

ACP-EU COTONOU AGREEMENT

**AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND
PACIFIC GROUP OF STATES**

**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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ACP/21/001/15

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ACP-EU JOINT DOCUMENT

Subject: Report from the ACP-EU Council of Ministers to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on the implementation of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement in 2014

In accordance with Article 15(3) of the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000, as first amended in Luxembourg on 25 June 2005, and amended for the second time in Ouagadougou on 23 June 2010, hereinafter referred to as "the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement", the ACP-EU Council of Ministers hereby submits to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly its report on the implementation of the Agreement in 2014.

REPORT FROM THE ACP-EU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
TO THE ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACP-EU
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

(2014)

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I. INTRODUCTION

The year 2014 was marked with intense discussions on private sector development in ACP countries as well as by reinforced cooperation between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States in international fora which materialised in the joint effort to prepare a common position with a view to discussions on the post-2015 framework.

In parallel, the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, assisted by its preparatory bodies, continued to develop ACP-EU cooperation in other areas related to its three pillars: political cooperation, economic and trade cooperation and development finance cooperation.

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE ACP-EU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND ITS PREPARATORY BODIES IN SPECIFIC AREAS OF COOPERATION

1. Political cooperation

In 2014, the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors focused on political cooperation in two areas: the post-2015 Development Agenda and migration.

The post-2015 overarching framework was discussed as a run-up to the discussions on Sustainable Development Goals in September 2014 during the 69th UN General Assembly. Following an exchange of views, the Council adopted the joint declaration on the post-2015 framework setting out joint priorities.

Migration was the second dominant theme in ACP-EU cooperation in the political sphere. In 2014, the ACP and the EU continued their dialogue on migration and development. A sub-group on visas was established and seminars on return and readmission (April 2014) and on Trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants (July 2014) were organised.

At its June meeting, the ACP-EU Council of Ministers examined the results of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly sessions which took place in 2013 in Brussels and Addis Ababa and adopted the report to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on the implementation of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement in 2013.

2. Economic development

Economic development strategies figured highly on the agenda of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and its preparatory bodies with two important topics: the future of EU support to ACP private sector development and the Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE). Both sides agreed that the issues of private sector development and CDE should be treated separately, and that the ACP and the EU side needed to look at the overall strategy and decide on the issue of the CDE only once the strategy had been defined.

Following the adoption of the ACP Strategic Framework for Private Sector Development by the ACP Committee of Ambassadors and the European Commission Communication on this subject, both sides urged a consensus on a joint ACP-EU strategy. The EU side informed the ACP-EU Council that as much as EUR 600 million could be allocated to this end from the intra-ACP envelope under the 11th European Development Fund. The ACP-EU Council adopted the Joint ACP-EU Cooperation Framework for Private Sector Development support in ACP Countries.

As regards the CDE, the ACP and the EU side discussed the situation of the Centre at different levels. The ACP-EU Council decided to grant a delegation of powers to the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors to adopt the decisions necessary to proceed with the orderly closing of the CDE, including the relevant amendment to Annex III to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement.

3. Trade cooperation

Trade cooperation was an important area of interest on the agenda of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and its preparatory bodies. The 71st meeting of the ACP-EU Subcommittee on Trade Cooperation was held in Brussels on 7 May 2014 with discussions on (1) Economic Partnership Agreements, (2) market access and commodity related issues, (3) consideration of the outcome of the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference and (4) trade related capacity building programmes.

With regard to EPAs, the year 2014 has brought about several important developments in the negotiation process. The West Africa EPA was initialled and the signature process started in December. Also, both the SADC EPA and the EAC EPA were initialled. As regards the implementation of EPAs already applied as well as interim EPAs, the Central Africa interim EPA was ratified by Cameroon on 22 July 2014 and the Pacific Interim EPA started to be provisionally applied by Fiji since 28 July 2014.

4. Development finance cooperation

In the area of development finance cooperation, the amendment of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement was the key topic on the agenda of the joint institutions. The international commitments towards aid effectiveness, taken by the Parties to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement in Busan, Accra and at the OECD-DAC in Paris in 2010, warranted further changes to the rules of nationality and origin, along with the aim of clarifying and simplifying the provisions of Annex IV in order to improve the efficiency of the implementation of the EDF. The ACP-EU Council adopted the decision on the revision of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement.

III. OVERVIEW OF WORK OF THE ACP-EU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND ITS PREPARATORY BODIES AND DOCUMENTS ADOPTED

1. Meetings

With a view to pursuing the objectives set out in the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, the following meetings of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and its preparatory bodies were held in 2014:

- ACP-EU Council of Ministers (Nairobi, Kenya, 19-20 June 2014)¹;
- ACP-EU Development Finance Cooperation Committee (Ministers) (Nairobi, Kenya, 19 June 2014)²;
- ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors (Brussels, 16 May 2014)³;
- ACP-EU Subcommittee on Trade Cooperation (Brussels, 7 May 2014)⁴;
- ACP-EU Development Finance Cooperation Committee (authorised representatives) (Brussels, 23 May 2014).

Details of the proceedings of the abovementioned institutions are set out in the outcomes of proceedings from their meetings.

The ACP-EU Council of Ministers also held debates with the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, at its 27th and 28th sessions held in Strasbourg, France, from 17 to 19 March 2014, and from 1 to 3 December 2014.

¹ Outcome of proceedings: ACP/21/003/15 - ACP-UE 2101/15

² Oral report from the meeting is annexed to the Outcome of proceedings of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers (ACP/21/003/15 - ACP-UE 2101/15)

³ Outcome of proceedings: ACP/22/001/15 - ACP-UE 2104/15

⁴ Outcome of proceedings: ACP/61/005/15 - ACP-UE 2105/15

2. Decisions

In 2014, the following Decisions were adopted in pursuit of the objectives set out in the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement:

- Decision No 1/2014 of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers of 20 June 2014 regarding the revision of Annex IV to the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement⁵
- Decision No 1/2014 of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors of 7 February 2014 appointing the members of the Executive Board of the Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE)⁶
- Decision No 2/2014 of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors of 5 August 2014 appointing the members of the Executive Board of the Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE)⁷
- Decision No 3/2014 of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors of 23 October 2014 on the renewal of the appointment of the Director of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA)⁸
- Decision No 4/2014 of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors of 23 October 2014 regarding the mandate to be given to the Executive Board of the Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE)⁹

⁵ ACP/21/004/14 - ACP-UE 2117/14

⁶ ACP/85/007/14 - ACP-UE 2104/14

⁷ ACP/85/039/14 - ACP-UE 2122/14

⁸ ACP/84/055/14 - ACP-UE 2125/14

⁹ ACP/85/056/14 - ACP-UE 2127/14

3. Political documents

The ACP-EU Council of Ministers adopted the following documents of a political nature:

- Report from the ACP-EU Council of Ministers to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on the implementation of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement in 2013¹⁰ adopted by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers on 19 June 2014;
- Joint ACP-EU Declaration on the Post-2015 Development Agenda¹¹ adopted by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers on 19 June 2014;
- Joint ACP-EU Cooperation Framework for Private Sector Development support in ACP Countries¹² adopted by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers on 19 June 2014;
- Joint ACP-EU Declaration on the Centre of the Development of Enterprise (CDE)¹³ adopted by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers on 19 June 2014.

¹⁰ ACP/21/003/14 - ACP-UE 2116/14

¹¹ ACP/21/005/14 - ACP-UE 2118/14

¹² ACP/21/006/14 - ACP-UE 2119/14

¹³ ACP/21/007/14 - ACP-UE 2120/14