



African industrialists oppose the Economic Partnership Agreements

Nearly a 100 industrialists signed the AIA petition against the conclusion of the EPA

Abidjan, 4th October. Nearly a hundred industrialists from Western and Central Africa have already signed the petition against the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPAs) launched by the African Industrial Association (AIA).

“We are pleasantly surprised to have gathered so quickly so many signatories of African industrialists from Western and Central Africa. This demonstrates the huge concern of local actors regarding the establishment of free trade between Europe and our regions. This feeling is shared by other organisations of African Industrialists in other parts of the continent and must not be ignored by the negotiators” declared Pierre Magne, the President of the AIA.

The signatories reject the EPAs as proposed by the European Union (EU), notably the principle of reciprocal market opening between the EU and the African regions. They consider that the conclusion of the EPAs which is scheduled for the end of 2007, under the proposed conditions would have as a consequence the destruction of African industries. These industries are often young and fragile, but they are also a key factor in the creation of wealth and jobs on the continent.

The African industrialists call for the global negotiations and the sector-by-sector approach to take into account the existing gap between the EU and Africa. They ask for the principle of asymmetry in the commercial relationships to be maintained, for an aid to upgrade the African economies and for support to favour the effective functioning of the regional integration and investment, notably the private one. They want negotiations to come up with a partnership between Africa and the EU which contributes to the development of the strong potential of the emerging African industry through a special and differential treatment.

“The actual conditions of the EPAs are not foretelling positive outcomes for the development of the African industries and the creation of jobs in our countries. If they are not deeply modified, we are going to see the African industrial sectors disappear one by one. The African and European decision makers know that we cannot face the competition and the strength of European industries. We urge African and European decision makers to negotiate a credible agreement based on a “win/win” strategy which will offer real development prospects to Africa,” concluded Pierre Magne.

Contacts

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PETITION

Call of African industrialists against the conclusion of the Economic Partnership Agreements

We, African industrialists, are opposed to the conclusion of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) as they have been proposed by the European Union (EU).

We strongly reject the principle of reciprocal market opening between the EU and the African regions. The global negotiations and the sector-by-sector approach must take into account the necessary asymmetry of the relationship between the partners.

The conclusion of EPAs on the proposed EU basis in 2007 would certainly destroy the young and fragile African industrial sector which is a key actor when it comes to the creation of wealth and jobs on the continent. In addition, we doubt that an upgrading of our industries can be achieved within the identified timeframe.

We call on the European Union to review its development policy towards its African partners.

It is necessary to negotiate a credible free trade agreement based on a “win/win” strategy. In particular, there is a need to support, as a priority, regional integration and investments, especially private investments.

We want the future partnership between Africa and the EU to contribute to the development of the strong potential of the emerging African industry through a special and differential treatment.

We urge African and European decision makers to listen to the voice of the African industrialists who want to play an active part in the definition of an agreement with the UE which will offer real development prospects to Africa.

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Signatories

3I (Ivory Cost), Afric Plastique 1 (Mali), Azito Energie (Ivory Cost), Azito Energie Holding (Ivory Cost), Bramali (Mali), Batex (Mali), CAITA-France, (Ivory Cost), CCIM Mali (Mali), Chimtec (Ivory Cost), Cinpharm, CMDT (Mali), Cofisac (Senegal), CORALMA International, DDB, ENTAG (Guinea), Embalfaso (Burkina Faso), Embalmali (Mali), Eurolait (Mali), Ets Jean Azar (Mali), Fasocoton (Burkina Faso), Fasoplast (Burkina Faso), FILTAB (Ivory Cost), Filtisac (Ivory Cost), Fofy Industrie (Mali), Fumoa (Senegal), GAM (Mali), GFI (Ivory Cost), Golden Flour Factory (Cameroon), Groupe AMI (Mali), Ind. Bois Glaces (Mali), Industrial Promotion Services (Congo) SARL (Democratic Republic of the Congo), IPS (WA) (Ivory Cost), Ivoire Coton (Ivory Cost), LABO OI (Madagascar), La pasta SA (Cameroon), MABUCIG (Burkina Faso), MASAL SPRL (Democratic Republic of the Congo), MCT (Chad), Metalu SPRL (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Moore Paragon, MTOA (Senegal), NITAF (Nigeria), Panzani Cameroon (Cameroon), PEM (Mali), Pizolub (Gabon), Plastic Elastomer (Mali), PLASTICAM (Cameroon), PROMODIM (Madagascar), SACIMEM (Madagascar), SAIL (Senegal), SDTA, SEGMA (Mali), SGM (Cameroon), SIAT (Congo), SIFA (Burkina Faso), SIGALLY (Gabon), SISEP (Ivory Cost), SITAB (Ivory Cost), SITAM (Madagascar), SITRABCAM (Cameroon), SMASA (Cameroon), SMAG (Gabon), SMNC, SN SOSUCO (Burkina Faso), SOCACIG (Central African Republic), Socembal SPRL (Democratic Republic of the Congo), SOCTAM (Madagascar), SOCIGA (Gabon), SODEMA (Mali), SOMANAP (Mali), SOMAPEC (Mali), SOMAPIL (Mali), SONATAM (Mali), SOPAL (Burkina Faso), SOTAMALI (Mali), SOTRAL SPRL (Democratic Republic of the Congo), STONES (Mali), Sucre Participation (Ivory Cost), TOBACCOR, TREFILKIN SPRL (Democratic Republic of the Congo), UCODAL (Mali), Unilever (Ivory Cost).

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