

**ACP-EU COTONOU AGREEMENT**

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

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**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**Brussels, 23 April 2018**

**ACP/21/004/18**

**ACP-UE 2112/18**

**ACP-EU JOINT DOCUMENT**

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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 2017

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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 2017.

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

(2017)

## CONTENTS

### Page

I.	Introduction	4
II.	Activities of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and its preparatory bodies in specific areas of cooperation	5
	1. Political cooperation	5
	2. Economic development	6
	3. Trade cooperation	6
	4. Development finance cooperation	6
III.	Overview of work of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and its preparatory bodies and documents adopted	7
	1. Meetings	7
	2. Decisions	8
	3. Political documents	8

## I. INTRODUCTION

The year 2017 was dedicated to stock-taking and forward looking discussions in the areas of the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. In addition, the parties also continued their exchange on migration and development.

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 2017, the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors focused on political cooperation in four areas: implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, climate change, the future of the relations between ACP countries and the EU and migration.

The implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda was discussed ahead of the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development convened under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council (10-19 July 2017 in New York), with a view to reinforcing synergy and commonality of views to facilitate the implementation.

Climate change was a prominent item on the agenda, providing an opportunity to discuss further grounds for ACP-EU cooperation with a view to an effective implementation of the Paris Agreement, ahead of the COP 23 chaired by Fiji, held from 6 to 17 November 2017 in Bonn.

Although no negotiating positions on either side existed on the future of the relations between ACP countries and the EU, both Parties continued to share information on the state-of-play of their internal discussions and the following steps of their preparations for the negotiations.

Migration was also a dominant theme in ACP-EU cooperation in the political sphere. It allowed for a comprehensive discussion on the basis of the implementation of the Valletta Action Plan and the EU Trust Fund.

At its meeting on 5 May 2017, the ACP-EU Council of Ministers examined the results of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly sessions which took place in 2016 in Windhoek, Namibia and in Nairobi, Kenya and adopted the report to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on the implementation of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement in 2016.

## 2. Economic development

Economic development strategies figured highly on the agenda of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and its preparatory bodies, with the main topics being private sector development and the European External investment Plan.

## 3. Trade cooperation

Trade cooperation had a prominent place on the agenda of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and its preparatory bodies: it was discussed at both Ministerial (by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and the Joint ACP-EU Ministerial Trade Committee) and at senior officials' level (ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors, Subcommittee on Trade Cooperation). Trade debates focused on Economic Partnership Agreements and the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference.

With regard to EPAs, following the previous years' important progress in the negotiation process, the year 2017 focused on implementation, and in relation to some regions and countries, on deepening and widening of the EPA.

The Joint ACP-EU Ministerial Trade Committee also debated other trade-related topics: ACP-EU trade regime issues, Digital economy, WTO issues, Trade-related capacity building and the Pan-EU list of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions.

## 4. Development finance cooperation

In the area of development finance cooperation, the revision of Annex II<sup>1</sup> to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa were the main focus of the discussions at the joint institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> Annex II, Chapter 3, to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement: Terms and conditions for financing - Financing for short-term fluctuations in export earnings.

### 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 2017:

- ACP-EU Council of Ministers (Brussels, 5 May 2017)<sup>2</sup>;
- ACP-EU Development Finance Cooperation Committee (Ministers) (Brussels, 4 May 2017)<sup>3</sup>;
- Joint ACP-EU Ministerial Trade Committee (Brussels, 20 October 2017)<sup>4</sup>,
- ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors (Brussels, 17 March 2017)<sup>5</sup>;
- ACP-EU Subcommittee on Trade Cooperation (Brussels, 7 March 2017)<sup>6</sup>;
- ACP-EU Development Finance Cooperation Committee (authorised representatives) (Brussels, 10 March 2017).

Details of the meetings 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 the 33rd session of the latter, held in St. Julian's, Malta from 19-21 June 2017 and at the 34th session, held in Port-au-Prince, Haiti from 18-20 December 2017.

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<sup>2</sup> Outcome of proceedings: ACP/21/001/18 - ACP-UE 2104/18

<sup>3</sup> Oral report from the meeting is annexed to the Outcome of proceedings of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers (ACP/21/001/18 - ACP-UE 2104/18)

<sup>4</sup> Draft Minutes: ACP/61/027/18 - ACP-UE 2109/18

<sup>5</sup> Outcome of proceedings: ACP/22/001/18 - ACP-UE 2103/18

<sup>6</sup> Outcome of proceedings: ACP/61/067/17 - ACP-UE 2112/17

## 2. Decisions

In 2017, the following Decision was adopted in pursuit of the objectives set out in the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement:

- Decision No 1/2017 of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors of 8 December 2017 regarding the implementation of Article 68 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement <sup>7</sup>.

## 3. Political documents

The ACP-EU Council of Ministers adopted the following document 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 2016<sup>8</sup>, adopted by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers on 5 May 2017.

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<sup>7</sup> ACP/22/004/17 - ACP-UE 2115/17

<sup>8</sup> ACP/21/003/17 - ACP-UE 2111/17