Cocoa and Chocolate: trade myths about tariff rates for developing countries - Brussels, 9 August 2006

One of the more persistent myths about EU Trade policy is that the EU charges low tariff rates for raw goods from all developing countries but higher tariffs for processed products made from the same raw goods, thus preventing developing countries from exporting processed goods for which they would earn a higher return. This is a phenomenon referred to in the jargon as 'tariff escalation'. Perhaps you've heard that Ghana can export raw cocoa beans to the EU cheaply but not chocolate? Or that Rwanda can export raw coffee beans to the EU at a preferential rate but not ground or roasted coffee? These myths are so persistent that even some European Member States cite them.

But they are not true. The tariffs for these raw and processed goods are the same for countries like Ghana and Rwanda. As members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries group (ACP), they export these goods and almost all others they can produce to the European Union *tariff-free*. You can see for yourself and test the truth of other claims about the EU's tariff rates by using the European Commission's on-line Export Helpdesk, which provides details of tariff rates and regulations for exporters from developing countries.