



2023/0464(NLE)

2.2.2024

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on International Trade

for the Committee on Development

on the proposal for a Council decision on the Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, of the other part (COM(2023)0791 – C9-XXXX/2024 – 2023/0464(NLE))

Rapporteur for opinion: Samira Rafaela

PA_Leg_Consent

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

On 15 November 2023, the EU and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States signed the Samoa Agreement, which established the overarching framework for EU relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. It will replace the Cotonou Agreement, which was signed in 2000 for a 20-year period, and hence had to be extended. The Samoa Agreement includes six priority areas: democracy and human rights, sustainable economic growth and development, climate change, human and social development, peace and security, and migration and mobility. From the INTA perspective, the Rapporteur highlights the following points:

First, the Agreement should benefit intra-African trade and the economic integration of the African continent through the AfCFTA. Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) are useful instruments and should help reach this goal.

Second, it is welcomed that the Agreement includes a pathway to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement, as well as the UN principle on free, prior, and informed consent. The Agreement should foster sustainable development in both regions, where the EU trade toolbox, including EPAs, GSP and Aid for Trade, but also CBAM and the Anti-Deforestation Regulation, should be mutually reinforcing.

Third, EPAs between the EU and African countries should contribute to long-term sustainable development, reduce poverty, and boost regional integration. These EPAs should benefit the African population and intra-African trade.

Fourth, the Agreement's trade and investment provisions should benefit all parties. The EU should therefore be mindful about a potential misbalance of benefits of trade and investment relations with the OACPS countries, especially related to sustainability.

Fifth, the EU should engage in capacity building where necessary, and support activities related to science, technology, research, innovation and the digital transformation in the OACPS countries. The EU should also engage with OACPS countries about new and existing EU trade legislation, including CBAM and the Forced Labour Ban.

Sixth, it is welcomed that the Agreement includes strong human rights commitments. The Agreement should help with the fight against inequalities, and its implementation should be gender mainstreamed, which includes, among others, gender equality and trade related aspects and gender chapters in trade agreements.

The Committee on International Trade calls on the Committee on Development, as the committee responsible, to recommend that Parliament gives its consent to the draft Council decision on the Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, of the other part.