

## TradeCom II Support to the ACP Group in Geneva

### PRESS RELEASE

**Title of Project:** “Targeted Support to the ACP Group in Geneva to Strengthen the Group’s participation in the multilateral trade negotiations under the World Trade Organisation (WTO)”.

**Location:** Activities will be managed in coordination with the ACP Office in Geneva, Switzerland.

**Date:** Intended implementation starting date – February 2017

**Duration:** 12 months

**Web:** [www.tradecom-acpeu.org](http://www.tradecom-acpeu.org)

#### **Background**

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TradeCom II is a Programme financed by the EU at the request of ACP Group. It is designed to facilitate the integration of ACP Countries in the global economy and value chains by improving, *inter alia*, their capacity:

- to formulate and implement suitable trade policies,
- to participate effectively in multilateral trade negotiations under the WTO and to implement the trade agreements to their benefit, and
- to strengthen their competitiveness.

TradeCom II Programme has translated the needs of ACP beneficiaries into a number of relevant and implementable projects.

#### **Support to the ACP Group in Geneva**

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“Support to the ACP Group in Geneva to Strengthen the Group’s participation in the multilateral trade negotiations under the World Trade Organisation (WTO)” is a project designed by TradeCom II Programme in collaboration with the ACP Office in Geneva.

It is designed to support the ACP Office and the ACP Group in Geneva to participate effectively in trade negotiation in WTO and to draft legal text for incorporation in the outcome of the WTO negotiations.

The African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP Group) is an organisation created by the Georgetown Agreement in 1975. It is composed of 79 African, Caribbean and Pacific States that seek to be integrated into the global trading system but face an array of constraints including supply-side constraints and high trading costs. Its main objective is to singularly, severally and collectively negotiate and implement cooperation agreements in a variety of fields spanning from trade, economics, politics and culture, cooperation in diverse international fora. The ACP Geneva Office was established in December 2001 to assist the ACP Group in Geneva to enhance its effective participation in the multilateral trade negotiations under the WTO. It now has a more permanent status and has widened its mandate to include, *inter alia*, facilitating coordination among the Representatives of ACP countries in Geneva and, providing technical assistance to ACP States with regard to issues dealt with in Geneva.

Based on the ongoing WTO negotiations, the ACP Group has identified its offensive and defensive interests in the key areas of the multilateral trade negotiations: agriculture, non-agricultural market access, services, fisheries and intellectual property rights.

The challenges that ACP negotiators face include lack of data and of professional and technical analysis that would ensure that ACP positions are formulated on the basis of sound technical research.

In the context of this Project, the needs of the ACP Group in Geneva can be classified under four clusters covering the main thematic areas:

- Institutional/Capacity Building: The ACP Group has established itself as an important player in the WTO negotiations. To maintain and build upon this position, there is need for targeted capacity building;
- Legal Support: The ACP Group requires, from time to time, focused and targeted legal support on specific legal aspects of the agenda for the trade negotiations and outcome texts;
- Studies: ACP Group negotiators require detailed studies and analyses to inform their negotiation positions. However, due to limited human resources at ACP Missions and time constraints, the ACP Group is not always able to carry out necessary/needed studies and analyses;
- Logistical Support: Due to human and financial resource constraints the ACP Group has a need for additional logistical support.

### **Project outputs**

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The Project contributes to:

- empower ACP Delegations in Geneva to participate effectively in trade negotiations/deliberations in the WTO;
- guide ACP delegations to participate in the drafting of legal text/elements for incorporation in the outcome of the WTO negotiations;
- ensure that ACP Group's positions are fully reflected in the legal text and outcome of the 2017 11th Ministerial Conference.

### **Intervention areas**

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To support the ACP Group in Geneva in the multilateral trade negotiations under the WTO, the areas of intervention contemplated under this project are three-fold:

- The first support area is to ensure the effective participation of the ACP negotiating team in the negotiation process so that the ACP interests in the negotiations will be strongly advanced and defended. Under this support area the activities foreseen are:
  - the elaboration of comprehensive and substantive analytical outputs—studies, issue papers, and legal/economic analyses on, *inter alia*, trade distorting domestic support, public stockholding for Food Security purposes and non-agricultural market access; and
  - the organization of meetings/training on WTO negotiations.
- The second support area is to elaborate concrete trade negotiating positions through:
  - advisory support leading to negotiation positions on the five main thematic and other areas of the WTO negotiations (agriculture, WTO rules, non-agricultural market access, Special and Differential Treatment, services);
  - data collection and analysis.
- The third support area is to ensure that ACP Group's positions are fully reflected in the legal text and outcome of the 2017 11th Ministerial Conference:
  - Elaborating a composite negotiating position paper(s) on ACP positions in the key areas of the trade negotiations; and
  - Providing interpretation of the draft MC 11 legal texts and targeted outcomes.