

FIRST MEETING OF EAC MEMBER STATES' GENEVA DELEGATES FORUM AT CUTS GENEVA
RESOURCE CENTRE

CUTS GRC hosted a lunch meeting for EAC Geneva based delegates on 17 February 2010 to facilitate a discussion on EAC related issues. CUTS briefed them on the work being done and planned in the EAC region and received good feedback and comments from the participants.

1. All the five EAC member states were represented at the meeting.
2. The delegates were briefed on CUTS activities in the EAC region including BIEAC and FEATS project, ongoing EIF related work and proposed future work in the region, including in the context of the MOU signed between CUTS and EAC Secretariat.
3. The delegations appreciated CUTS projects in the region and the planned work in pursuance of the MOU with EAC and felt that this was a good step towards addressing trade policy related issues in the region. They made enquiries about some of the ongoing work and how it is sustained at the country, region and international level beyond projects, the possibility of doing additional work for the region based on their requests and continuing these interactions on a more sustained basis.
4. The delegates noted the need for harmonizing the EAC position on various issues in Geneva and therefore appreciated CUTS GRC's offer to enable them to meet and coordinate their activities and seek collaboration on various issues.
5. It was also noted that the lack of a coordination unit on international trade at the EAC Secretariat has resulted in member countries not harmonizing their positions, and that this needs to be addressed, especially in light of the fact that the region now operates under a Common External Tariff (CET).
6. On EPAs, delegates pointed to the lack of coordination with their Brussels and Capital based colleagues involved in the EPA negotiation, which had led in some instances to contradictory positions at the WTO and the regional level.
7. CUTS-GRC thanked the delegations for their interest in the work of CUTS and offered to host lunch-time working meetings on a quarterly basis. In addition delegates could always use both the CUTS GRC capacity in addressing the issues they wished to refer to it and its conference facilities whenever they wished.