



KENYA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Multi-stakeholder Workshop on Regional and Multilateral Trading Systems

Date: 4th to 5th March, 2015.

Venue: Panafric Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya.

Rapporteur's Report

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	List of Acronyms	
1.	ACP	African Caribbean and Pacific Countries
2.	AU	African Union
3.	BITS	Bilateral Investment Treaties
4.	CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
5.	CARIFORUM	Caribbean Forum
6.	CET	Common External Tariff
7.	CFTA	Continental Free Trade Area
8.	COMESA	Common Market for East and Southern Africa
9.	CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
10.	EAC	East African Community
11.	EALA	East African Legislative Assembly
12.	ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African ...
13.	EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
14.	ESA	East and Southern Africa
15.	EU	European Union
16.	FEPA	Framework Economic Partnership Agreement
17.	GATT	General Agreement on Tariff and Trade
18.	GMOs	Genetically Modified Organisms
19.	IMF	International Monetary Fund
20.	ISO	International Organization for Standardization
21.	KEPSA	Kenya Private Sector Alliance....

22.	KHRC	Kenya Human Rights Commission
23.	LDCs	Least Developed Countries
24.	NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
25.	OWINFS	Our World is Not for Sale
26.	SADC	South African Development Community
27.	SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
28.	SEATINI	Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiations Institute
29.	SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary standards
30.	SST	South – South Trade
31.	TF	Trade Facilitation
32.	WTO	World Trade Organization

A. Introduction

This was a regional workshop which attracted about 75 participants from the EAC, SADC, ECOWAS, and the EU. The participants were drawn from different sectors and institutions including the civil society, government, Members of the East African Legislative Assembly, media practitioners, academia, farmer movements, workers, development partners and the youth.

The main aim of the conference was to provide a snapshot of the progress so far in the EAC-EU EPA, including the outstanding issues, positions of the EU, EAC, Kenya and the rest of the stakeholders including the CSOs, farmers, private sector and trade unions. The conference also provided an opportunity to the participants to get an analysis of the EU-ECOWAS EPA and EU-SADC EPA. This was important for purposes of experience sharing, learning and offering strategic interventions with an Africa perspective.

Since some of these regions are already in the implementation stage of EPA, they provided invaluable lessons to the EAC by sharing their challenges and the lessons learnt so far in the implementation process. *(See attached below Annexure 1, the Concept Paper for the objectives, aims, and expected outputs and outcomes of the workshop).*



Concept Paper_EAC
EU EPA Regional mee (Annexure 1)

Scope of the Report

This report captures the proceedings of the conference including the various presentations, issues raised by the discussants in the various sessions and plenary deliberations. The report also captures the main issues raised as well as some of the decisions arrived at. The various presentations that were availed to the Rapporteur are also annexed here for your further reference. To see the full presentation, just click on the annexure to open.

B. Day one

The workshop began by Andrew Odete, the moderator for the morning session calling the meeting to order and making his welcoming remarks. He introduced the organizers and called them to give their opening briefs to officially welcome the participants and declare the workshop open.

1. Opening Remarks

- **Fredrick Njehu – Programme Advisor, Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC)**

Fredrick welcomed everyone to the conference and explained why the conference was important at this point in time, the objectives, and the expected output as well as expected outcomes of the conference. He then gave an outline of the programme for the two days of the conference. (See annexure 2 below for a comprehensive programme of the conference).



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(Annexure 2)

(See annexure1 for comprehensive objectives of the conference).

- **Ms. Deborah James – Our World is not for Sale Network (OWINFS)**

Ms. Deborah reminded participants of the WTO Ministerial conference set to happen in Kenya in December 2015. She reiterated that this will be the first time the meeting is taking place in Africa and therefore it is very important for the African countries to participate fully in it as this will enable them to among other things, change some of the WTO Rules to allow them participate actively in food production and in WTO processes. She noted that part of the purposes of the conference was therefore to ensure the preparedness of Kenya and Africa for the WTO conference.

She also reiterated the importance of the participation of the people affected by negotiations such as EPAs, like the farmers and workers to participate in the process so that they address their local concerns and issues.

- **Mr. Oduor Ong'wen – Kenya Office Head – Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI) – Kenya.**

He connected this story to the struggles of Africa in this process and in other areas, and said that this was the essence of the meeting, to find out when Africa will push its wheelbarrow upside down. He urged participants to help find out how Africa can start doing this. He then introduced his team from SEATINI.

- **Ms. Elizabeth Kariuki – Programme Manager KHRC**

Ms. Kariuki welcomed the participants in the meeting on behalf of the KHRC board and management. She informed the participants of the various programmes that KHRC works on and the linkage its programmes have with trade justice and EPAs specifically. She also thanked the partners of KHRC for their cooperation in organizing the conference.

You can read more on the mandate of the KHRC on their website, <http://www.khrc.or.ke/>

After the introductory remarks by the organizers, there was a round of introductions from the participants and thereafter the presentations began.

2. Presentations

- i. **EAC-EU-EPA Negotiations: Status, Challenges and Next Steps – by Ambassador Nelson Ndirangu, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.**

Mr. Ndirangu's presentation was structured as follows; first he discussed the **Brief history of the Negotiations**, he then discussed the **Status** of the negotiations at the moment, the **Challenges** during and post negotiation stage and the **Next step**.

History

He pointed out that the history of EPAs dates back to 1957 when the Treaty of Rome was signed. The colonizers felt that the colonies should not be left alone but that they should take part in the developments of their former colonies.

He gave an outline of various negotiations and treaties, conventions and Agreements signed before the EPAs.¹

He noted that for over 30 years until 31st Dec 2007 most of ACP countries including Kenya entered EU market duty free as a result of a non-reciprocal preferential market access agreed with EU under Lome IV.

He explained that all these Arrangements that were there before had some short falls e.g. rules of origin, like high tariffs, and tariff escalations, on any form of value addition and side supply constraints. The regime therefore did not help the country to industrialize as they should have. The objective of the EPAs therefore was a noble one, aimed at helping the ACP countries to develop.

He also explained that at first, the negotiations were not clear whether the countries would go as all ACP states or as regions and whether as regions, Tanzania would go as EAC or COMESA and Uganda would be under SADC or EAC. It was latter agreed that negotiations were to be as EAC with Kenya Uganda and Tanzania, and later Rwanda and Burundi joined.

The negotiations were supposed to have been concluded by 31st July 2007 but it was not possible. Consequently FEPA was signed to allow parties to enjoy trade relations as the negotiations continue. However due to the deadlines set by the EU and the outstanding issues the negotiations could not be concluded on time.

¹ Younde I and II 1963/69; 1970/75, Lome I and II 1975/80, Lome III 1985/90, Lome IV 1990/2000, Cotonou Partnership Agreement 2000.

Status of the EPAs Negotiations

As to the status of EPAs, he informed the participants that the negotiations were concluded in December 2014. It is now undergoing legal scrubbing and will be ready for ratification soon.

Challenges

Mr. Ndirangu explained that some of the challenges faced during the EPAs Negotiations include;

- a. Financial constraints – the EU provided the funds to facilitate the negotiations which meant that both parties were not on equal footing in the negotiation process.
- b. Within the EAC, the countries are not classified uniformly, while other countries are LDCs, Kenya is classified as a non LDC. This meant different interests by the different states.
- c. Lack of consensus among the EAC states – It was difficult to get into a common ground as partner states before negotiating with the EU.
- d. The EU came up with new issues that were originally not part of the negotiations, issues of environment, health and safety standard, good governance in tax issues.
- e. Stringent rules of origin e.g. double transformation of textile products.
- f. Supply side constraints e.g. cost of production, lack of adequate products for export.

Next steps

Mr. Ndirangu explained that the next step which has already begun is the stage of Legal scrubbing. This involves looking at the negotiated text and cleaning it up. The next meeting for legal scrubbing is slated for April 2015 and he invited all the stakeholders to send representatives to the same.

After that, the EPA will be translated to 24 EU languages and Kiswahili. This will be followed by the ratification process by all EAC Partner states and two thirds of the EU member states.

Entry into force

Mr. Ndirangu informed the participants that in the meantime before the Agreement enters into force, the EU has allowed the goods to enter the EU market duty free, quarter free under the EU market Regulations.

After ratification, the next stage will be the implementation. He informed the participants that the ministry had started carrying out sensitization of stakeholders across the country and has so far covered 13 counties.

He reminded the participants that in negotiations, one does not necessarily get what they wanted, that the remaining thorny issues will be addressed as the implementation continues, the parties will proceed to negotiate on other issues like competition, environment.

Plenary Discussions

Questions and issues arising

- Substantive and procedural challenges, e.g. public participation, rules of origin. Africa should learn from these challenges for the future negotiations.
- The next step – what are the avenues of public participation in the next steps
- There is a problem of liberalization, privatization and micro economy, is it possible to have a centralized integrated market without government interference?
- What were the benefits of EPAs for Kenya to go with EAC while Kenya has other over 40 Agreements with other countries and is also classified as a non LDC state? How helpful is this Agreement to the producers, the manufacturers and consumers?
- A participant also raised two issues to do with liberalization and privatization as well as the issue of Crops Act 2013 is strangling liberalization especially tea, what's the government doing about it?
- A participant expressed concerns that Kenya might become a dessert in the near future, with global warming and other environmental problems at the moment. He

sought to know what the way forward to address environmental issues is especially from the government.

- Another participant sought to find out the issue of discrepancies in the negotiation process. He pointed out with concerned that the EU got over 90 percent of what they wanted while Africa got far less, why?
- A participant sought to know whether there are any avenues to develop future industries especially in Kenya like oil industry and the future of Kenya in Agreement
- The issue of the court's judgment on the Small Scale Farmers case – That after the judgment, the small scale farmers were invited for only one meeting for participation, they cannot give adequate feedback to their members on the grass root on what's going on in the process. They expressed the importance of information sharing going forward.
- The EU is not ready to address the issue of subsidies, how is the government positioned to address those challenges.
- The question of chance for review of the Agreement in the process of the implementation of the Agreement also came up. Participants raised the question of untrustworthiness of the EU in reviewing Agreements with its partners. The issue of foreseeable negative implications in the implementation of EPAs arose, whether there were certain foreseeable negative implications of EPAs and how the negotiators addressed them.
- How satisfied is the government in the inclusiveness and participation of the stakeholders in the negotiation process?
- How do you link the process of WTO negotiations, EPAs and the ongoing African Negotiations such as the Tripartite and the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)?

Responses

The question of review

- The Agreement provides that any party can bring any issue on the table for review; it also allows any party to walk out of the agreement. The review on our part will be

to review any part that may not possibly be implemented, to look at the progress and how to continue.

Liberalization

- EAC is part of the world and can't be isolated; however they are very cautious at any step of any negotiations not to contradict themselves, the treaties are more than 40.
- The Agreement with the EU is meant to benefit the region, if later the region does an assessment and realize they are not benefiting then they can work out. However from the initial assessment, the Agreement is very beneficial.
- The Agreement has a clause on the export taxes, they are not outlawed, however they will be subject to review within 48 months, there has to be consultations.
- He said that the government feels and is convinced that the agreement is beneficial to the region.

The issue of Tea

- The president gave a directive that everywhere that we go our first product to promote is tea, the agreement between Kenya and Nigeria is on the tea packaging industry.
- Kenya has a commercial attaché in Russia whose work is to promote two products, tea and roses.
- On the question of what exactly did we get out of the negotiations, he said that we got 100%.

The issue of consultation and public participation

- In his response on participation, Mr. Ndirangu said that the ministry has covered 13 counties sensitizing them on EPAs and also updating them on the WTO negotiations. The ministry has open meetings at the directorate where they invite any organization interested to join them in the preparations and also for the legal scrubbing. It was confirmed that the whole team that was negotiating EPA was there

in the legal scrubbing process, e.g. KEPSA, consultant from the private sector. It was held in Arusha, Tanzania.

Issue on Rendezvous clause

- Rotich responded to that, giving the process- he said there will have to be a mutual agreement to start the negotiations, the expectation is that there are five years within which parties will decide whether they want to negotiate and which areas to negotiate on, these are trade related areas, Intellectual Properties, public sector procurement sustainable development.

The negative side implications

- This may not be answered for the time being, there were analytical work done during the negotiations but it may not be possible to say specifically whether there will be negative implications.

Stakeholder participation

- Even though small scale farmers and human rights groups were not there, the government was under the impression that the manufacturers association was representing them.

Issue of linkage of WTO EPAs, CFTA

- The regime between EAC and the EU is based on Article 24 of GATT
- There are negotiations going on in the WTO that African states should follow keenly e.g. both agriculture and non-agricultural products (NAMA), all these should be beneficial to the region
- In WTO there are products referred to as tropical products which should be zero rated , like cut flower, rice, sugar, small scale farmers should therefore get used to the trade with the EU.
- He also said that Kenya is exporting more to Africa than to any other part of the world. CFTA is therefore very attractive to us because we want to open up Africa for

business because we think that is where our future lies. (See Annexure 3 for Mr. Ndirangu's full Presentation).



Presentation_for_the_Regional_Workshop (Annexure 3)

The midmorning session was moderated by Dr. Mwambutsya Ndebese. There were two presentations following each other followed by discussions and plenary deliberations on both.

ii. Presentation 2 Shaping the Future of EU-EAC Economic Relationship –by Christopher De Vroy, delegation of the EU to Kenya

Christopher clarified the EU's standpoint on EPA and tried to clarify certain misunderstandings around the Agreement and the negotiation process. He gave what he termed as Trade Facts and figures for the participants to digest. These were as follows;

1. Single market means , goods entering the EU can freely move to all 27 EU countries
 2. The EU is the main market to Kenyan products. Close to 21% of the Kenyan exports, 70% of flower, fresh food, coffee and tea.
 3. The EU is Kenyan favourite destination, reason, shared ties and close proximity.
 4. In 2013 imports from EU member countries to member countries s constitute around 185 billion shilling. Combined efforts from china and India are almost 4 times of what Kenya import from EU. Kenyan exports to China and India combined is slightly less than 4% of Kenyan exports.
- He then stated that these facts validate the claim that Kenya and the EU are tight trade partners. (See details in the main Presentation, annexure 4).

Insights regarding the EU-EAC EPA

- Mr. Vroy took the stand point that the reciprocal market agreement is uneven and contains many advantages to the EAC. He argued that all FTAs are supposed to be symmetrical. However in EPAs the AU took in consideration the different levels of

development. It is therefore asymmetrical. He gave an example with the requirement that EAC will open up its market to up to 86.2% for over 25 years. He concluded therefore that the additional advantage that EAC gave to the EU as compared to what other trading partners of the EU gives them is therefore in comparison modest- around 65%.

- He also stated that EAC-EU EPA lacks ambition, that it is just a mere trade in goods agreement and that it lacks rules on fairness in competition and well defined protection of foreign investors, public procurement, IP agreement, though things may change if Rendezvous clause is further negotiated as indicated by Ndirangu.

He said that one of the many advantages of EPA is that it will harmonize the trade regimes and ensure a homogenous trade between the two regions.

He gave some statistics of trade between Kenya and the EU and stated that Statistics show that EU imports into Kenya only represent 12% of the Kenyan imports. There is no study that shows heavy revenue loss in the implementation of the EPAs. He also assured the EAC farmers that they are fully protected by liberalization in the agreed EAC-EU EPA text.

He underscored that much remains to be done, signature and ratification in due time is very essential. He expressed his optimism that hopefully we will continue to partner in a more constructive way. Hope that the EPA will be finally ratified by 1st October 2016.



Presentation_-_Chris
topher_De_Vroey.pdf

(Annexure 4)

iii. Presentation 3 – Assessment of the possible implications of the EAC-EU EPA on Kenyan Agricultural sector and its compatibility with WTO rules– by Edger Odari, ECONews Africa

He first addressed some of issues raised by Christopher, for example the issue of restricted access, he said the 100% is not only restricted to EAC but all other trading partners with the EU. It cannot therefore be termed as an advantage to the EAC.

On his presentation he discussed the following;

- The History of EPAs, Trade between Kenya and the EU noting that the balance of trade is in favor of the EU and that major exports from Kenya are up to around 80%.
- He gave terms of reference and objectives of the study and certain questions that the study sought to answer; Methodology of study was both qualitative and quantitative assessments.
- He then looked at the Compatibility between EPAs and WTO. He stated that EPAs face two sets of issues;
- One is the Compatibility with the existing trade rules, e.g. most favored nations treatment; and two, the consistency with the dynamisms multilateral trade negotiations.
- He explained that Agriculture and non-agricultural goods will lose some of the advantages they have under the WTO rules e.g. the stand still clause, the extent of flexibilities, imposition of export duties and taxes, multilateral safeguards, bilateral safeguards, infant industry protection, Singapore issues.
- He pointed out that in a negotiating process, you get what you negotiate for, so there is need to learn lessons from the negotiating process, what we didn't do right.

Implications to Regional Economic Integration Process

- He underscored some of the implications of the EPAs to the different regions of Africa. He argued that the Agreement disintegrates more than integrates the EAC. He also argued that EAC-EPAs has far reaching implications on the Agricultural sector, including, trade diversion, , welfare effect. He said that likely implications of EPAs on Local Agricultural Production would include potential flooding of the local market with cheap products from the EU. He argued that the only advantage is that the EAC agricultural products are listed as sensitive goods and are therefore protected from liberalisation.
- He also expressed concerned over the issue of market access. He pointed out that it's one thing to have a market open and another thing to talk of the ability to take the goods to the port of entry.

The Ratification Process and the role of Various Stakeholders in the Implementation of the Process

He discussed the ratification process under the Ratification Treaties Act, the role of the executive, the legislature and other stakeholders.

He concluded that increased imports and technical barriers to trade in the EU market remain the biggest threat to agricultural sector.

Discussants

Agnes Kirabo– Uganda Food Alliance

. She challenged the facts presented by Christopher on certain fronts, for example, she pointed out that the main purpose of agriculture is to feed the population, so there can't be anything like cheap food. States sovereignty lies on its ability to feed itself. She also raised the issues of GMOs and the need to rethink of out to relate our agricultural production ambitions and trade ambitions.

Plenary

- A participant raised the issue of policy space and stated that it's not correct to state that there is no policy space, and that policy space has been safe guarded.
- Another participant pointed out that whereas one Euro might be small money to the EU it's a lot of money to some of the parties, It is therefore important to talk about revenue loss seriously. He gave statistics of how much the EAC states will lose 301.1 million Euro revenue losses by the EAC states.
- a participant noted that what the EU representative gave as facts were just opinions and they do not reflect the correct position on the ground. Regional integration is not only about trade, it's about production.
- It was also pointed out that historically the relationship between Kenya and EU has been exploitation and that EPAs should be seen as a new colonization tool. He raised the issue of goods from EU flooding the EAC market. He also complained of the recent rejection of Kenyan goods by the EU from entering the EU market.

- it was noted that that the products that Kenya exports to the EU are primary products but those it exports to other EAC countries are value added and that Kenya should therefore be keen on the exports to African markets more.
- It was pointed out that the EPAs do not allow the EAC to increase its tariffs and that it may not be possible to industrialize in those conditions.
- Another participant asked whether GMO is part of the agreement, and that EU is the main producer of chemicals used in Africa and yet they place restrictions on the use of chemicals by farmers in Africa.
- Also raised was the issue of Miraa having been burnt from entering the UK markets. Since UK is part of the EU, and therefore a party to EPAs, what's the likelihood of its effect in Kenya with regard to Miraa?
- Another participant stated that EU looks at food exported from Africa just as merchandise or as commodity and not as food *per se*, and that this brings about food insecurity.
- What are sometimes presented as facts are not facts, the idea that the EPAs is WTO is compatible is correct but that view is box shifting by the EU since they will produce food and dump them into Africa. They are compatible with the WTOs because it's them who made WTO rules without Africans states being involved substantially. EPAs are a danger to South – South (SS) Trade. How possible will it be possible to trade as South – South Trade?

Responses from Edgar

Domestic support measures making competition a bit difficult. Revenue losses - the revenue losses that they discussed in the presentation was not the general revenue but only on the agricultural sector.

Christophe

- South - South Trade – most of EU trade is intra EU trade, but EPAs do not hinder intra- regional trade, that Africa benefits from duty trade under EPAs, they are therefore asking for a gradual opening of the market.

- The issue of use of pesticides and the rejects of goods to EU market – decisions by the EU are not discriminative, they reject whoever uses too much pesticide, and they want to protect their consumers from excess pesticides.
- Miraa - some countries allow drugs but this does not mean they are allowed to export those drugs all over the world.
- Subsidies – the agricultural subsidies are non-trade distorting, they are meant to produce environmental friendly production and quality products.
- EPAs maintain 25% subsidy on sensitive products which are mostly agricultural.
- Revenue losses – will be small taking to consideration the fact that it will be for a long period of time and that the market will be liberalized.

There were two presentations in the afternoon session after which there was a discussion and then plenary deliberations for the two sessions.

iv. Presentation 4 : Assessment of the ECOWAS – EU EPA: Lessons learnt implications and way forward – by Sylvester Bagooro – Third World Network – Africa

Brief Introduction

West Africa EPAs was approved on July 3 2014 in Accra Ghana. Just like the EAC one and any other ACP region, the West Africa EPA was also with some opposition.

What is in the Agreement: Good EPAs and Non good EPAs

Key Provisions in the EPA:

Export Taxes, stand Still Clause; National Treatment; MFN Clause;

Duration and Revision Clause – review after every year

Ratification - all EU States to sign, at least 2/3 of the West African States. This he said was an open discrimination against the West African States and an open intention to divide the region.

Rendezvous clause and areas covered in the Rendezvous- IP and innovation.

Implication – in terms of Content

Market access, Loss of policy space – Export Taxes, Value addition, Revenue Losses and PAPED, , PAPED – AN empty shell, Constraints on South – South Trade, Destruction of the Region – ratification clause, , Implications – Institutional angle, Rendezvous–Serious blow to Africa’s development – government procurement, services,, capital control, and investments,, EU influence on Parliament and Ministry of Trade and Industrialization.

Lessons Learnt

Fragmentation of our internal Economic policy coherence, Rendezvous Clause and trade facilitation in the EPA and the Bali outcome will be repeated., Fragmentation responses from CSOs at the regional levels, African level and National levels., He concluded that Africa faces multiple attacks from EPA, WTO, BITS, AGOA (unfolding into FTA) – need for multi-faceted strategy response that deals with the multi issues arising.



Presentation -
Sylvesata Bagooro - / (Annexure 5 for the full Presentations by Sylvester Bagooro)

v. Presentation 5: Assessment of the SADC-EU-EPA: Lessons learnt implications and way forward – *by Ludwig Chizarura, SEATINI-Zimbabwe*

Ludwig informed the participants that SADC has negotiated EPA in two blocks, East and Southern Blocks (ESA), then the Southern one (SADC) block. – Lessons learnt from this – disruption on region’s initiative of regional integration by creating multiple memberships and weakening regional bargaining power. His presentation was under the following headings;

Current state of EPA in SADC

There are varied results depending on individual country interests.

Lesson – Regional Integration Falling Apart as each country is pursuing a cause best suited to its own interests.

Contentious issues

The instruments of liberalizations (SAPs, BITS EPAs) are limiting national policy space for host countries and at the same time binding.

Most Favored Nation Clause - There is need for calls for equal treatment of foreign investors.

Removal of Export taxes - EU is calling for the removal of export taxes on raw material.

Development Assistance Promised by the EU

Lessons- we need to pool resources together and become self-reliant and promote regional trade.

Agricultural Subsidies and Market access – this implies that tariff phase down for SADC countries and use of SPS and phase BT by EU.

Lesson- small scale farmers need protection from foreign subsidized agricultural commodity.

Dispute Settlement mechanisms

All the above clauses enforceable through the dispute settlement mechanism

Lessons- avoid such agreements that enable legitimate governments to be sued by foreign entities.

Zimbabwe Experience in Implementing EPAs

Zimbabwe began implementing EPA in May 2013. The implementation process is one that is marred with a myriad of challenges. The **challenges** include;

The Agreement is not being gazetted to align itself with the national legislation, therefore the country is not officially considered as implementing the agreement, the industrial capacity of the country is very low, difficulties in tariff reduction, difficulties in adopting rules of origin, Agriculture is in crisis due to commercialization leading to switch from food to commercial crops and that the country is facing harsh economic conditions.

Way forward

Mr. Ludwig told the participants that EPA is a reality; its rejection should be a regional effort as opposed to each country making its own efforts. SADC member state should work hard to regain regional integration before seeking international markets. SADC member countries should use their production capacity and experience in order to develop productive capacity to become internationally productive SADC to draw lessons from countries that have signed the full EPAs

Discussant –Tetteh Homeku, Third World Network, Africa

Digesting the similarities in the SADC and ECOWAS EPAs

Continental Free Trade Area Negotiations to be launched this year and concluded by 2016. With the EPAs, the negotiations will be done not one on one but through the AU. We are abandoning our own continental strategy and embarking on the strategy of other economies

The need for the CSOs to come together and come up with a strategy, address our weaknesses and get back.

Plenary Discussions

Export taxes, the EU want the raw products from Africa to reach them at a throw away price and then sell them back to Africa at exorbitant prices with export taxes.

Prof. Armadee Daga made a long contribution to the plenary discussion raising some very pertinent issues. He expressed the need to take a Micro strategic and policy perspective

into the issue being discussed, that there is need to analyze what to gain and loose in a contract and to negotiate on that basis.

He posed the question whether we are in a position to safeguard our own interests in negotiating the contract as African states or even whether we are clear of our own interests, what they are, what our long term goals and short term goals are. He said that we cannot therefore blame the EU for all our problems. *"We look like we are ready to sacrifice the long term gains and take the short term gains."*

He gave example with Zimbabwe, what could Zimbabwe have lost if it didn't sign the EPA?. "Have we as individual countries done proper cost benefit analysis of the contract? Have we looked at alternatives if any? What do we need to do to access the alternatives? Have we examined the "what if" case scenario? E.g. Ethiopia, which is not a member of WTO what has happened to them." He said that "if we do finally decide to sign, the problem is like putting a double barrel gun to your head. "We are saying we want industrialization to create jobs. But if we have to sign, then we have to put conditions so that we remain competitive."

- He pointed out that in the struggle, we have a weak point, and the weak point is that, the CSOs have not been visible enough, and the people directly affected are not being mobilized to the streets.
- Another issue that arose was of the different interests by the different African states. It was pointed out that not all countries have the same interests even within Africa. Why do people think we have the same interests as Africans? For example in SADC where countries like South Africa and Mauritius had their own interests.
- Another participant pointed out that EPA negotiations are mostly dominated by the executive arms of government. E.g. Parliament, in terms of oversight and representation.
- The need to strengthen the idea of generational equity also came out, the right of the future generation is at stake and the current generation has no right to sell the rights off the future generations

- It was also pointed out that there is a missing communication between the representatives in the negotiating table and the stakeholders bringing about disunity. If we are not united we cannot get a fair deal out of negotiations..
- The issue of the workers as the missing link in this process – Where is the worker in the whole process of the negotiations? They are supposed to be stakeholders in the process. The workers need to wake up to speak out. There is no trade without a worker and that the worker is the missing component in the negotiation process.
- Another participant also pointed out that this is a political struggle, there is need to mobilize people on the streets, the farmers, the workers and other stakeholders. This can be done by the CSOs. Need to launch “*Bunge La Watu Wa Africa Mashariki*” (East African People’s Parliament) where the common mwananchi can meet and discuss their issues that are not being addressed by their representatives.

Responses

- It was pointed out that there is power contest in the negotiation process and the one with the greater power reigns sovereign. So the EU has invested so much on EPAs and has a higher negotiating power.
- The ability to mobilize people is very important. There is a much bigger struggle coming from the US and other fronts. We can’t sit down and watch.

The need to have Alternatives other than EPA, for example strengthening intra-African trade. The market for African manufactured products is not Europe that is the market we need to focus on .Zimbabwe for example, what has it gained by signing the agreement?. Their economic sanctions were lifted, that is probably a success to them, but on other fronts, Zimbabwe has everything to lose. They can gain more by trading with other African states.

Participants concluded that there have been a number of studies that have been carried out on EPAs, some sponsored by the EU itself that point to the fact that we are not gaining from EPAs.

One of the key issues that came out of the session was the need for the continent to come together, regional organization being key and the need for the CSOs and the other movements like the farmers to cooperate with each other and come up with proper approaches in addressing these issues.

vi. Presentation 6 Reflections on the CSOs experiences in the EAC-EU EPA Negotiations: Key Lessons learnt and way forward – by Oduor Ongwen – SEATINI – Kenya

Mr. Ongwen narrated the experiences of workers in the negotiations from the workers own their perspective. This he did by calling workers representatives in the conference and small scale farmers to give their own stories.

Some of the pertinent issues that were raised include;

The low wages for the workers –The workers’ pay has been low for the workers. He stated that the worker is paid about 150 – 200 shillings after grading. The workers working and living conditions are not guaranteed. They lack protective gears at work, there are no standards followed. He said these are elite negotiations done very first away from workers. “Yes they are creating jobs but they are poverty jobs.” He posed.

It was agreed that the place of workers in the negotiations are very important and must be looked into. “The trade is not fair, the standards have not helped much neither is the government. The industry is not regulated. Another workers representative pointed out that the workers voice must be done.” There are some growers that still do not have the correct standards; the export processing standards are flawed because the workers are not heard. The policy space is about workers, what is their place in the whole negotiations?.

The chairman of the Kenya Small Scale Farmers’ pointed out that most of the benefits of EPA was for the large scale flower farmers, most of whom are foreigners. He said that their case against the government dragged on for a long time and when the judgment was finally delivered which directed the government to consult all stakeholders, the government shifted goal posts and went to the regional block. Due to constraint of resources they could not compete.

Ongwen spoke about the motivation of the CSOs in this process. He said the motivation is that CSOs are established on the foundation to speak for the voiceless. It has been about the content, the process and other important issues including; participation, accountability, transparency, flexibility, and subsidiary-all decisions must be made at the local level when there is possibility to do so.

He gave a brief history of the CSOs involvement in the process. There were several huddles which they had to go through to take part in the negotiations.

They have been able to bring on board other stakeholders like workers, bring together NGOs from other countries to address the issues, research into potential impacts of the EPAs which have been able to validate some of the concerns, bring on board parliamentarians from both National Parliament as well as regional Legislative Assembly, and engage negotiators on a wide range of contentious issues a number of which have been resolved.

Challenges

- He pointed out some of the challenges which include; the hostile relationship between the government NGOs and private sector.
- Staying power of the NGOs, most of them dropping off the issue along the way and pick other new and more interesting issues.
- Working with parliaments have been a big challenge since the parliaments always revolve, change of people in the committees, they have to first learn about the issues before they can effectively engage.
- The problem of resources-the western countries are not ready to provide resources even on research. Thus they have not been able to develop technical capacity to engage.

Discussants – Ambassador Nathan Irumba, Prof. Yash Tandon and William Madiwa.

1. Ambassador Irumba, SEATINI Uganda

- Dynamics in world economic issues- CSOs need to be telescopic, be able to zoom in and out the issues, take the big picture of the issues and deal with them.

- Best practice- the regions should learn from the best practices from their partners. For example the successful suit against the government of Kenya by the Kenya Small Scale Farmers Forum could be emulated by other regions.
- He also expressed the need to make the issues tangible, articulate the issues and put them at individual level, family level. He gave the example of the media which exploits the emotions of the society by telling their stories through the story of an individual or a group of individuals.
- The issue of looking at the long term national interests also came out. The question of whether we have or we are mortgaging the future generation through such Agreements, whether we have denied them the opportunity to enjoy sustainable development.
- The issue of wages- the need to engage with the people on the supply chain themselves. Now that the agreement has been signed, how do we build the capacity to profitably, sustainably equitably trade under the Agreement?. In the supply chain, who will absorb the cost? He said that Legislation will not effectively work to ensure that this happens.
- Alternative trade opportunities – How do we make south to south trade work within the international standards, retain accountability, quality of goods exchanged among the African states.
- He told the participants that if you want to go fast go alone, if you want to go far go with others, countries decided to go fast so they went alone, they sacrificed the long-time gain. There is need to get back together and find a way of moving together in harmony.

2. William Madiwa, Tanzania Trade and Economic Justice Network

He began by saying that the EU is looking for resources to feed their industries and they are also looking at Africa as a market where they can sell their products. So to them it's a ground for raw materials and an open market for their finished goods. He explained that Tanzania has been slow on agreements that are at regional level. The ministry of Trade has too much discretion to decide on so many issues alone to the extent that the government had very strict rules on whether the civil societies could discuss the issues in public.

Mr. Madiwa explained that part of the main problem in Tanzania is lack of technical capacity among the citizens to engage on issues of EPAs.

Neutrality of CSOs in politics – he explained that there are three types of CSOs, the ones that say yes, the ones that say no, and the ones that say maybe. The government will always frustrate the ones that say no, put the ones that say yes into its pocket while those that say maybe have very little impact if at all.

He also pointed out that Policy options give the private sector opportunities to do business at a regional level at the expense of other sectors since most governments always look at the private sector as the engine of economic growth.

The EAC should examine the interface between the internal market of the EAC and the future of the EAC at the international level. The EPAs lays a foundation for the EAC to be a raw material exporting hub forever.

Plenary

- It was pointed out that the press fraternity is more interested in money than anything else, so the small organizations cannot be easily heard since they do not have the financial muscle.
- A participant made reference to the government proposal to put up a tea packaging facility in Nigeria. He expressed the view that as a country we do not have enough expertise to run a tea packaging facility in Nigeria as has been proposed, but even if we were to do so, why in Nigeria?
- The participants also pointed out that the CSOs participation in the process is not a privilege but a right derived from the Cotonou Agreement. Also came up was the need to organize ourselves in socio-economic and political constituencies so that these issues become election issues.
- The scramble for Africa in the 21st Century – participants expressed concerned at the way China and the rest of the west are in stiff competition for Africa. This scramble is not in the benefit of Africa, and that the trade that the western countries seek to do with Africa is mainly aimed at killing Africa.

- The participants also expressed concerns that employers are increasingly transforming labour from permanent to casualized labour.
- The government invited people for negotiations but most of them failed to turn up. It is important for the CSOs to participate in the implementation process. Sensitization of people on EPAs is important for it to be successfully implemented.
- Africa needs to prepare and package itself properly in view of the other negotiations coming up from the US, China, India and Brazil..
- Fair trade issues – participants pointed out that fair trade issues should not be another non-tariff barrier.
- Trade is not only about labelling, it's about market. Participants expressed the view that the definition of fair is not what we think it is as Africans. Rather we should ask the question, fair to whom?
- Another participant expressed the view that we need not to subscribe to ISOs, that by doing so, food kiosks that women run for the workers will go. He said that Trade is war, and that there is nothing called fair trade.

Responses

- Participants noted that it is the efforts of the CSOs that have made sure that the negotiations reached where they are now and there is need for further collaborations especially when the opportunity comes for review.
- Implementation – it was also pointed out that the missing link in the conversation is the consumer. With the consumer having information, they will be able to decide what to buy. There is therefore need to name and shame products, supply chain with negative impacts.
- Fair trade is a voluntary certification, the role of CSOs in this is to complement government efforts, the adoption of fair trade is a recognition that the consumer and producer work together to ensure fair trade.
- The workshop concluded that the EPAs in their current forms do not reflect the needs of African states and should therefore be rejected. However, there is still room for the CSOs to engage during the implementation process.

C. Day Two

Fred Njehu welcomed the participants to the session and invited the Rapporteur to give a recap of the previous day's deliberations. He then invited the moderator to kick off the session. There were five presentations on this second day beginning with presentation seven in the first session.

vii. Presentation 7: Current Dynamics within the WTO Negotiations, their Implications on the Developing Countries/LDCs and the Proposals for away Forward – Ambassador Nathan Irumba, SEATINI-Uganda

Ambassador began his presentation by reminding the participants of the importance and the main mandate of WTO. He pointed out that WTO is considered an embodiment of trade system and one which should take up trade negotiations and make rules that govern international trade. He also gave a brief summary of the Doha Declaration and its importance in international trade. He pointed out that the initial thinking was that the problems of developing countries were to be at the heart of Doha Round of negotiations; however the negotiations proceeded on very different premise. Even though development was to be at the centre, it was relegated to the periphery; it became market access and industrialization and even narrowed down to market access to developed world at the expense of developing countries.

He then went ahead to discuss what he termed as the 21st century issues in international trade Agreements negotiations. He gave examples like competition, investment intellectual property issues, and Duty free quota free market access. He stated that there is need to formulate new approaches to negotiating multilateral trade agreements. The Ambassador also discussed the issue of trade facilitation. He said the big question is, whose trade is being facilitated? He pointed out that the developed world has used the philosophy of “If you can’t convince them, confuse them” in their negotiations with developing countries on matters trade. He expressed regrets that the dynamics in WTO are such that we are pressed to accept more rules and where we can’t agree with the rules, our industrial partners are negotiating bilateral agreements which we will be forced to be part of.

He also expressed concern to the fact that Civil societies have migrated to environment and climate change issues from trade issues thus making easy for the African governments to conveniently conclude deals with developed world that are not in the interests of the African continent.

Way forward

He suggested that as a way forward, we need to be very careful about getting more information about what is happening in WTO. It's possible that when a country is hosting WTO, there is much pressure on it to deliver its region (deliver the goods to the developed countries), and therefore Kenya must be watched carefully and offered the necessary assistance to ensure that it doesn't deliver the continent to the West.

viii. Presentation 8: Doha Round Stalemate and Why African Countries should be Concerned – by Peter Lunenbourg, South Center, Geneva

Peter began his presentation by asking who among the participants know ESA. A few people did. He explained that ESA is made up of countries like Madagascar and Mauritius, and that these countries operate on FEPA and on their way to conclude comprehensive EPAs. However, for the last few years, nothing much has happened. He pointed out that part of the reason for this is that Countries by themselves are normally very reluctant to negotiate and they must be pushed.

As his topic suggests, he posed the question, why should Africa be concerned? He then noted that from Doha rounds, we can get more market for our products, and however, we shouldn't be too concerned.

Discussants

Dr. Mwabutsya Ndebesa, Makerere University, Uganda.

The discussant for the session asked the question whether we should be worried about our contribution to global trade, which he answered to the affirmative, noting that Africa only contributes 2% to global trade and that intra-African trade is less than 6% while in EU it's over 60%. This is a reason for us the African countries to be worried.

He also pointed out that the Developed countries in WTO are interested in commerce; market access, IP, while developing countries are interested in development and that there is a contradiction in these areas of focus. He reminded the participants that, for the African countries to get what they want out of the multilateral trade negotiations, we as African countries must understand our issues and protect those issues. These are issues like; rules of origin, special and differential treatment, market access and market entry.

Way forward

As a way forward, Dr. Ndebesa reiterated that we should focus on defining our issues clearly, who is defining them, is it the politicians, the executive, the CSOs, or a combination of all these groups, bring on board citizens to participate in defining these issues. He reminded the participants that Trade negotiations are political processes and therefore we should engage parliament both at the National and the Regional levels.

He also raised the issue of Access to technology. He expressed concerned that we have technical society, but lacking in organizational. He then reminded the participants that Africa should take advantage of the WTO meeting in Nairobi in December, and to do so, we need to profile what we want, if we don't the outcome will be negative.

OduorOng'wen

Ong'wen reminded the participants that it came out clearly in the conference that trade is war and that the developed countries already know it is war, but most of our negotiators think it's a dance. Our interlocutors have mastered our psychology – "if you can't convince them, confuse them".

Prof. Yash Tandon

On his part, Prof. Tandon, told the participants that exporting raw materials is a colonial legacy that we must not accept. We must decide what we want.

Regarding the WTO meeting, he pointed out that we must decide what we want, what we want WTO to do, trade facilitation is not good for us as it is aimed at benefiting the developed countries and not Africa. By august we must have a solid vehicle that will get us

there. He expressed concerned that as a consequence of our region's heavy dependence on funding from the west, we suffer the inability to negotiate our needs properly with them. He gave example with the secretariat of EAC in which depends on 60% of funding from development partners.

He explained that the global geopolitics has changed dramatically and that it has become another war, and therefore we must change our tactics and strategies, we must rethink things like SAPs, things imposed on us by the World Bank and IMF.

Plenary

The following issues and questions arose during plenary discussions:

1. The issue of subsidies – Why has WTO refused to include subsidies in their rule, why are they pressurizing developing countries to lower their tariffs. Who is paying for the subsidies? We should learn from Africa, G20 was created to cool down China, Brazil and South Africa.
2. The place of Africa in the WTO – Influence of Africa in decision making process especially the structure of WTO is it that Africa is misrepresented or she does not have issues to take there or the issues are such that we can't participate in. The WTO is an opportunity in 20 years so there is need to formulate a strategy for engagement.
3. On signing EPAS – a question arose as to what percentages Africa is ready to offer as she prepare to sign the agreement? Are we thinking of exporting raw materials or industrialization? Is Africa signing to offer EU rule or is she are participating.
4. The issue of Doha rounds – what changes does Africa need to take place in the system so as to accommodate our needs.
5. Constant change of negotiators in the developing countries, where negotiators are changed constantly and the new ones don't even know what happened 5 years again. This is a big challenge both in negotiating agreements and stakeholder engagements. Ministers and MPs also change constantly and the new ones don't easily appreciate the issues.

Responses

After the plenary discussions the following were some of the responses given by presenters and the discussants on the issues raised;

On the issue of heavy reliance on funds from developed countries and its consequences on Africa's ability to negotiate constructively in multilateral trade agreement negotiations, the panellists noted that power influences economic negotiations, powers include economic power and knowledge, those who have power are able to exert them over the weak ones and achieve their end results.

On subsidies, it was explained that there are export subsidies and production subsidies and that subsidies will not be reduced in Doha round of negotiations.

**ix. Presentation 9: An overview of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and its Implications to Africa's Trade and Development –
*By Tette Homeku, Third World Network-Africa***

He began his presentation by expressing concerned over the overreliance on funding from the developed countries by developing states. He pointed out that in the efforts to boost the intra- African trade, we have invited the EU and others to help us boost it through funding but their understanding of boosting is different from ours.

He also expressed the view that there are different Understandings of Trade Facilitation, that what we have as trade facilitation is not trade facilitation that Africa needs. Trade facilitation was one of the 4 Singapore issues.

He stated that trade facilitation agreements are supposed to simplify customs duties and procedures. It's meant to increase of transparency, participation. He gave examples with certain difficulties that arise with trade facilitation agreements as they are currently and noted that these examples suggest that the trade facilitation agreements are not what they are mistaken to be. This is a bad deal that does not address Africa's needs. How did we get there? We paid more attention to capacity building as opposed to the rules which do not address our needs.

He said that LDCs are concluding agreements whose effects are not very good for them; that they confuse their needs with their desires. That LDCs don't have their own agendas in the negotiations; they don't have political capacity to negotiate. That LDC's must be able to understand the totality of their economic interests, the reality that emanate from it and what LDCs need to do to address them.

**x. Presentation 10: EPA Agriculture chapter and WTO Agreements:
Implications on Livelihoods and Food Security –
*By Jane Nalunga, SEATINI – Uganda.***

She started her presentation by noting that Agriculture in the WTO is the most contested area in international trade and that the agreement on agriculture in the WTO was put there to discipline the high subsidies and protection. She also noted that the agreement was supposed to subsidize domestic products to support their export and increase their competitiveness in foreign markets. EU agreed to eliminate them by 2013.

On the issue of Market access - progressive reduction of tariffs for developed and developing countries, LDCs exempted but had to bind their tariffs. There is no policy space to protect our production.

The Doha round – the Doha round issues are being worked on

Box shifting – domestic subsidies

Agriculture in the EPAs – sensitive list – most value added products are not in the sensitive list. Does this mean we are going to stay as raw material producers? There is a link between value addition and production, when you don't add value, production goes down.

Way forward

As a way forward, we should be able to have a link between our vision and what we want to negotiate, so that we are consistent in our negotiations in different negotiation processes.

Discussant Deborah James, Our World is not for Sale (OWINSF)

Ms. Deborah began by pointing out that one of the major imbalances that are there in EPA is that states have agreed to reduce the subsidies that are there in the WTO Agreement.

She noted that there is need to allow Africa to spend its own money on its farmers to invest in agriculture rather than depend on funds. This is the main issue that will be discussed in the WTO meeting in December. That one of the main agenda should be to change the rules to allow developing countries to deal with mass poverty, food insecurity and eradicate hunger in their countries without WTO standing on their way – permanent solution to African problems by African countries themselves.

Plenary

A participant also raised the issue of malnutrition in the African continent. He pointed out that malnutrition is a fantastic business, that it has changed its form; there is new forms which come from the junk food, an idea from the west.

Some of the questions and issues arising from the plenary were as follows;

The issue of individual countries v corporations, whether this affect negotiations?

Elaborate on the Contradistinctions on agriculture and the Maputo declaration

The issue of food security is becoming more elusive, Trade facilitation agreements, what advices can you give on them? Implications on livelihood and agriculture under EPAs, Ambitious food Security Action Plan, what became of it? The need to strategize on how to engage in December at the WTO meeting

A participant who was part of the negotiation process told the conference that If you really want to influence the EPA, you have to start from the EAC CET. EAC has a review process every five years. This however raised a very emotive debate as most participants did not agree with his view.

The challenges in the enforcement of CADE by African government, How do we measure our commitment to Malabo or Maputo? Do those two speak to WTO?

Responses

Tetteh –under part two of the WTO agreement developing countries are allowed to self-select the provisions they want to implement right away or those they want to implement if they get support or those they will implement later. Our countries have not been able to select properly. Even though we cannot change the rule, we can stagger the implementation. Under EPA the EU giving money is discretionally. It's not aid for trade, its aid for trade liberalization.

Jane – AU v CAP in the EU, whether we can make the CAP have teeth. It may not be possible because the AU is not an implementation body, what we can do is to increase our budget at the national level and focus on policy at the AU level.

Since our agricultural sector is already weak from under financing and other factors, anything weakening it more will result to food insecurity.

xi. Presentation 11: Regionalism vs Multilateralism: Focus on EPAs in the context of regional Integration – by Prof. Yash Tandon.

Prof Yash gave a brief history of the EAC community and how the EU used the community to develop their own industries.

He also reminded participants that EALA has got supra national powers than even the EU Parliament. It is therefore a very important body to use. We must continue to provide political support to EALA. It is a political body with legislative functions.

He told participants that each one should apply for the East African Passport from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This will make it very easy for them to move around the EAC states easily.

Ambassador Irumba

Is EAC forced with integration or are they interested to integrate.

The difference between us and EU is that they have a clear idea of global Europe of conquering the world and safeguarding their interests. This is what informs the policy and

the negotiation stand by the EU. In African countries, the ultimate objective is common market, currency and political confederation.

Looking at the bilateral agreements, we are in danger of getting into asymmetrical relationships that then hinder us from integrating with ourselves. The different EPAs we are signing are not integrating Africa towards regional integration.

What should be informing us in terms of negotiations – our development and regional development should be non-negotiable. That is likely not being factored in the negotiations. The unfortunate thing is that we are raising Africa towards primary export. There is very little inter-connectivity between the EAC countries.

Ambassador Irumba expressed the view that Africa needs to come up with mechanisms to ensure that EPAs do not compromise our quest for continental regional integration. So far it's compromising because we are harmonizing our integration with EU rather than ourselves.

Also arising was the question of how we can use oil to promote regional integration. Oil invites several external actors like the west. How do we deal with them? The presenters concluded that EPAs is not supportive of regional integration.

Plenary

- The participants expressed the concern that they have not been addressed on the issue of how the negotiations are impacting on potential industries though we agree that industrial growth is fundamental to development.
- There is need to discuss these issues with policy makers; bring them on board and put pressure them to act. The immediate opportunity for this is the WTO Ministerial Conference in December.
- Preparation for the WTO ministerial conference in December – What are we going to do to ensure that the outcome of this meeting in Africa is not a total defeat to African issues? Some likeminded organizations should start working as early as possible to come up with a policy paper which is not theoretical, speaking of the issues to be addressed in the conference. The policy (advocacy) paper should be

sent to all heads of states in Africa, all ministers involved in the negotiations, all MPs in Africa. We should also actively use the social media around such an advocacy paper to create a buzz that would go beyond Africa and get people talking.

- It was also suggested that if we are to get anywhere with EPA, we need to take the discussion to the EU. Sensitize the EU citizens, tell them the dangers we are facing. CSOs should stop growing cold feet.
- The issue of negotiators – we need to give political backing to them so that they can stand their ground during the negotiations with the understanding that they are doing it for and on behalf of the people. This can however only be done if they shift away from defensive position. They should try to find to find and construct common ground.
- The question of whether we have a global Africa strategy or a global East Africa strategy.

Responses

Prof. Yash told members that if you do not have a single currency you cannot have a single economic policy. We should have African currency. He gave example with UAPDA which was the currency of the COMESA countries but died a natural death, and the need to revive such. He said that this will help to minimize use of foreign currency.

Close of the Conference

The general mood of the conference from the beginning to the end was that Africa has nothing much to gain from EPAs in their current state and there is therefore need for the African countries to regain what they have lost.

Rap-up – Conference Statement

At the close of the conference, a draft conference statement was drafted and read through to the participants, then the plenary made suggestions to improve the statement further. It was agreed that the statement will be sent out to the participants for endorsement.



Statement_from_the
Conference-_draft

(Annexure 6 – Draft Conference Statement)

Closing Remarks

Closing remarks were then given by Deborah James and Ambassador Irumba. Debora in her final remarks informed the participants that the LDCs have a waiver in implementing TRIPs Agreements under WTO and that the waiver expires at the end of this year, that there is a campaign to extend the waiver, and that there is need to fight for it. She then gave a parting shot and thanked all participants for attending the conference and for their participation.

Ambassador Irunga on his part reminded participants not to give up. He said that progressively by continuing to talk, everyone will become aware of the issues and that in the long run the message gets home, the discussions start influencing individuals and institutions. He told the participants to continue creating awareness at the intellectual, grass root and government levels.

Fredrick Njehu then gave a vote of thanks and closed the conference officially.