



Council of the
European Union

**Brussels, 16 December 2019
(OR. en)**

14899/19

**ACP 146
WTO 337
RELEX 1134**

LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Subject: COUNCIL DECISION amending the negotiating directives for the negotiation of Economic Partnership Agreements with the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and regions, to the extent that they fall within the competence of the Union

COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2019/...

of ...

**amending the negotiating directives for the negotiation
of Economic Partnership Agreements
with the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and regions,
to the extent that they fall within the competence of the Union**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 90, Article 100(2), the first subparagraph of Article 207(4) and Article 209, in conjunction with Article 218(3) and (4) thereof,

Having regard to the recommendation from the European Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) On 17 June 2002, the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and regions and adopted directives for those negotiations.
- (2) Concluded EPAs with the ACP countries and regions include rendez-vous clauses for the future review of those agreements.
- (3) The amendment of the negotiating directives is necessary to frame new negotiations more accurately in light of recent Union policy initiatives and priorities as trade evolves worldwide.

- (4) EPAs form part of the overall relationship between the Union and its Member States, on the one side, and the ACP countries, on the other, as set out in the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part¹, as last amended (Cotonou Partnership Agreement) and, once applicable, its successor agreement. Under Article 34(1) of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, the economic and trade cooperation between the parties aims at fostering the smooth and gradual integration of the ACP States into the world economy, with due regard for their political choices and development priorities, thereby promoting their sustainable development and contributing to poverty eradication in the ACP countries. In this context, EPAs can be considered to constitute development instruments as referred to in Article 36(2) of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement. Negotiations should therefore specially take account of the different levels of development of the parties, as well as of the particular economic, social and environmental constraints of the ACP countries and of the capacity of those countries to adapt and to adjust their economies to the liberalisation process,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

¹ OJ L 317, 15.12.2000, p. 3.

Article 1

The negotiating directives addressed to the Commission for the negotiation of Economic Partnership Agreements with the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and regions, to the extent that they fall within the competence of the Union, are amended as set out in the addendum.

Article 2

The negotiations shall be conducted in consultation with the ACP Working Party. The Trade Policy Committee shall be associated on specific trade-related matters.

Article 3

This Decision is addressed to the Commission.

Done at ...,

For the Council

The President
