



2023/2853

19.12.2023

**COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2023/2853**

**of 12 December 2023**

**on the signing, on behalf of the Union, of the Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union, of the one part, and the Republic of Kenya, Member of the East African Community, of the other part**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 207(4), first subparagraph, in conjunction with Article 218(5) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) On 12 June 2002, the Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations on behalf of the Union for Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.
- (2) The negotiations between the Union and the East African Community (EAC) Partner States (the Republic of Burundi, the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of Uganda) for an EU-EAC EPA were concluded on 14 October 2014 and the EU-EAC EPA was initialled on 16 October 2014.
- (3) The Republic of Kenya ('Kenya') signed and ratified the EU-EAC EPA on 1 and 28 September 2016, respectively. For the EU-EAC EPA to enter into force, all EAC members need to sign and ratify it. To this date, the signature and ratification of the other EAC members are still pending, thus preventing the EU-EAC EPA from entering into force.
- (4) On 19 December 2019, the Council updated the Commission's negotiating directives of 2002 by including the conclusion of a chapter on trade and sustainable development in EPAs.
- (5) On 27 February 2021, the EAC Summit authorised individual EAC members to proceed with the bilateral implementation of the EU-EAC EPA under the principle of 'variable geometry'. On 4 May 2021, Kenya notified the Commission of its request to move forward in that sense.
- (6) On 17 February 2022, the Union and Kenya signed a Joint Statement on the margins of the EU-African Union Summit agreeing to advance the negotiations on an EPA between the Union and Kenya ('the Agreement'), which is to remain open for accession by other EAC Partner States.
- (7) On 24 May 2023, the negotiations for the Agreement were successfully concluded.
- (8) The Agreement should therefore be signed on behalf of the Union, subject to its conclusion at a later date,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

*Article 1*

The signing on behalf of the Union of the Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union, of the one part, and the Republic of Kenya, Member of the East African Community, of the other part ('the Agreement'), is hereby authorised, subject to the conclusion of the said Agreement <sup>(1)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> The text of the Agreement will be published together with the decision on its conclusion.

*Article 2*

The President of the Council is hereby authorised to designate the person(s) empowered to sign the Agreement on behalf of the Union.

*Article 3*

The Agreement shall not be construed as conferring rights or imposing obligations which can be directly invoked before Union or Member State courts or tribunals.

*Article 4*

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, 12 December 2023.

*For the Council*  
*The President*  
P. NAVARRO RÍOS

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