

CHAPTER 15

COOPERATION

Article 15.1: Objectives

1. The Parties affirm the importance of economic and trade cooperation, as means to contribute to implementing this Agreement and enhancing its benefits.
2. The objectives of this Chapter are to facilitate the establishment of close cooperation aimed, *inter alia*, at:
 - (a) strengthening the capacities of the Parties to maximise the opportunities and benefits deriving from this Agreement;
 - (b) promoting economic and social development;
 - (c) increasing the level of and deepening cooperation actions between the Parties at the bilateral, regional or multilateral level;
 - (d) promoting the export of goods and services of the Parties to international markets; and
 - (e) creating new opportunities for trade and investment and promoting competitiveness and innovation through the involvement, where appropriate, of the private sector including the SMEs by, *inter alia*, facilitating the integration of SMEs into global value chains and encouraging SMEs to organise or participate in trade promotion events.

Article 15.2: Scope

1. The cooperation activities under this Chapter are related to trade in goods, trade in services, investment and other areas, as mutually agreed by the Parties.
2. Cooperation between the Parties under this Chapter will supplement the cooperation and cooperative activities between the Parties set out in other Chapters of this Agreement.

Article 15.3: Economic Cooperation

The Parties will encourage and facilitate economic and trade cooperation activities on a mutually agreed basis, which may include:

- (a) dialogues, workshops, seminars and conferences;
- (b) collaborative programmes and projects;
- (c) technical cooperation;
- (d) sharing of best practices on policies and procedures;
- (e) the exchange of economic and trade information; and
- (f) the organisation of trade fairs, missions and exhibitions.

Article 15.4: Small and Medium Enterprises

1. The Parties will promote a favourable environment for the development of SMEs as well as the exchange of experiences and good practices with SMEs.
2. Cooperation will be undertaken on a mutually agreed basis and may include the following subjects:
 - (a) the designing and development of mechanisms to encourage partnership and value chain development;
 - (b) development of human resources and management skills to increase the knowledge of each other's market;
 - (c) developing methods and strategies for enhancing the growth and development among enterprises, especially SMEs, within a sector;
 - (d) increasing access to information regarding mandatory procedures and any other relevant information for SME exporters;
 - (e) designing programmes to improve the productivity of SMEs;
 - (f) developing initiatives oriented to transfer technological innovation to SMEs;
 - (g) increasing access to information on technological promotion programmes for SMEs and financial support and encouragement programmes for SMEs;
 - (h) supporting SME exporters in promoting exports to overseas markets; and
 - (i) encouraging partnership and information exchange for SME financing institutions.
3. Cooperation may be developed through:

- (a) information exchange;
- (b) conferences, seminars, dialogue and training programmes with experts;
- (c) promoting contacts and encouraging exploration of industrial and technical opportunities between stakeholders; and
- (d) trade promotion activities, including participation in trade fairs and missions.

Article 15.5: Contact Points

Each Party shall designate a contact point to facilitate communication between the Parties on any matter covered by this Chapter.

Article 15.6: Resources

The implementation of the cooperation activities under this Chapter shall be subject to the availability of funds and resources of each Party and the applicable laws and regulations of each Party.

Article 15.7: Non-application of Dispute Settlement

Neither Party shall have recourse to dispute settlement under Chapter 18 (Dispute Settlement) for any matter arising under this Chapter.