SYMPOSIUM ON PREFERENTIAL TRADE AGREEMENTS AND INCLUSIVE TRADE

Bangkok, Thailand, 14-15 December 2017

PRESENTATION

Roundtable 3: Insights from the Private Sector: Sharing Experiences from Ecowas Region

Mr Savane Soumaila,
Topaz Multi-Industries SA
TOPAZ MULTI-INDUSTRIES SA

Manufacturer of Paint, Plastic (Injection Molding), Plastic film grade articles and PVC products based in Guinea Conakry.

Paint Division: Water and solvent based paints and varnishes.

Plastic Division: Polyethylene films, carry bags and Shopping bags for general use.

Plastic Injection Molding Division: Chairs, tables, bowls.....

PVC Division: PVC Rigid pipes, Forage Pipes, Electrical and water tubes and industrial Pipes with various fittings and accessories.
TOPAZ PERFORMANCE

- 4 factories in Guinea
- Top employer in Guinea after the government
- 3500 employees as direct employment
- + 100 trucks to transport our goods
- 40% of our production is exported
Challenges:

- Heavy customs formalities
- Border harassment by agents
- Bribe all along the corridor
- Intimidation
- Unnecessary delay
- Competition with other products
- High production cost
- Electricity cost
- Currency
- Unqualified labour cost
- Low level of Productive Capacity
- Lack of adequate infrastructure
- Most important lack of knowledge on all the multiple trade agreements signed by state and their implications on business
• Insight on importance of trade agreement for an industry, a company

• Development of regular meetings and sharing with Trade Department and Private sector

• More workshops and invitation to participate on CFTA meetings

• Topaz is agreed to the ETLS

• The ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) is the main ECOWAS operational tool for promoting the West Africa region as a Free Trade Area.

• Aims to establish a common market through “the liberalization of trade by the abolition, among Member States, of customs duties levied on imports and exports, and the abolition among Member States, of non-tariff barriers….”.
CONSEQUENCES of ETLS

- Better market access and export opportunities for our products
- Opportunities to export our goods at better prices
- Better opportunities and diversification in a bigger market with more consumers
- Competition – improved competitiveness
- Increase of our export
- Doing more market researches in Ecowas community
SUCCESS STORY

- Negotiating new contracts with big players e.g. Burkina Faso for the National Backbone
- 14 000 km of HDPE pipes to be supplied in Burkina Faso
- More than 1 year production for the company
- Plan to build a manufacturing plant in Ouagadougou for the 2nd phase of the project
• The 2 shoes salesmen sent to Africa to prospect the market

• Trade Agreements can either have a positive effect or a negative effect on your industry, business or an economy of a country.

• It is very important to involve the private sector in the negotiation because the private sector is the one who is going to implement it and make it a success or a failure.

• We encourage to keep on working on this kind of initiatives in terms of capacity building and assistance to the private sector to make trade more inclusive and equitable.
Thank You