

## Free Trade as a Means for Poverty Eradication? Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and Political Alternatives

In June 2000 the Cotonou agreement – as the successor of the Lomé treaties – was signed between the European Union (EU) and 77 ACP countries (Africa, Caribic, Pacific). In so called “Economic Partnership Agreements” (EPAs) substantially all trade relations between the EU and the ACP-group will be subjected to WTO-compatible free trade principles. EPAs aim to establish “new WTO compatible trading arrangements removing progressively barriers of trade” between six regional “free trade areas” within the ACP group and the EU.

Civil Society Organisations and even the World Bank are pointing out that reciprocal free trade between unequal partners will come at the expense of the economic weaker partner. Even ACP governments comment on the present EU free trade position and express their misgivings and criticism.

On the occasion of the 2006 review of the negotiation process ACP countries have the possibility to decide on alternatives to EPAs. According to the Cotonou agreement the EU in 2006 is bound to offer those countries alternatives, who are not willing to conclude an EPA. To offer those countries a real choice, meaningful trade alternatives have to be developed jointly without any further delay. Up to now the EU has been reluctant to do so. Demands for the development of alternatives have been raised in public discussions, but have not been sufficiently developed yet. By convening this expert meeting the organisers would like to contribute to this process.

The expert meeting will give an introduction to EPA implications and introduce reciprocal and non-reciprocal alternatives. Trade alternatives and their political feasibility will be discussed with guests and speakers from Southern Africa, German government delegates, researchers and other representatives from ACP countries and NGOs.

During the NGO strategy meeting on Saturday discussions will be deepened and intensified. In addition, elements of a joint NGO strategy towards EPA alternatives for the coming year will be developed.

### Location and approach

**Gustav-Stresemann-Institut**  
**Langer Grabenweg 68**  
**D-53175 Bonn**  
**Germany**  
**Tel.: ++49 2 28.81 07 -0**

**We are quick to reach and easy to find ...**

**... by car**  
**Right side of Rhine:**

A 3, until motorway-crossing Bonn/Siegburg  
A 560, Bonn until motorway-crossing St. Augustin  
A 59, Bonn-Bad Godesberg until motorway-crossing Bonn-Ost (42)  
A 562 until exit Rheinaue, then turn left;  
next traffic-light: turn right into Heinemann Strasse  
100 m after next traffic-light: U-turn left, parking after  
100 m on the right

**Left side of Rhine:**

A 61, until motorway-crossing Meckenheim  
A 565, direction Bonn  
Exit Bonn-Poppelsdorf, direction Bad Godesberg (B9)  
At traffic-lights right before Underground-station "Max-Löbner-  
Strasse": turn left into Max-Löbner-Straße until end, then turn left

**... by public transport**

**from Bonn central-station:**

U-Bahn Line (underground/tram number) 16 or 63,  
direction Bad Godesberg,  
leave tram at "Max-Löbner-Straße",  
walk down "Max-Löbner-Straße" to the end.  
(Between Bonn central station and Bonn-Bad Godesberg trams  
commute every 7 minutes; tram-number 16 and 63).

**from ICE-Station Siegburg/Bonn:**

U/tram-line 66, direction Bonn/Bad Honnef  
leave tram at station "Robert-Schuman-Platz"

**... by plane**

**From airport Cologne/Bonn:**

bus No. 670 until "Hauptbahnhof" (central station)  
From Bonn central-station: see above

## Expert Meeting and NGO Strategy Meeting 21. and 22.10.2005



at Gustav-Stresemann-Institut, Bonn

## Free Trade as a Means for Poverty Eradication?

**Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)  
and Political Alternatives**



Jointly organised by Ecumenical Service for Advocacy Work on Southern Africa (KASA), Coordination Southern Africa (KOSA), Network Africa Germany (NAD), terre des hommes and World Economy, Ecology & Development (WEED)

10.30 Welcome

*Wolfgang Schonecke, Netzwerk Afrika Deutschland, Bonn*11.00 **Trade and Development in one Boat? The EPA Concept from a Critical Civil Society Perspective***Tendai Makvavarara, One World Action, Namibia*12.00 **Trade and Poverty Eradication – EPAs and their Effects on the Rural Poor in Zambia***Angela Mulenga, Civil Society Forum Trade Network Zambia*Chair: *Theo Kneifel, KASA, Heidelberg*

13.00 Lunch

14.00 **From Reciprocity to Preference: Scenarios for Alternatives to EPAs from an EU Perspective***Francesco Rampa, ECDPM, Maastricht\**Chair: *Dieter Simon, KOSA, Bielefeld*

14.45 Coffee Break

15.15 **Alternatives to Reciprocal Liberalisation: Perspectives from Southern Africa***Masiwa Rusare, TRADES Centre, Zimbabwe*16.00 **Development Benchmarks as Reference for EPAs and Alternative Trade Agreements***Karin Ulmer, APRODEV, Brussels*16.45 **Resume and Perspectives***Klaus Schilder, WEED, Berlin*

17.00 Break

17.30 **Panel Discussion – Free Trade as a Means for Poverty Eradication? Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and Political Alternatives***Evita Schmieg, Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Berlin**Edwin Laurent, Special Envoy to the EU for Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Brussels\***Angela Mulenga, Civil Society Forum Trade Network Zambia**Tendai Makvavarara, One World Action, Namibia*Chair: *Tillmann Elliesen, Editor, Magazine for Development and Cooperation, Bonn*

19.30 End

09.30 Welcome

*Dieter Simon, KOSA, Bielefeld*Chair: *Karin Ulmer, APRODEV, Brussels***EPA negotiation process until 2007 – An Overview***Matt Griffith, CAFOD, London*10.00 **Brief statements on the political implications and risks associated with EPA alternatives addressing the following:**

- 1) Political recommendations drawn from the trade alternatives discussed?
- 2) Strength and weaknesses?
- 3) Political feasibility?

*Tendai Makvavarara, One World Action, Namibia**Angela Mulenga, Civil Society Forum Trade Network Zambia**Masiwa Rusare, TRADES Centre, Zimbabwe*

11.15 Coffee Break

11.45 **Discussion of trade alternatives and their significance for civil society engagement**

12.30 Lunch

14.00 **Elements of strategic planning for campaign activities in 2005/2006**Chair: *Matt Griffith, CAFOD, London*

16.00 End



## Registration and Fees

Please register as soon as possible, but at the latest by October 13<sup>th</sup> 2005.

**For registration please send an e-mail to [nad.bonn@netzwerkafrika.de](mailto:nad.bonn@netzwerkafrika.de), giving your full name, address, e-mail, phone number and the name of your organisation. Please indicate if you need accommodation.**

The registration fee is 40 Euro. The fee includes the costs of a bed in a single room and meals.

The registration fee for day visitors is 15 Euro per day. The fee includes lunch and coffee/tea.

Fees can be paid during the conference.

## Further Information

**Netzwerk Afrika Deutschland e.V.**

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[www.stopepa.de](http://www.stopepa.de)

## Jointly organised by

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- Network Africa Germany (NAD)
- terre des hommes
- World Economy, Ecology & Development (WEED)
- StopEPA-Campaign ([www.stopepa.de](http://www.stopepa.de))

## Supported by

- *Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED)*
- *Katholischer Fonds für weltkirchliche und entwicklungsbezogene Bildungs- und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit*
- *Nordrhein-Westfälische Stiftung für Umwelt und Entwicklung*