

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

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ASSEMBLY OF THE AFRICAN UNION

Second Ordinary Session

10 - 12 July 2003

Maputo, MOZAMBIQUE

Assembly/AU/Dec.6 – 32 (II)

Assembly/AU/Decl.4- 11 (II)

DECISIONS AND DECLARATIONS

**DECLARATION ON THE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP
AGREEMENT (EPA) NEGOTIATIONS**

We, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, meeting in Maputo, Mozambique from 10 to 12 July 2003 in our Second Ordinary Session,

Having considered the Report of the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Trade under the Specialized Technical Committee on Trade, Customs and Immigration; the Mauritius Declaration on Preparations for Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) Negotiations; and the Report of the Third Ordinary Session of the Executive Council on this issue,

Reaffirming our determination to take up the multifaceted challenges that confront our continent and people in the light of the social, economic and political changes taking place in the world,

Determined to promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to our continent and peoples,

Concerned over the slow evolution of Phase I of the EPA negotiations and the persistent divergence of views between the EU and ACP in the context of and the preparations underway for the commencement of Phase II of the negotiations which is scheduled for September 2003,

Noting that some Regional Economic Communities have indicated to the European Union their readiness to negotiate the EPAs, as from September 2003,

Aware of the various activities undertaken by some of the Member States within the context of the Regional Economic Communities in preparation for the Phase II of the negotiations:

1. **REAFFIRM** the negotiating Guidelines of the ACP and the need to preserve the unity and solidarity of the Group;
2. **ENDORSE** the Mauritius Declaration on Preparations for EPA negotiations and the report of the Third Ordinary Session of the Executive Council on this issue;
3. **REGRET** the deadlock and lack of progress registered in Phase I of the EPA negotiations and **URGE** quickening of the pace of the negotiations;
4. **REITERATE** that Phase I of the ACP-EU negotiations should be expeditiously concluded with an agreement covering the principles, objectives and cross-cutting issues in EPAs as provided for in the Guidelines;
5. **FURTHER REAFFIRM** the unity and solidarity of Africa throughout the EPA negotiations;
6. **FURTHER REITERATE** that the development dimensions, with emphasis on the provision of additional resources for the removal of production, supply and trade constraints, must be adequately addressed in the negotiations to make EPAs truly development-oriented;
7. **DIRECT** African negotiators to ensure that EPAs are compatible with the objectives and principles of the Constitutive Act, the Abuja Treaty and the African Union Programme-NEPAD;
8. **MANDATE** the Commission to coordinate, monitor and harmonise the efforts of the concerned RECs and Member States in the negotiations of EPAs with the EU; and

establish an appropriate mechanism for cooperation and coordination between the Permanent Representatives' Committee (PRC) in Addis Ababa, the African Groups of Ambassadors and Negotiators in Brussels and Geneva, as well as with the capitals of concerned Member States;

- 9. CALL ON** all Member States of the AU and EU to intensify cooperation in WTO to achieve development-friendly rules in that Organisation in order to promote the sustainable development of African/ACP States, contribute to poverty eradication and facilitate the smooth integration of African countries into the world economy, with due regard to their political choices and development priorities so as to enable our continent to respond to the challenges of globalization;
- 10. FURTHER DIRECT** the Commission to work towards the establishment of a joint AU/EU Monitoring Mechanism to include the various African regional negotiating groups/RECs with a view to:

 - a) monitoring the entire process of the EPAs;
 - b) facilitating the implementation of the regional integration programmes under the ACP/EU Cotonou Agreement, the Ninth EDF, including capacity-building programmes; and
 - c) ensuring the coherence of these programmes with the priorities and objectives of the African Union.