

REGIONAL SEMINAR ON THE EU-SADC EPA
(13-15 September 2010, Cape Town)

Africa-EU Strategy and EPA

Axel Pougin de la Maisonneuve
Head of Section

Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of South Africa





Overview of the presentation

Africa-EU Partnership on Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure :

- Rationale and Objectives
- Assessment of progress
- Facilitating implementation



Rationale and Objectives

- Overall objective :

“In line with the **Abuja Treaty**, establishing the African Economic Community, trade and integration are recognised as essential components of the wider process of **regional integration** and development, which shall be duly promoted by the present partnership.” (JAES Chapter IV)

- Instrument :

“Regional Economic Communities will play an essential role as building blocks of the continental integration process.” (id.)



Rationale and Objectives (2)

- Africa-EU Partnership:
 - “Africa and the EU will work together to make trade rules and regimes more coherent and harmonised. This will require the gradual harmonisation of trade, customs and industrial policies, laws, regulations and procedures”
 - “Africa-EU cooperation will be underpinned by stronger bilateral development-oriented trading relationships between Africa and the EU:
 - through the implementation of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with African EPA regions
 - by supporting African business
 - by cooperating in developing export strategies and business-to-business relations ».



Assessment of progress : glass half full or half empty ?

At political and institutional levels :

- Tripartite project (COMESA, EAC, SADC)
- Progress in RECs' integration agendas
 - Kampala Summit October 2008 identifies 5 priority areas :
 - Trade and customs (FTA)
 - Joint competition authority for air transport
 - Infrastructure development
 - Legal and institutional framework
 - Merger of the RECs



Assessment of progress : glass half full or half empty ? (2)

- Progress in AU/RECs linkages :
 - Political dialogue
 - « Minimum Integration Programme »

At technical level :

- SPS (BTSF training programme and other regional and national programmes)
- AU Border Programme regional workshops (Ouagadougou, Libreville, Windhoek)
- Africa-EU Infrastructure Trust Fund
- Africa-EU Business Fora



Facilitating Implementation

Continental perspective yet to be fully explored:

- AU process, including Africa-EU JAES, brings coherence to integration and trade strategies
- However it cannot be seen as an efficient driver for change, at least as yet :
 - To coordinate AU and RECs strategies
 - To deliver high scale integration projects on the ground (ex : need for further progress in identifying « bankable » initiatives in the field of trans-African networks)

Conclusion

- EPA part of an overall strategy to promote integration at regional and ultimately at continental levels, where Africa-EU trade cooperation (=> EPA) is used as leverage.
- Progress on this agenda results from a combination of political will and of pressure by the economic players – just like the European integration process !



THANK YOU!

