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From the Lome Convention to the Economic Partnership Agreements: an assessment of trade relations between the ECOWAS and the EU

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From the Lome Convention to the Economic Partnership Agreements: An assessment of trade relations between the ECOWAS and the EU.

By Mncedisi Innocent Madela

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for a Masters degree in International Relation, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

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DEDICATION

To my both parents the late Gabisile Meltah Madela and the late Mavelempini Michael Mabele: You both gave birth to a man, *that did not allow destitution to be his decider, neither the deprived background to take him down.*

DECLARATION

I, Mncedisi. I. Madela, declare that this Masters Research thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters in International Relations in the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university

SIGNED

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……day of……..2010

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Abstract

The continuous negotiations between the EU and the ECOWAS on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) started in September 2002, with an aim of completing these negotiations before end of December 2007, which was set up by the EU. The essence of the EPA is to replace the longstanding preferential trade that allowed the ACP countries to export their goods to the EU market without reciprocating. Since, preferential trade was not compatible with the World Trade Organisation rules. This study examines the negotiation process between the EU and the ECOWAS, with an aim of examining whether the proposed EPAs would stimulate regional integration in West Africa or it would undermine it. This study is an attempt to show how the EU has intended to foster this agreement in the region through its various offensive strategies, and it explores responses by West African states.

The ECOWAS region is negotiating the EPAs with an intention of achieving a development focused trade agreement that is going to take into account developmental challenges of the region. In addition, it has become clear that Nigeria is not prepared to sign the interim EPAs with the EU; instead, it is working hard to ensure that the EPAs have a development dimension attached to it. Subsequently, this would mean that regional collective interests are promoted under the EPAs in order to ensure that development achieved in West Africa is not reversed.

Abbreviation

ACP ……...African, Caribbean Pacific

CAP……Common Agricultural Policy

CET……Common External Tariffs

CPA……Cotonou Partnership Agreement

CEMAC……. Economic Community of Central African States

EBA……... Everything But Arms

EC……...European Commission

ECDPM……..European Centre for Development Policy Management

ECOWAP……...Economic Community of West Africa's Agricultural Program

ECOWAS……. .Economic Community of West African States

EDF……....European Development Fund

EEC……European Economic Community

EPA……Economic Partnership Agreements

EU……..European Union

GATT……General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs

GSP……Generalized System Preferences

IMF…… International Monetary Fund

LDC…….. .Least Developed Countries

MFN……Most Favoured Nation

MMC……..Ministerial Monitoring Committee

MTR……Mid-Term-Review

NANT…… National Association of Nigerian Traders

NIEO……. New International Economic Order

NIP…… National Indicative Plan

ODA…….. Overseas Development Agency

REPA……..... Regional Economic Partnership Agreements

SPS……. Sanitary & Phyto-sanitary Standards

STABEX…… Stabilization of Export

SYSMIN…… System of Mineral Export Stabilization

UEMOA……. Union Economique et Monetaire Ouest Africaine

UNCTAD……... United Nation Conference on Trade and Development

WAEMU …… West African Economic and Monetary Union

WTO……... World Trade Organization