



The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung is pleased to invite you to a Side Event at the 10th Ministerial Conference of the WTO in Nairobi, Kenya which is coordinated closely with the Economic Commission for Africa

A HUMAN RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE ON THE CFTA

held on 17.12.2015, 11.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., at the NGO Centre, Room NGO3

Transparency and participation are key human rights principles and generally also good rules of thumb that can transform a trade negotiation from a secret, exclusive process to an open, inclusive one that is acceptable to a wide range of stakeholders. Adopting these principles will be of utility to negotiators to assess and manage risk, help make trade-offs, balance trade and other obligations and ensure policy coherence between trade policy and other development policies.

As the CFTA process moves forward and the negotiations begin, it will be useful to envision in advance a plan for transparent negotiations that is inclusive and participatory. Average Africans need to be involved in the integration process more. This requires more information on how it works, which will also help to offer greater transparency of the process and secure greater buy-in from the populace.

If going by the projections, there will be substantial increases in both industrial and agricultural intra-African trade and real improvements in wages and employment. However, going by the experiences of other bilateral and regional free trade agreements, it is clear that with the potential positive impacts on human rights, there are also potential adverse impacts as a result of trade provisions and how they are designed and implemented.

Therefore, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) exploring possible ways to conduct a human rights impact assessment (HRIA) of the Continental Free Trade area agreement in Africa focusing on agriculture including food security and livelihoods as well as on employment.

By early 2016, a first scoping study of such an assessment will be published. At this side-event, some of the study's analyses and recommendations will be presented to the public for the first time.

Welcome and Introduction

- ❖ **Yvonne Theemann**, Senior Program Officer, Trade and Development, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Geneva Office

Speakers

- ❖ **David Luke**, Coordinator, African Trade Policy Centre, Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
- ❖ **James Thuo Gathii**, Wing-Tat Lee Chair, International Law, Loyola University Chicago

