

EU/SADC EPA States Economic Partnership Agreement

2016/0005(NLE) - 20/06/2016 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to conclude the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the SADC EPA States, of the other part.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: on 12 June 2002, the Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations for Economic Partnership Agreements with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

The negotiations have been concluded and the Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the SADC EPA States (comprising Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland), of the other part, was initialled on 15 July 2014.

It is now necessary to conclude this Agreement on behalf of the European Union.

CONTENT: with this proposal, the Council is called upon to adopt a Decision to approve, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the SADC EPA States, of the other part.

Scope and purpose of the Agreement: the Agreement contains provisions on:

- cooperation,
- trade in goods,
- trade and sustainable development,
- customs and trade facilitation,
- technical barriers to trade,
- sanitary and phytosanitary measures,
- dispute settlement,
- geographical indications and rules of origin.

It also contains important trade provisions offering asymmetric **market access to the EPA States**, which allows them to shield sensitive sectors from liberalisation.

The Agreement includes institutional provisions and monitoring to ensure the correct application of the Agreement.

For further details on the proposal, *please refer to the summary of the Commission's initial legislative proposal from 22.1.2016.*