

# Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement between Mauritius and India

The Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA), between Mauritius and India, signed on 22 February this year, entered into force on 1 April 2021.

The CECPA contains 8 chapters and 16 annexes, including Trade in Goods, Rules of origin, Sanitary and phytosanitary measures, Technical barriers to Trade, Trade in services and Dispute Settlement.

On trade in goods, Mauritian exporters will benefit preferential market access on a list of 615 products as follows:

- Duty free access on 376 products
- Reduced duties on 127 products
- Tariff Rate Quotas on 112 products, including, inter-alia:
  - o 40 000 tons of special sugar at 10% duty compared to 100% applicable to import from all sources
  - o 2 million liters of beer at 25% duty, compared to 150% duty
  - o 1.5 million liters of rum at 50% duty compared to existing duty of 150%
  - o 5000 liters of fruit wine at 50% duty compared to duty of 150%
  - o 7.5 million pieces of garments at zero duty
  - o 7000 tons of canned tuna at zero duty

Mauritius will provide preferential access on 310 products, with Tariff Rate Quotas on around 100 products such as spices, tea, plastic articles, wooden furniture, parts of motor vehicles, amongst others. Both Parties also agreed to pursue negotiations after the coming into force of the Agreement to extend preferential market access on a list of products of interest to each Party.

The CECPA also contains a safeguard clause which can be triggered in the event of a sudden surge in imports to protect the local industry.

On trade in services, India has committed to provide market access on some 94 service sectors, including professional services, business services, financial services and telecommunications services. The Agreement also provides a framework for Professional Bodies of the two countries to negotiate mutual recognition of educational and professional qualifications, within one year from its entry into force in the fields of architecture, engineering, medical, dental, accounting and auditing, nursing, veterinary and company secretariat. This will give a boost to Mauritius as an educational hub for Indian students.

The CECPA also provides for the incorporation therein of a chapter on Economic Cooperation on which negotiations have been completed. However, internal consultations by the Indian side are being pursued with Ministries concerned and are expected to be completed soon. The chapter covers some 25 sectors in which both Parties have agreed to enhance their collaboration such as Pharmaceuticals, Agro-industry, SMEs, Manufacturing, Ocean economy, ICT, Financial services, amongst others.

To benefit from the Agreement, potential importers and exporters will be required to meet the rules of origin requirements and to submit the certificate of origin or origin declaration. The certificate of origin shall be issued by the competent authorities of the Parties. In the case of Mauritius, the competent authority is the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) Customs Department.

Tariff Quotas upon imports from India will be granted on a first come first serve basis in accordance with the date and time of validation of the bill of entry submitted for home consumption and will be managed by the MRA Customs Department.

Detailed information with respect to the Tariff Quotas will be posted on the website of the MRA.

As regards exports to India, Tariff Quotas will be allocated to exporters in Mauritius, based on clearly defined criteria, by a Committee under the aegis of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and comprising representatives from the public and private sector.