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Consistency of IEPA provisions with existing customs unions in Africa

EU Member States and the European Commission have repeatedly stressed the importance of EPAs effectively supporting regional integration in the ACP. This would suggest that the provisions of IEPAs should be consistent with common external tariffs, institutional arrangements and policy instruments of existing customs unions in Africa.

In this context:

1. Does the European Commission believe that the existence and maintenance of a common external tariff by all members of a customs union is central to the continued integrity of a customs union?
2. Does the European Commission support the modification of the provisions of IEPAs which place obligations on some members of a customs union to apply different tariffs on imports from the EU compared to the tariff applied on imports from the EU by other members of the same customs union?

Answer:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=P-2008-4461&language=EN>