

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3848/09
by Kader Arif (S-D)
to the Commission

Subject: Impact study on the interim Economic Partnership Agreement with Cameroon

On 15 January 2009 Cameroon signed an interim EPA with the European Commission.

In the draft resolution which I submitted to the Committee on International Trade (INTA) on 8 January 2009 on the subject of that agreement, then still under negotiation, I stressed that 'at the current time, no impact study has been carried out to determine the precise economic, social, financial and environmental impact of the interim EPA if it were to be signed'.

In a document sent to the INTA committee members on 21 January 2009 containing various comments on that draft resolution, the Commission stated that 'many impact studies on Cameroon' existed.

The first study mentioned in the document, 'Emini, 2008', is not available on the Commission website. Moreover, it must be stressed that Mr Emini is a Cameroonian researcher who took part in a study by the Ministry of Finance of Cameroon, the main conclusion of which was that, if the EPA were to be signed, losses in tax revenues would reach EUR 155 million by 2030. The second study mentioned, 'Portier, Rampulla and Vellutini, 2008', is unavailable on the Internet, to the best of my knowledge. The third study, 'Financial Services in Central Africa, September 2006', proceeds from the assumption that a full agreement will be concluded with the region as a whole, whereas this is not certain. The study fails to assess in any way the impact of an interim agreement concluded only with Cameroon and confined to the area of trade. Finally, the last study mentioned, which was discussed at a meeting in Libreville on 6 and 7 June 2007, is, in fact, not an impact study, but merely a working group report.

In light of these various considerations, has a serious impact study has been carried out to determine the impact of the interim EPA with Cameroon? If the Commission believes that the aforementioned studies are indeed serious impact studies, which of their conclusions suggest that the interim EPA will have a positive economic and social impact on Cameroon?