



## **Primary Food Processors' Statement On Economic Partnership Agreements**

The association of Primary Food Processors (PFP) takes note of the Regulation (EU) No 527/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending the Council 'Market Access Regulation' (EC) No 1528/2007. The amendment sets the deadline of 1 October 2014 for certain ACP countries to ratify their interim Economic Partnership Agreements before their unilateral market access to the EU is withdrawn.

We recall that the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) aim at supporting regional integration, sustainable development and poverty eradication efforts as well as gradual integration of the ACP economies into the world economy. The EPA negotiations should therefore pay due regard to the ACP regional dynamics and development priorities. Against this backdrop, we stress the importance of the EU's technical and financial assistance aimed at enhancing the ACP institutional capacities and sustaining their reform efforts.

PFP is fully supportive of the EU-ACP cooperation on customs and trade facilitation matters. In particular, we favour reforms that simplify and rationalise cross-border trade procedures and reduce the transaction costs thereof. Similarly, we consider it vital that the EU continues to assist its ACP counterparts in addressing other non-tariff barriers to trade, such as sanitary and phytosanitary measures, in order to facilitate the EU-ACP regulatory convergence. Resolving the above trade-related matters that are currently hindering the ACP's ability to fully engage in the global trading environment remains crucial to ensure a successful and effective implementation of the EPAs.

Primary Food Processors trade with a number of ACP countries, notably in West and Central Africa as well as in the Pacific. We support the EU's endeavours to maintain a sustainable long-term trade relationship with its ACP partners and express our concern about potential disruptions in the existing trade flows if certain ACP countries revert to the Generalised System of Preferences.

PFP therefore calls on all Parties in the EPA talks to continue to aim for a conclusion of the EPA negotiations and close the gaps on the outstanding issues in a mutually satisfactory manner.

The **Primary Food Processors of the EU (PFP)** consists of six trade associations:

- European Starch Industry Association (AAF)**
- European Committee of Sugar Manufacturers (CEFS)**
- European Cocoa Association (ECA)**
- European Flour Milling Association (European Flour Millers)**
- European Vegetable Protein Federation (EUVEPRO)**
- European Vegetable Oil and Proteinmeal Industry (FEDIOL)**

**PFP** represents the European primary food processing industries. It provides the link between agricultural raw materials and final products (secondary processors in the food, feed and non-food sectors). PFP members process approximately **220 million tons of raw materials** (cereals, sugar beet, rapeseeds, soybeans, sunflower seeds, cocoa beans, crude vegetable oil, starch potatoes...) **employing over 120 000 people** in the European Union.

