To this end, in line with the WTO obligations, the Agreement will enhance commercial and economic relations, support a new trading dynamic between the Parties by means of the progressive, asymmetrical liberalisation of trade between them and reinforce, broaden and deepen cooperation in all areas relevant to trade;
- (h) promote private-sector development and employment growth.

ARTICLE 3

Specific objectives

In accordance with Articles 34 and 35 of the Cotonou Agreement, the specific objectives of this Agreement are to:

- (a) establish a basis for the negotiation of an EPA which will help reduce poverty, promote regional integration, economic cooperation and good governance in Central Africa and increase Central Africa's production, export and supply capacities, as well as its ability to attract foreign investment and its capacities in terms of trade policy and trade-related issues;
- (b) foster the smooth and gradual integration of Central Africa into the global economy, in accordance with its political choices and its development priorities;
- (c) strengthen existing relations between the Parties on the basis of solidarity and mutual interest;
- (d) create an Agreement that is compatible with the rules of the WTO;

- (e) establish a basis for negotiating and implementing an effective, predictable and transparent regulatory framework for trade, investment, competition, intellectual property, public procurement and sustainable development in the Central African region, thus supporting the conditions for increasing investment and private-sector initiatives, and enhance capacity for the supply of goods and services, competitiveness and economic growth in the region;
- (f) provide a roadmap for negotiations on the areas referred to in paragraph (e) for which it was not possible to complete negotiations in 2007.