

- (b) to lay the foundations for the negotiation of an EPA which will help to reduce poverty, promote regional integration, economic cooperation and good governance in West Africa and to improve West Africa's capacities as regards commercial policy and trade-related issues;
- (c) to promote the harmonious and progressive integration of West Africa into the world economy, in accordance with its political choices and development priorities;
- (d) to strengthen the existing relations between the Parties on the basis of solidarity and mutual interest;
- (e) to create an agreement which is compatible with Article XXIV of GATT 1994.

TITLE II

PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 3

Development cooperation in the framework of this Agreement

The Parties undertake to cooperate in order to implement this Agreement and to help support the Ivorian Party in the achievement of the EPA objectives. This cooperation shall take financial and non-financial forms.

ARTICLE 4

Development finance cooperation in the framework of this Agreement

1. The provisions of the Cotonou Agreement concerning economic and regional cooperation and integration shall be implemented with a view to maximising the benefits of this Agreement.
2. European Community financing¹ pertaining to development cooperation between the Ivorian Party and the European Community in support of the implementation of this Agreement shall be provided in accordance with the appropriate rules and procedures set out in the Cotonou Agreement, in particular the programming procedures of the European Development Fund (EDF), and using the relevant instruments financed by the General Budget of the European Union. In this context, supporting the implementation of this Agreement shall be one of the priorities.
3. The Member States of the European Community collectively undertake to support, through their respective development policies and instruments, development actions to encourage regional economic cooperation and the implementation of this Agreement both at national and regional levels, in accordance with the principles of efficiency and complementarity of aid.
4. The Parties shall cooperate to facilitate the participation of other donors willing to support the efforts of the Ivorian Party to achieve the objectives of this Agreement.

¹ Not including financing provided by the individual Member States.

5. The Parties acknowledge the usefulness of regional financing mechanisms such as a regional EPA fund established by and for the region in order to channel financing at regional and national level and effectively implement the measures accompanying this Agreement. The European Community undertakes to channel its support either through the financing mechanisms of the region or through those chosen by the countries signatory to this Agreement in accordance with the rules and procedures set out in the Cotonou Agreement and in compliance with the aid effectiveness principle of the Paris Declaration, with a view to ensuring simplified, efficient and rapid implementation.

6. For the implementation of the provisions of paragraphs 1 to 5 of this Agreement, the Parties undertake to cooperate using financial and non-financial means in the areas defined in Articles 5, 6, 7 and 8.

ARTICLE 5

Business environment

The Parties consider that the business environment is an essential factor in economic development and that, consequently, the provisions of this Agreement shall be aimed at contributing to this common objective. Côte d'Ivoire, which is a signatory to the Treaty establishing the Organisation for the Harmonisation of Business Law in Africa (OHADA), reaffirms its commitment to applying the provisions of this Treaty.

In accordance with the provisions of Article 4, the Parties undertake to work unrelentingly on improving the business environment.

ARTICLE 6

Support for implementation of the rules

The Parties agree that the setting of trade rules, which include provisions on cooperation detailed in the various chapters of this Agreement, is fundamental to achieving the objectives of this Agreement. Cooperation in this field shall be organised in accordance with the arrangements specified in Article 4.

ARTICLE 7

Strengthening and modernising productive sectors

In relation to the implementation of this Agreement, the Parties affirm their wish to upgrade the competitiveness of the productive sectors of Côte d'Ivoire affected by this Agreement.

The Parties agree to work together using cooperation instruments and in accordance with the provisions of Article 4, and to support:

- the repositioning of the private sector vis-à-vis the new economic opportunities created by this Agreement,
- the definition and implementation of modernisation strategies,
- the improvement of the private sector environment and of the business climate referred to in Articles 5 and 6,
- the promotion of the partnership between the Parties' private sectors.

ARTICLE 8

Cooperation on fiscal adjustment

1. The Parties acknowledge the challenges which the elimination or substantial reduction of customs duties provided for in this Agreement may pose for Côte d'Ivoire, and they agree to establish dialogue and cooperation in this field.
2. In the light of the tariff dismantling schedule adopted as part of this Agreement, the Parties agree to establish in-depth dialogue on fiscal adjustment measures in order to ultimately ensure a balanced budget position for Côte d'Ivoire.
3. The Parties agree to cooperate as regards the provisions of Article 4, in particular through the facilitation of assistance measures in the following fields:
 - (a) a significant contribution to absorbing net fiscal impact in full complementarity with fiscal reforms;
 - (b) support for fiscal reform accompanying dialogue in this field.

ARTICLE 9

Cooperation in international fora

The Parties shall endeavour to cooperate in all international fora where issues relevant to this partnership are discussed.