

East African Community (EAC) – EPA (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and South Sudan)

Economic Partnership Agreement between the East African Community Partner States, of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part *

Article 16 - Special provisions on administrative cooperation

1. The Parties agree that administrative cooperation is essential for the implementation and control of the preferential treatment granted under this Part and underline their commitment to combat irregularities and fraud in customs and related matters.
2. Where a Party has made a finding, on the basis of objective information, of a failure to provide administrative cooperation and/or of irregularities or fraud, the Party concerned may temporarily suspend the relevant preferential treatment of the product(s) concerned in accordance with this Article.
3. For the purpose of this Article, a failure to provide administrative cooperation shall mean, inter alia:
 - (a) a repeated failure to respect the obligations to verify the originating status of the product(s) concerned;
 - (b) a repeated refusal or undue delay in carrying out and/or communicating the results of subsequent verification of the proof of origin;
 - (c) a repeated refusal or undue delay in obtaining authorisation to conduct administrative cooperation missions to verify the authenticity of documents or accuracy of information relevant to the granting of the preferential treatment in question.
4. A finding of irregularities or fraud may be made, inter alia, where there is a rapid increase, without satisfactory explanation, in imports of goods exceeding the usual level of production and export capacity of the other Party that is linked to objective information concerning irregularities or fraud.
5. The application of a temporary suspension shall be subject to the following conditions:
 - (a) The Party which has made a finding, on the basis of objective information, of a failure to provide administrative cooperation and/or of irregularities or fraud shall without undue delay EU EAC EPA Consolidated text 11 notify the Committee of Senior Officials of its finding together with the objective information and enter into consultations within the Committee of Senior Officials, on the basis of all relevant information and objective findings, with a view to reaching a solution acceptable to both Parties.
 - (b) Where the Parties have entered into consultations within the Committee of Senior Officials as above and have failed to agree on an acceptable solution within three (3) months following the notification, the Party concerned may temporarily suspend the relevant preferential treatment of the product(s) concerned. A temporary suspension shall be notified to the EPA Council without undue delay.

* Not yet in force.

(c) Temporary suspensions under this Article shall be limited to that necessary to protect the financial interests of the Party concerned. They shall not exceed a period of six (6) months, and may be renewed. They shall be subject to periodic consultations within the Committee of Senior Officials in particular with a view to their termination as soon as the conditions for their application no longer exist.

6. At the same time as the notification to the Committee of Senior Officials under paragraph 5(a) of this Article, the Party concerned should publish a notice to importers in its Official Journal. The notice to importers should indicate for the product concerned that there is a finding, on the basis of objective information, of a failure to provide administrative cooperation and/or of irregularities or fraud.