



TEXTS ADOPTED

P10_TA(2026)0340

The state of play of advancing EU-Africa trade and investment relations

European Parliament resolution of 8 October 2026 on the state of play of advancing EU-Africa trade and investment relations (2026/2624(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 23 October 2025 on renewing the EU-Africa partnership: building common priorities ahead of the Angola Summit¹,
- having regard to its resolution of 23 June 2022 on the future of EU-Africa trade relations²,
- having regard to the African Union's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want,
- having regard to China's zero-tariff policy with all African countries under the China-Africa Economic Partnership for Shared Development as of 1 May 2026,
- having regard to the joint declaration of the 7th African Union-European Union summit, held in Luanda, Angola, on 24 and 25 November 2025,
- having regard to the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) that have been concluded or are being negotiated between the EU and 15 sub-Saharan African countries and regions,
- having regard to the UN Conference on Trade and Development Economic Development in Africa Report 2024 entitled 'Unlocking Africa's trade potential: Boosting regional markets and reducing risks',

¹ OJ C, C/2026/2100, 29.4.2026,
ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2026/2100/oj>.

² OJ C 32, 27.1.2023, p. 74.

- having regard to the EU Aid for Trade Progress Report 2023,
 - having regard to the Sustainable Cocoa Initiative launched in 2020,
 - having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 1 December 2021 entitled 'The Global Gateway' (JOIN(2021)0030),
 - having regard to the question to the Commission on the state of play of advancing EU-Africa trade and investment relations (O-000041/2026 – B10-0017/2026),
 - having regard to Rules 142(5) and 136(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the countries of Africa together constitute the EU's fourth-largest trading partner and export market; whereas the EU is Africa's largest foreign investor;
 - B. whereas Africa represents one of the world's fastest-growing regions, with considerable economic, demographic and entrepreneurial potential, offering major opportunities for sustainable trade, investment, industrial development and strengthened EU-Africa economic cooperation;
 - C. whereas Africa's share in global trade has declined steadily over the past 50 years and accounts for 2,9 % of world trade according to the UN Conference on Trade and Development; whereas the continent is highly dependent on imports and commodity-based natural resource exports; whereas the level of intra-continental trade in Africa is far below its potential and accounts for only 14,9 % of total continental trade; whereas trade between the EU and Africa increased by 30 % and investments by 15 % between 2015 and 2025; whereas 97 % of African exports enter the European market duty-free;
 - D. whereas Africa's participation in global trade and investment remains limited; whereas African countries have enormous economic potential and a wealth of critical natural resources, particularly copper, manganese, cobalt and platinum group metals that are greatly needed for the transformation of the economy and the green transition; whereas Africa is a key partner for Europe and the EU has an interest in investing in the local refining and processing of African raw materials to reduce its dependencies for processing; whereas any trade of these resources must be based on fairness and mutual respect; whereas the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples requires the free, prior and informed consent of local communities; whereas African countries have a vast labour pool with 12 million new jobseekers entering the labour market every year, while currently only 3 million jobs are available;
 - E. whereas the countries of Africa are not homogeneous; whereas the

African continent is particularly vulnerable to external shocks given its high rate of dependency both on external financial resources and revenue, such as foreign remittances, foreign direct investment, tourism and external aid, and on imports of manufactured goods; whereas the energy transition is a unique opportunity for Africa to reposition itself in global supply chains, provided that its economy is not solely based on the export of raw materials;

- F. whereas African countries are losing 2 to 5 % of their GDP to climate extremes, and many are diverting up to 9 % of their budgets to responding to these;
- G. whereas EU-African trade and investment relations encompass various EPAs, Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreements, Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships and other forms of engagement; whereas many sub-Saharan African countries have also concluded bilateral investment treaties with different EU Member States;
- H. whereas increasing uncertainty in trade policies and the volatility of tariffs in global trade pose a challenge for the world economy; whereas Europe-Africa trade relations should remain a source of stability grounded in predictable frameworks and a commitment to rules-based trade; whereas to that end, the Commission should conduct, without exception, thorough impact assessments and stakeholder consultations for its policy proposals, including with African counterparts directly affected by EU legislation;
- I. whereas the rules-based multilateral trading system is the best guarantor of development, economic diversification, job creation and sustainable, clean growth;
- J. whereas political stability, economic freedom, good governance and the rule of law are preconditions for investment, sustainable economic growth and shared prosperity; whereas, in order to have a greater presence on the African continent and face strong global competition, the EU must coordinate its political diplomacy with its economic diplomacy, moving from a normative approach to a pragmatic and egalitarian partnership;
- K. whereas the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is a major milestone in a six-phase implementation plan for regional integration and holds immense promise for Africa's economic future; whereas to date, 54 African Union member states have signed the Agreement establishing the AfCFTA;
- L. whereas the United States' African Growth and Opportunity Act trade preference programme expired on 30 September 2025 and was extended by the US administration until 31 December 2026, with retroactive effect; whereas following the programme's expiry, the terms of the agreement may change to the detriment of African interests in the light of President Trump's 'America First' trade

policy;

- M. whereas third and emerging countries, particularly China, Russia and the United States but also India, Latin American countries and the Gulf countries, are expanding their strategic operations in Africa; whereas the geopolitical upheavals and international rivalries on the continent, particularly in economic and infrastructure projects, make it necessary for Europe to develop concrete partnerships based on economic exchanges and mutual benefit and trust; whereas the EU must use its economic power to counter the growing influence of China and Russia in Africa through pragmatic, rules-based, transparent and mutually beneficial partnerships that support European economic security; whereas increasing geopolitical and economic competition in Africa, notably in strategic sectors such as critical raw materials, infrastructure, energy and digital technologies, highlights the urgent need for the EU to strengthen its strategic presence through sustainable investment, trusted partnerships and mutually beneficial economic cooperation; whereas China's zero-tariff policy on all products from African countries with which it has diplomatic relations has been in effect since 1 May 2026; whereas China is the continent's largest trading partner, with trade reaching EUR 297 billion in 2025, which strengthens its influence in the Global South; whereas, without industrial diversification, the elimination of tariffs risks perpetuating an asymmetrical trade model;
- N. whereas the EU is the leading investor in Africa by accumulated foreign direct investment (FDI) stock while third countries like China largely invest through loans; whereas the Gulf states are the fastest-rising strategic investors in Africa; whereas half of the investment projects under the EU's Global Gateway strategy have been earmarked for Africa; whereas a number of important Global Gateway projects have been launched and are expected to significantly stimulate trade and investment; whereas Global Gateway, however, requires continuous evaluation, concrete governance benchmarks and greater strategic direction as its current slow implementation, limited visibility and insufficient political ownership undermine its impact; whereas a number of Global Gateway projects are reportedly being implemented by Chinese companies, contradicting the initiative's objective of offering a credible alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative and of generating genuine local value;
- O. whereas women are at the heart of economic, social and entrepreneurial dynamics on the African continent; whereas trade and investment relations with African countries should support gender equality and the advancement of women's rights; whereas investments must be made in women's empowerment, access to finance, education and ownership for women on the African continent;

- P. whereas African countries' trade relations can contribute to addressing structural economic disadvantages such as low productivity sectors, low diversification, infrastructure gaps, inherited historical borders, weak economic governance, high dependence on raw material exports, a lack of local processing capacities and a high debt burden; whereas fair, balanced and ambitious trade relations are one possibility to help offset these disadvantages;
- Q. whereas, given the trade imbalances, the World Trade Organization (WTO) facilitates trade and capacity-building in sub-Saharan Africa through the Aid for Trade initiative and the Digital Trade for Africa project, as well as the informal African Group within the WTO;
- R. whereas the EU is one of the major WTO partners within the Aid for Trade initiative, providing 38 % of the funding; whereas Africa is the second-largest beneficiary;
- S. whereas artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping global trade and investment patterns, creating opportunities for productivity, innovation and value creation; whereas open-source AI solutions can reduce costs, strengthen local capacities and reduce dependence on a limited number of providers; whereas digital infrastructure and skills gaps risk excluding African partners from the benefits of AI-driven growth; whereas Africa's digital trade landscape is expanding rapidly; whereas the adoption of the AfCFTA Digital Trade Protocol in 2024 laid the regulatory foundation for a unified African digital market; whereas the digital economy offers significant opportunities for strengthened EU-Africa cooperation; whereas the EU should step up efforts to support Africa's digital transformation and connectivity; whereas the digital divide risks excluding partners in the Global South from AI-driven growth opportunities;
- T. whereas the South African People's Tribunal on AgroToxins has drawn attention to the adverse human rights, health and environmental impacts associated with highly hazardous pesticides, including pesticides prohibited in the EU but produced and exported to third countries;
- U. whereas the export of pesticides banned in the EU may create a 'boomerang effect', leading to non-compliant residues in imported agricultural products, thereby adversely affecting exporting countries' access to the EU market, as illustrated by the significant decline in Kenyan vegetable exports, undermining both the public health objectives and economic interests of partner countries;
- V. whereas the G20 South Africa 2025 priorities highlighted that a share of the growing global chemical production is shifting to the Global South, increasing risks for particularly vulnerable countries due to limited access to information, safer alternatives and adequate

chemical management infrastructure;

Sustainable and inclusive growth

1. Stresses the importance of building a sustainable, competitive and robust infrastructure and industrial base in Africa, with a view to developing resilient value chains, strengthening and diversifying Africa's trade networks, and promoting high value-added processing of raw materials in Africa as a key pathway to quality job creation, sustainability and greater economic resilience; deplores the persistence of major infrastructure gaps that hinder both regional economic integration and external trade;
2. Calls on the Commission, the Member States and the countries of sub-Saharan Africa, as well as African and European enterprises and investors, including African pension funds and insurance companies with substantial assets, the African Development Bank and the European Investment Bank, to address these gaps as a matter of priority by making full and more effective use of existing and potential future EU financial instruments to support the upgrading of physical infrastructure, the development of integrated corridors (projects linking ports, rail and roads), investments in clean energy (e.g. solar) and digitalisation, the strengthening of human skills and development, the reduction of non-tariff trade costs, the streamlining of import and export procedures, and the diversification of trade partners, while ensuring that African industrialisation projects apply modern, sustainable and, wherever possible, climate-neutral production technologies using local materials to reduce the carbon footprint, in line with the African Union's Agenda 2063, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Global Gateway strategy;
3. Considers it a priority to support the development of Africa's institutional capacity and public and private sectors, including public-private partnerships, through stronger support for micro and small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurship, by improving access to finance, strengthening digital skills, supporting innovation, incentivising the formalisation of trade and addressing infrastructure deficiencies so that the continent can unlock its full economic potential; reaffirms, in this context, the importance of women's empowerment, the development of business-to-business meetings, the role of the diaspora, and the investment climate;
4. Reiterates that political stability, social cohesion, good governance and the respect for the rule of law are preconditions for establishing a conducive business environment, including with regard to trade and investment; emphasises that the linkage of political and economic issues allows the EU to maintain a political dialogue with African authorities while guaranteeing commitments to democratic values; welcomes the fact that a number of countries have

strengthened resilience in Africa through stronger regulatory environments, enhanced connectivity, economic diversification and political stability;

5. Welcomes the fact that the EU is working towards diversifying its trade relationships by building new partnerships, focusing on sustainable economic investments and strategic cooperation based on long-term commitment, including with African countries, which have a crucial economic, demographic and environmental role in international trade given their deep historic geographical and cultural ties; takes note of the historic ties between certain European and African countries and stresses that trade relationships should be based on equal partnership;
6. Believes that the AfCFTA, which aims to eliminate 90 % to 97 % of customs duties, offers a pathway to reduce dependency on global markets and enhance resilience; reaffirms its full support for the initiative and calls for its swift implementation across the continent; notes the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding in April 2026 between the AfCFTA Secretariat and the EU in Addis Ababa, marking a new step in strengthening trade and investment relations between Africa and the EU; calls for the EU and its Member States to maintain and strengthen their financial and technical support for the implementation of the AfCFTA; stresses that, for the AfCFTA to fulfil its potential and extend beyond trade liberalisation by contributing to poverty eradication and the reduction of inequalities, African countries must retain sufficient policy space to pursue strategies that ensure coherence between trade policies, economic diversification, responses to demographic and social needs, and the objectives of sustainability and inclusive growth; stresses that the AfCFTA should be implemented in an inclusive manner with the involvement of the private sector, trade unions, civil society and local communities; emphasises that EPAs are complementary to the further development of the AfCFTA; emphasises that the Memorandum of Understanding signed in Addis Ababa promotes a new generation of EPAs, and creates more synergies between the two systems (EPAs and the AfCFTA); welcomes, in this regard, the objective to move from a multitude of fragmented agreements (EPAs) to a single continent-to-continent partnership;
7. Recognises the AfCFTA as a positive development in inter-regional trade as it has potential to fully unlock the economic potential of the African continent, which would contribute to stronger and more impactful EU-Africa trade and investment relations;
8. Calls on the Commission, the European External Action Service, the Council and the Member States to ensure that the Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package delivers tangible results by aligning properly managed projects with the EU's strategic interests and African priorities, preventing unsustainable debt, supporting

poverty eradication, women's rights, gender equality, climate action and biodiversity protection and promoting human development in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); demands that a key objective be to tackle inequalities and ensure that Global Gateway projects contribute to the creation of decent and sustainable jobs and help strengthen value chains in partner countries; reiterates its call to ensure a periodic impact assessment of Global Gateway through the European Court of Auditors thematic audits and to ensure effective, evidence-based measurement methods, such as distributional impact assessments, to clearly identify who benefits from Global Gateway projects;

Trade and investment relations

9. Stresses that long-term, stable trade and investment relations must be mutually beneficial and constitute a win-win for all parties involved;
10. Recalls that the EU has been a reliable partner that adheres to the international rules-based order, providing stability and predictability, which create a competitive advantage for its trade partners;
11. Reaffirms that efforts geared towards supply chain diversification create opportunities for both continents, and believes that the EU and the African Union should work together to create the conditions and incentives required to support the diversification of investments to deepen local value creation and sustainable job development by boosting the production of EU and African companies; underlines, in this context, that a de-risking strategy involving public or multilateral institutions (e.g. the European Investment Bank and the African Development Bank) is essential; believes that such a strategy will encourage African and European entrepreneurs to invest in processing plants, ensuring lower capital costs, reduced exchange rate risk and secure market access;
12. Recognises that the diversification of production chains is an instrument of macroeconomic stabilisation (e.g. defence of local currencies), a lever for industrialisation and transformation, and an accelerator of regional integration (e.g. Morocco), enabling the building of more stable and secure relationships in a fragmented global context;
13. Recognises the strategic importance of critical raw materials for both Africa and Europe to achieve the global green and digital transitions; recognises the strategic need for Africa to transition from an extractive economy to an innovation-driven processing-based economy; stresses that cooperation in this field must be founded on mutual benefit, transparency and sustainability and calls on the Commission to swiftly move forward on signing mutually beneficial agreements with relevant African partner countries, prioritising

sustainability goals, securing supply chains and ensuring the inclusion of dispute settlement provisions; emphasises that such agreements must be concluded in an inclusive manner – socially, by integrating local populations through free, prior and informed consent and engaging other relevant stakeholders, and economically, by supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), ensuring technology transfer and investing in transformation, without compromising European economic security; encourages partners to adhere to high transparency standards, such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, and ensure the full involvement of Parliament; stresses that mechanisms such as Domestic Advisory Groups are relevant and useful tools that should be further strengthened and included in all future trade agreements; emphasises that regional stability and security are prerequisites for African economic prosperity, as natural resources do not automatically guarantee development;

14. Calls for Europe's resilience to be strengthened by diversifying away from excessive dependencies through partnerships that promote responsible and traceable mining, local value addition and skills development; underlines that initiatives under the Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package should foster resilient, fair and environmentally responsible supply chains, ensuring that resource cooperation contributes to poverty reduction, quality jobs, sustainable and inclusive growth, economic diversification in African countries, and the economic sovereignty of the continent, thereby respecting workers' rights and human rights;
15. Expects the Global Gateway strategy to contribute to creating local added value and decent jobs, fostering social inclusion and fighting inequality through strengthened partnerships; calls on the Commission to prioritise high-impact, visible and scalable projects in strategic sectors such as transport and connectivity infrastructure, energy projects and digital economy and services, thereby delivering tangible results on the ground and reinforcing the EU's credibility as a partner; calls on the Commission, however, to increase visibility, transparency, oversight and parliamentary involvement in the scrutiny of investments and the development of the Global Gateway strategy to ensure its effectiveness and improve its communication through a public, standardised central portal providing information on Global Gateway projects, in order to strengthen the impact and recognition of initiatives; recalls that investment-driven projects including Global Gateway should not replace official development assistance (ODA) initiatives and funding focused on development; stresses that the 360-degree approach of the EU's Global Gateway strategy constitutes the EU's unique added value and distinguishes it from other global actors operating in Africa, notably China, as it combines investments in sustainable infrastructure and connectivity with a strong focus on sustainable development, decent job creation, poverty eradication, healthcare, education, skills development, good

governance and social inclusion, thereby fostering long-term and mutually beneficial partnerships with African countries; insists on ensuring that this initiative does not increase the debt burden of partner countries;

16. Believes that good governance, social cohesion, respect for the rule of law, a conducive investment climate, industrialisation, the development of basic infrastructure and investment in human capital are factors that contribute to political and economic stability and therefore need to be pursued and furthered by strategic EU investments; highlights, in this regard, the importance of the African diaspora in Europe investing in productive sectors on the African continent;
17. Considers that the trade partnership between the EU and Africa should promote food sovereignty by supporting the modernisation of the sector and by mobilising more public and private capital, including from African banks, ensure adherence to the principles of sustainability, and not undermine food security, food safety and food quality nor drive deforestation or environmental degradation, while also ensuring the compliance of EU agricultural imports with EU health, environmental and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) legislation and relevant animal welfare legislation, in line with WTO rules; calls for the autonomy of African food systems to be strengthened, notably by supporting the development of local fertiliser production in Africa and by promoting research and innovation to develop sustainable alternatives; believes that this will require greater commitments on both continents and the boosting of safe, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems in order to step up efforts to reach the SDG of zero hunger by 2030 and support joint action to mitigate climate change; underlines the importance of technical assistance, including technology transfer, to support exporters in Africa in complying with EU sustainability legislation and food safety standards, thereby reducing the risks of unfair competition with EU products; believes that accelerating the integration of African countries into the AfCFTA will help make intra-African agricultural trade a priority and ensure their own food sovereignty, enabling the continent to move from subsistence or export agriculture to genuine collective food independence; recalls that the Commission announced an EU export ban on hazardous pesticides in its 2020 Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability;
18. Calls for strengthening the EU-Africa partnership in digital trade, focusing on removing barriers, improving regulatory cooperation, developing digital skills, expanding digital infrastructure and supporting the integration of SMEs into digital value chains while ensuring the protection of fundamental rights; stresses the growing importance of AI for trade, investment and economic development and calls on the Commission to support the adoption of AI in African partner countries through trade agreements, digital partnerships

and the Global Gateway strategy; encourages the promotion of open-source, trustworthy and human-centric AI ecosystems that foster local innovation, reduce dependencies and contribute to economic growth and sustainable development objectives, including climate action, healthcare and food security;

19. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure greater coordination and speak with one voice when engaging with African partner countries, and to enhance communication about and raise the visibility of cooperation on trade- and investment-related matters, notably under Global Gateway and the Aid for Trade initiative, embracing a true Team Europe approach; underlines that the Aid for Trade initiative is a strategic platform enabling the operational deployment of Team Europe, ensuring an improved business climate to attract the private sector, and coordinating EU support for the AfCFTA;

Governance of EU-Africa trade and investment policies

20. Is convinced that EU-Africa trade and investment relations must be based on the people-to-people approach, promoting multistakeholder exchanges and various education and research initiatives in order to facilitate meaningful public participation and empower civil society and individuals to build mutually beneficial relations; stresses that the participation of civil society organisations and trade unions must be a cornerstone of the EU-African Union strategy to achieve the SDGs; further stresses that the involvement of the private sector is equally essential in ensuring effective implementation, including through the exchange of best practices between EU and African businesses, in order to foster responsible business conduct; emphasises that Domestic Advisory Groups provide an important example of how people-to-people participation can strengthen ownership, transparency and legitimacy within trade agreements; recalls that diasporas play a key role as intermediaries on cultural, institutional and economic levels, fostering economic and social progress;
21. Recalls that the implementation of sustainability chapters in trade agreements should notably be supported by simultaneous capacity-building efforts (technical, financial and human assistance) through the EU's development assistance and other investments, enabling partner countries to fulfil their commitments; stresses that civil society stakeholders and trade unions should be actively involved in the implementation and monitoring process; recalls that respecting commitments is the responsibility of countries but also of economic actors operating on the ground; stresses that the implementation and monitoring process must be gender-responsive and include the effective participation of women;
22. Recognises the potential of Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships

(CTIPs) to provide a more flexible and targeted approach to the EU's trade and investment relationships with partner countries by focusing on cooperation on specific sectors; stresses the importance, nonetheless, of Parliament's democratic scrutiny in all EU trade relations, including CTIPs, and calls for a strong parliamentary oversight role on both sides; calls on the Commission to ensure full compliance with the principles of institutional balance, including appropriate scrutiny and the involvement of Parliament in the negotiation, conclusion and implementation of all new types of agreements, always on an equal footing with the Council; calls on the Commission to ensure that CTIPs are implemented correctly and in a transparent manner and that all relevant stakeholders are involved in a timely manner in both their implementation and monitoring in order to ensure transparency, accountability and a positive social impact; calls on the Commission, furthermore, to publish a rolling annual implementation roadmap for CTIPs, to be shared and discussed annually with Parliament;

23. Calls on the Commission to establish frameworks for regulatory dialogue within agreements that enable the further development of partnerships at both bilateral and multilateral level, as a people-centred instrument of cooperation; stresses the need for long-term regulatory dialogue and cooperation as a central pillar of modern trade agreements and international partnerships, providing a practical pathway to jointly improve standards over time and assess different needs; highlights that regulatory dialogue should include the structured involvement of trade unions, civil society organisations, parliamentary actors and other civic stakeholders on both sides;
24. Underlines the importance of strengthening investment ties, promoting the clean energy transition, decarbonisation and climate resilience, fostering the transfer of skills and technology and creating a sustainable and strategic supply chain, as is the focus of the CTIP with South Africa; insists that the CTIP should deliver mutually beneficial and sustainable industrialisation, with a particular focus on promoting local SMEs, reducing inequalities through support for sustainable development, decent work, environmental standards and human rights; expresses its appreciation of the first business-to-government dialogue held as part of the CTIP in March 2026, and looks forward to the CTIP government-to-government dialogue that will take place later this year; calls on the Commission to keep Parliament informed and to seek its input where appropriate;
25. Welcomes the EU-Angola Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreement, the first agreement of its kind, which aims to create more legal certainty for EU investors and businesses operating in Angola, leading to benefits for both foreign and domestic companies; welcomes the trade and sustainable development (TSD) provisions

laid down in this agreement; calls on the Commission to speed up the negotiation of Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreements with other African partners, notably with Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, and notes that there should be a specific focus on the sustainable cocoa sector, building on positive experiences with the inclusive approach adopted by the Sustainable Cocoa Initiative, which contributed to high-quality development of local economies;

26. Highlights the importance of critical raw materials for sustainable energy technologies, but stresses that memorandums of understanding are no substitute for legally binding trade agreements, as they neither provide legal certainty nor allow for sufficient parliamentary oversight; calls on the Commission to refrain from concluding any memorandums of understanding with conflict-affected regions and to suspend those under which the extraction of minerals can contribute to fuelling existing conflicts, such as the Memorandum of Understanding with Rwanda;
27. Takes note of the fact that assessments of the socio-economic impacts of EPAs vary, ranging from enhancing economic growth and poverty reduction thanks to increased trade flows to the risk of harming local small-scale production; highlights the positive impacts of EPAs, notably in terms of improving market access, reducing tariff barriers and supporting regional integration; believes that EPAs have the potential to strengthen competitiveness in Africa by improving production standards, attracting investment and integrating African industries into regional and global value chains; sees room to improve the effectiveness of EPAs with African countries by adapting them to the dynamics of the AfCFTA, such as through the incorporation of provisions that support cross-border value chains, including additional areas such as trade in services, investment, intellectual property rights and competition, which would reassure businesses and investors about the business environment in the partner countries; reiterates its request that an in-depth analysis of the impact of EPAs on local economies, regional integration, economic diversification, gender equality, workers' rights and the SDGs be carried out before any new EPAs are negotiated; calls for EPAs to be modernised through the addition of strong, binding and enforceable TSD chapters aligned with the Paris Agreement and the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework, once they are up for review;
28. Notes that several EPAs remain non-operational or only partially applied; calls on the Commission to intensify political dialogue aimed at concluding mutually beneficial agreements and ensuring their swift implementation;
29. Emphasises that EPAs with African countries, including those in sub-Saharan Africa, need to support the various regional trade communities in Africa and the further development of the AfCFTA,

contribute to building resilient and sustainable regional value chains and help to boost and diversify intra-African trade; takes the view that EPAs should enhance the capacity of African countries to take advantage of trade opportunities, particularly in areas such as sustainable development, the green and digital transitions, food security, healthcare and poverty reduction, while supporting local industrialisation and processing, easier access to financing for SMEs, and capacity building to help African producers to meet European SPS standards; stresses that EPAs and the AfCFTA should support women's rights and gender equality and seek to address issues preventing the participation of women in entrepreneurship or the labour market;

30. Shares the long-term objective of establishing a comprehensive continent-to-continent trade, cooperation and development agreement between the EU and Africa with the aim of establishing a win-win free trade area, which takes into account vulnerable sectors, negotiated by the EU and the African Union, building on the foundations of the AfCFTA; emphasises that the creation of such an agreement should be preceded by the meaningful consolidation of a strong and resilient intra-African market; highlights, in this context, the role of the EU's trade policy engagement with African partners in supporting the development of the intra-African market;
31. Calls on the Commission to keep Parliament regularly informed of progress towards the long-term objective of a continent-to-continent trade and cooperation agreement, including through the various policy instruments related to Africa;

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32. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the EU Member States, the African Union, the governments and parliaments of the member states of the African Union, and the Secretary-General of the African Continental Free Trade Area.