

Question for written answer P-002414/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
Charles Tannock (ECR)

Subject: Possibility of a free trade agreement between the EU and Cape Verde

The Republic of Cape Verde is a member state of the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) Group and is currently implementing the Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU put forth at the Cotonou Convention in 2000. As a rapidly developing country, Cape Verde is pleased with the results that the EPA has produced as regards its economy and growth. However, Cape Verde is interested in furthering its position as regards the level of trade allowed with the EU.

As a least-developed country (LDC) and now a country with Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+) status, Cape Verde has enjoyed substantial import tariff reductions and access to the EU market. However, Cape Verde's full import and export potential has been restricted by its membership of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Cape Verde therefore wishes to establish a direct bilateral free trade agreement (FTA) with the EU in order to facilitate the export of its products, mainly the fish products of sardines and tuna, free from the hindrances of ECOWAS.

1. Is it possible for Cape Verde to denounce its obligation under the Economic Partnership Agreement and work towards a direct bilateral free trade agreement with the EU?
2. Has the Commission conducted any negotiations with Cape Verde regarding its membership of ECOWAS and the effects that its separation would have on the FTA?