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## THEMATIC HIGHLIGHT

### *Overview of the WTO TBT Committee meeting dedicated to the draft Guidelines on the Good Regulatory Practices and RIAs*



One of the interesting events in relation to TBT issues worth to be mentioned is the WTO TBT Committee Meeting held in Geneva on 7-10 March 2016 (the Technical Expert of the ACP TBT Programme was taking part in it). The work of the WTO TBT Committee Meeting was dedicated to two Thematic Sessions: on Conformity Assessment Procedures (presentations from Chinese Taipei, Indonesia, South Africa, Canada, ASIAN – Singapore, the USA, Switzerland, China, Mexico) and on Experience of WTO Members in conducting Regulatory Impact Assessment (presentations from the US, Korea, OECD, Australia and the EU). The idea of first session was to present cases of national conformity assessment procedures for recognition with the basic principle respected – inspected and tested once and accepted everywhere. Reduction of costs for producers was the “red line” that was underlining all presentations. (...)

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## PROJECTS' HIGHLIGHTS

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### *HAITI: Support to the national Bureau of Standards*



*Mission to the national Bureau of Standards, Haiti, April 2016*

In November 2015, the TBT Programme launched a project to support the Haitian Bureau of Standards (BHN). The purpose of this EDF-funded intervention are (a) to strengthen the BHN Quality Management institutional capacity; and (b) to promote the adoption of best international practices in the production and provision of goods and services.

The project should deliver its results by resulting in the the creation of an institutional framework for quality infrastructure in accordance with the WTO TBT Agreement and enhanced capacity of auditors and consultants to support Haitian firms and laboratories. Project activities commenced, also in November 2015,

with the arrival of the project Team Leader, George Dupret, in Port au Prince. During this initial phase Mr. Dupret met all major beneficiaries (BHN, Ministry of Trade and Industry MCI and Metrology Institute). There were also exchanges with other Haitian stakeholders interested in quality management, most notably, the Haitian Association for Quality Management (AHMAQ); the Directorate for Quality and Consumer Protection; the National Association of Fruits transformers (ANATRAF); and the Veterinary Laboratory and Control of Food Quality Tamarind (LVCQAT). (...)

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## NEWS & EVENTS

### *6th Steering Committee of the TBT Programme*



*6<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee, ACP House, Brussels, 21<sup>st</sup> of April 2016*

The sixth Steering Committee (SC) of the ACP-EU TBT Programme was held at the ACP House on Thursday, April 21, 2016. The Committee was chaired by Mr. Viwanou Gnassounou, Assistant Secretary-General responsible for Sustainable Economic Development and Trade at the ACP Secretariat.

In addition to the formal Steering Committee members such as those from DEVCO and the ACP Secretariat, the meeting was also observed by representatives of AFSEC, ARSO, the Pacific Island Forum (PIF), UNIDO and the Physikalisch Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB). The meeting

was also attended by the Team Leader of the newly established TradeCom II, thereby underscoring the sound collaboration among trade capacity building PMUs. During the meeting, the various stakeholders and observers were generally positive in the remarks on the Programme's work but also highlighted the closure of the Programme being imminent and the importance of conducting a timely assessment of its results (...)

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## NEWS & EVENTS

### *High-level Conference on Responsible Management of the Supply Chain in the Garment Sector*



*TBT Programme team at the conference marketplace of ideas, Brussels, 25<sup>th</sup> of April*

On April 25, 2016, the European Commission organised its first "High-level Conference on Responsible Management of the Supply Chain in the Garment Sector". Held one day after the third anniversary of the collapse of the Rana Plaza factory in Bangladesh, the conference promoted successful existing initiatives, including from Member States and industry and provided a platform for continuing the dialogue at EU level.

The high-level event featured interesting presentations by fashion designers, producers, policy makers and NGOs. Beyond the formal interventions in plenary

session, there was also an informal marketplace of ideas with posters displayed by a select band of initiatives highlighting activities supportive of responsible supply-side management in the garment sector. The TBT Programme used the opportunity to develop a poster to showcase its project: "Supporting REACH Compliance Among COMESA Footwear Tanners and SMEs" (...)

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## NEWS & EVENTS

### *European Development Days 2016: Joint action in favour of ACP countries*



The 2016 European Development Days (EDD2016) are fast approaching, with this year's focus on implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In pursuit of the overarching objective of sustainable development, multi-stakeholder dialogue and partnerships make EDD an engaging and participatory forum with its distinctive assembly of development actors.

In the spirit of cooperation, the EU-ACP Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), the ACP-EU Technical Barriers to Trade Programme (TBT Programme) and the ACP-EU TradeCom II Programme (TradeCom II) will jointly organise two attractive debates at EDD2016

on development issues pertinent to the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of countries (ACP). The first debate on: "Recent global developments in agricultural trade and the Sustainable Development Goals in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries" will take place in Brussels on June 15, inst. 15 between 09.30 - 10.45. (...)

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**[Register now](#) before the 15<sup>th</sup> of May**

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## INSIGHT

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### Technical Barriers to Trade induced by Mega Regional Trade Agreements (MRTAs) and their Impact on ACP Countries

With the WTO-guided multilateral liberalization efforts in a stalemate for some time now, regional integration has gained ground. The most recent development is the rise of so-called mega regional trade agreements (MRTAs), or 'mega trading blocs'. These agreements are being negotiated among major players in global trade. Significant MRTAs are TPP (Trans Pacific Partnership), TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) and RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership). The TPP agreement was concluded on 5th of October year, and now awaits ratification by the national parliaments.

MRTAs are characterized by covering a large share in global economic output and world trade. TPP covers for example 38.4 % of world GDP and 25.3% of world merchandise trade (Palit, 2014). A typical feature of MRTAs is the scope of the negotiations, particularly qualitative enhancement to WTO rules.

MRTAs not only address issues of border protection and tariff liberalization. They also specifically focus on behind-the-border measures and the regulatory level of member states, comprising product and production standards, existing technical barriers to trade (TBT) between member states, services, investment, and other issues. This deep integration among member economies is a new feature which distinguishes MRTAs from previous free trade agreements. The significance of a common regulatory framework is evident by the specific conditions of 21st century trade with its rising fragmentation of production processes driven by global value chains (GVCs).

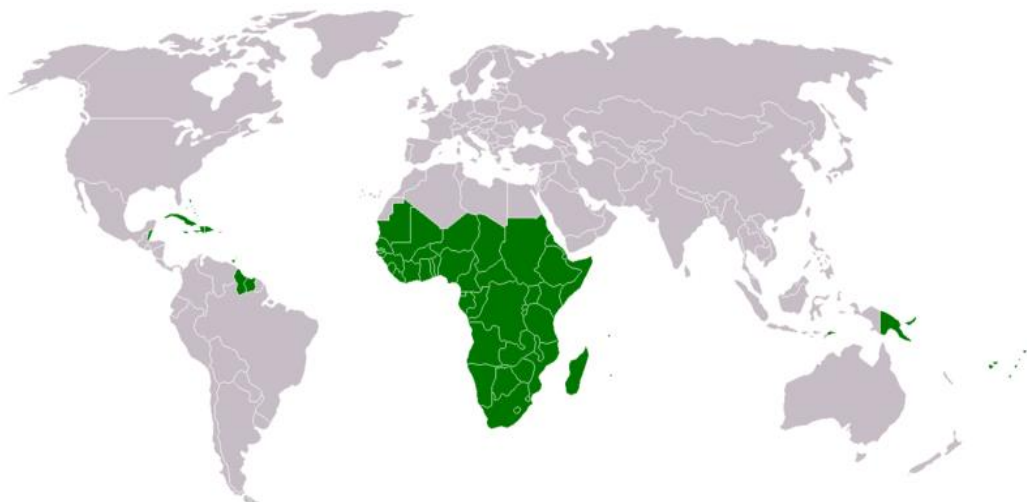
Given this new and extended scope of trade negotiations, MRTAs will have a significant impact on world trade order, and also especially on countries outside the trade agreements. More than 160 countries are excluded from the MRTA negotiations, including all ACP countries. The ACP countries are characterized by heterogeneity in terms of geographical characteristics and economic development but with a generally high prevalence of small scale producers and suppliers. For the majority of ACP countries, plugging into existing GVCs is already rather difficult. For these countries, MRTAs may give rise to additional challenges but also potential opportunities. Both challenges and opportunities will depend on the countries' individual trade, economic and investment linkages with the MRTAs (Palit, 2015). (...)

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## 24 ONGOING PROJECTS



*\*Map showing the origin of projects*

**ACP Geneva** -Support to the ACP Group

**AFRAC** - Accreditation e -earning Programme

**BURKINA FASO** - Quality Management System

**BURUNDI** -Reinforcement des capacités BBN

**CARIBBEAN EXPORT** - Regional Market Access Programme

**COMESA** - Participation of SMEs and Tanners in trade

**IVORY COAST** – Support to ISO accreditation

**IVORY COAST** - Quality and ethical Label for SMEs

**IVORY COAST** - Lanema Capacity Building

**ETHIOPIA** - Capacitating accreditation office, CA bodies

**GABON** – Capacity Building in TBT related issues

**GHANA** - Strengthening competitiveness of exporters

**HAITI** – Capacity building in Quality systems

**JAMAICA** - Enhancing Competitiveness, Regional Patent

**KENYA** – Capacity Building for QI Institutions

**MALI** - Appui à la Normalisation et promotion de produits

**NAMIBIA** - Implementation of the NSI Strategic objectives

**NIGER** - Renforcement des Capacités de l'IQ

**NIGERIA** - Strengthening Product Testing Laboratories

**RDC** – Support to certification system

**RWANDA** - Trade Enhancement & Certification

**SENEGAL** – Support to ASN

**TOGO** – Capacity Building in the agro sector

**UEMOA** – Train the trainers in Quality management

### UPCOMING TBT EVENTS

- European Development Days 2016, Brussels, **June 2016**
- 22nd ARSO General Assembly, Arusha, **June 2016**

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