Kenya's International Trade policy formulation and negotiations

Riungu, Sennane G
http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke:8080/xmlui/handle/123456789/11374
Date: 2012

Abstract:

International trade policy consists of bilateral and multilateral arrangements between countries and dictates the terms of commerce between them. These trade policies and relations vary in scope and content but generally depend on the structure of the economy of a particular country. In developing countries, trade policy-making is shaped by the interaction of international and domestic factors - economic and political. At the international level, the processes of globalization play a major role in influencing and shaping subsequent trade policies. At the domestic level, policy-making is intimately linked with the nature of the public-private relationship as well as the autonomy of state agencies and their institutional strength and capacity. Trade policies and their coherency clearly have a bearing on the overall trade strategy pursued and consequently on the economic gains from trade. Kenya's trade policy development has evolved through the following distinct policy orientations: import Substitution Policies (1960s-80s); Trade Liberalization through Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) (1980s) and Export Oriented Policies (1990s). Presently Kenya's Trade regime is guided by market-driven principles of liberalization under the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the increased efforts in the regional economic integration that has resulted in the establishment of the East African Community (EAC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA.) This study reflects on Kenya's international trade experiences and examines the institutional arrangements and interaction of its actors in the trade policy formulation and negotiations processes. It also identifies and contributes to a better understanding of the factors that constrain effective formulation, negotiation, monitoring and evaluation of the country's international trade policy.