

SAMPLE LETTER

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Dear (Add MEP name) MEP,

I'm deeply concerned about the impact that Europe's unfair trade deals called Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) are likely to have on some of the poorest people in the world.

The European Commission (EC) has used its negotiating powers to push through interim and comprehensive trade deals at the end of last year with 35 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP). These deals risk harming jobs, livelihoods and the environment. It will make it far harder for ACP countries to transform their economies and break away from commodity dependence. They go well beyond the requirements from the World Trade Organisation (WTO) for such agreements and set a damaging precedent for future negotiations.

Despite huge opposition from civil society, trade unions and parliamentarians across ACP countries and Europe, the EC remains intent on seeing the remaining African and Pacific countries sign up to full trade deals by the end of 2008. This includes pursuing negotiations on services and investment to the benefit of European companies, and at the expense of development. The Commission refuses to listen to requests from African trade ministers for substantial revisions to the deals and to convene a high level meeting between Europe and Africa.

I am concerned that these trade agreements will hurt poor people in developing countries if re-negotiations do not take place. Given that MEPs will have a role to play in the ratification process of these deals, I urge you to take the following steps:

- Request President Barroso to follow up on the commitment he made at the EU-AU summit in December 2007 to re-open negotiations on the contentious clauses.
- Seek an undertaking from President Barroso that the European Commission will stop pushing aggressive trade interests in negotiations e.g on services and investment, unless ACP countries specifically request it and their needs are paramount.
- Hold a full debate in the European Parliament and closely scrutinise the deals in order to hold the European Commission to account.
- Ensure that the concerns of African countries have been addressed and that renegotiations have taken place where necessary, before any assent is given on the final agreements through the European Parliament".

I look forward to hearing your reply.