



Joint Communiqué of the
SIXTH MEETING OF THE
EU-SADC EPA TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
19-20 February 2020, Brussels

Senior officials from six countries (Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa) of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the European Union held the 6th meeting of the Trade and Development Committee (TDC) under the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) on 19-20 February in Brussels.

As the EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreement (“EU-SADC EPA”) has entered its fourth year of application, both Parties took stock of its implementation and endorsed the draft decisions to be adopted by the Joint Council (the Ministerial-level decision making body of the EU-SADC EPA) and agreed on the way forward on several trade-related matters arising from the Agreement.

Parties endorsed draft decisions for adoption by the Joint Council on: (i) updating the reference quantities for the application by the Southern African Customs Union (SACU: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa) of the Agricultural safeguard under Article 35 of the EPA, (ii) allocation and reallocation of the tariff rate quotas (TRQs (pending the establishment of the SACU-wide TRQ management system) for imports from the EU and on (iii) corrigendum to the EU-SADC EPA.

Following the formal consultations within the context of the dispute avoidance and settlement provisions of the EPA on the safeguard tariff imposed by SACU on imports of frozen poultry from the EU, the Parties exchanged views on the next steps.

The Parties reaffirmed the importance of the inclusive monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the EPA. To this end, the Parties agreed on a set of monitoring indicators and on the process of the preparation of monitoring reports as of 2020.

As the EU-SADC EPA approaches 4 years of its implementation, the Parties exchanged views on its review which should start in 2021 in accordance with the Agreement’s provision.

An ad-hoc special technical group was set up to continue work on the few outstanding issues related to the EPA monitoring and evaluation system, the involvement of non-state actors, and the preparation of the review of the Agreement.

The co-facilitation of engagement of non-state-actors representatives from both sides in the monitoring of EPA implementation was also discussed with a view of reaching agreement on key principles allowing the organisation of a first joint meeting of non-state actors from both sides in October 2020.

In the context of implementation of the Trade and Sustainable Development Chapter, the EU made a presentation on the European Green Deal, the new EU's climate-friendly growth strategy, followed by an exchange of views between the Parties.

The Trade and Development Committee took note of the reports of the meetings of: the Special Committees on Customs and Trade Facilitation, the Special Committee on Geographical Indications and Trade in Wines and Spirits as well as of the EU-SADC EPA Agricultural Partnership. The Parties exchanged views on the SADC-EPA States' intention to start applying cumulation of rules of origin under Protocol 1 of the EPA facilitating integration of the SADC EPA Group into regional and global value chains.

The SADC EPA States provided updates on their *National EPA Implementation Plans*, aiming at identifying the necessary steps and measures to support the implementation of the EPA and enhance the contribution of the Agreement to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The official request of Angola of February 2020 to join the EU-SADC EPA was noted with appreciation by the Parties. They exchanged views on the next steps to be taken in response to the request for accession.

Last but not least, the Parties exchanged information on the state of play in their trade relations with third countries. The Parties also expressed joint support to the Phase II negotiations and effective implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement. Reaffirming support for the multilateral trading system, the Parties underscored the need to make progress on the crucial elements of the WTO reform, including the developmental elements and the unblocking of the WTO Appellate Body impasse, in view of the upcoming 12th Ministerial Conference in June 2020.