

ACP-EU COTONOU AGREEMENT

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

**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 9 April 2019
(OR. en)**

ACP/22/001/19 Rev.1

**ACP-UE 2103/1/19
REV 1**

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

Subject: Outcome of proceedings of the 68th meeting of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors in Brussels, Belgium, on 13 April 2018

The 68th meeting of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors took place on 13 April 2018 under the chairmanship of H.E. Mr Dimiter TZANTCHEV, Ambassador of Bulgaria and Chair of the Permanent Representatives Committee of the European Union.

The meeting was co-chaired for the ACP side by H.E. Ms Sheila Sealy MONTEITH, Ambassador of Jamaica, President-in-Office of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors.

The Commission was represented by Mr Stefano MANSERVISI, Director-General of DG DEVCO and Mr Nikos ZAIMIS, adviser at the Directorate for Sustainable Development, Economic Partnership Agreements, Agri-food and Fisheries in DG Trade. The EEAS was represented by Mr Koen VERVAEKE, Managing Director for Africa.

1. Adoption of the provisional agenda

The Committee adopted the agenda as set out in ACP/22/002/18 - ACP-UE 2108/18.

2. Adoption of the outcome of proceedings of the 67th meeting of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors on 17 March 2017

The Committee approved the outcome of proceedings of the previous meeting [ACP/22/001/18 - ACP-UE 2103/18].

3. Preparation of the 43rd session of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers

A. Relations between ACP countries and the EU post-2020

The ACP side underlined that the main objective of a Post-Cotonou Agreement would be to contribute to the attainment of sustainable development in all ACP countries, in line with the provisions of Agenda 2030, through a strengthened and deepened political partnership and reinforced regional integration, with the ACP Group as a more effective global player. It also informed the Committee of the state-of-play of its preparations for the adoption of its negotiating mandate at the 107th meeting of the ACP Council in May 2018 in Togo.

The EU side informed the Committee of the state-of-play of the process of its internal discussions and of the Presidency's intention to have the EU negotiating mandate adopted in May, ahead of the meeting of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers in Togo. It reiterated its general intention to see a new relationship that best corresponds to the new reality and the common future of the two groupings.

The Committee agreed that a Post-Cotonou Agreement must result in a strengthened partnership between the ACP and EU, one which responds to the current and future priorities of the citizens on both sides, and enhances the collective role and influence of the partnership in global governance. At the same time, the Post-Cotonou Agreement must contain robust provisions in support of regional and continental integration.

B. Strengthening cooperation in international fora

The ACP side proposed the development of a calendar of joint ACP-EU activities in 2018 at the global or regional levels, for the consideration of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers.

The EU side stressed its strong belief that the potential that the ACP-EU cooperation has on global issues needs to be exploited beyond the field of climate change.

The Committee affirmed its belief that building on the successful cooperation at the international level would require the institutionalisation of a mechanism for regular and sustained joint action. The preparation of the calendar of joint activities for consideration and the development of principles for that type of cooperation would therefore be a step in the right direction.

C. Climate Change

The ACP side welcomed the outcomes of COP 23, which made progress on the development of a rulebook for the implementation the Paris Agreement and adopted other important decisions under the leadership of the Fijian Presidency. In preparation for COP 24, it confirmed its intention to focus on supporting the revision and implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions, contribute to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°, and monitor and contribute to the discussions at global level as part of the Talanoa Dialogue. The ACP side also informed that it considers climate change as a cross-cutting issue which must be addressed in all sectors to ensure development from an economic, social and environmental perspective. In the Post-Cotonou Framework, it must be holistically and comprehensively addressed at the national, regional and Intra-ACP levels.

The EU side confirmed its commitment to a successful implementation of the Paris Agreement and its intention to continue to work with the ACP side to maintain this issue high on the agenda of international discussions and reap results. It welcomed the invaluable opportunity, from the Fijian chaired COP 23 to COP 24 in Poland, to steer this agenda further ahead. It also expressed its hope that a joint position on this subject can be adopted at the meeting of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers in Togo.

The Committee noted the commitments of ACP and EU Member States to continue to play a leading role in the fight against Climate Change. The Committee congratulated Fiji for its leading role as President of UNFCCC COP 23 and pledged its full support to Poland, as the country to take over the Presidency at COP 24 in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018. The Committee agreed to prepare a Joint Declaration on climate change for adoption by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers in Lomé, Togo, on 31 May and 1 June 2018 to reiterate ACP and EU countries' commitment to fully and effectively implement the Paris Agreement.

D. Migration

The ACP side confirmed that the ACP Member States remain highly motivated to follow up on the different processes of migration cooperation, as they see the many commonalities that exist between the ACP-EU Dialogue on Migration and the Africa-EU Partnership on Migration. It called for the consideration of an ACP-EU joint action for the negotiations on the Global Compact for safe, orderly, and regular migration.

The EU side welcomed the regular stock-taking of the implementation of the Valletta Action Plan, as well as the state-of-play of the Rabat and Khartoum processes. It welcomed the impetus given to the cooperation on migration by the Abidjan Declaration, which called for deepening the cooperation and dialogue at continental level on migration and mobility in a strengthened and regular manner.

The Committee took note of the information provided by both sides, and would remain keen to continue the collaborative approach to collectively strengthen actions that were advanced to address the challenges and opportunities of migration, both at the North-South and South-South levels.

E. Development Finance Cooperation

– Information on the Activities of the ACP-EU Committee on Development Finance Cooperation

The Committee of Ambassadors took note of the results of the 35th meeting of the ACP-EU Committee on Development Finance Cooperation (authorised representatives) held on 4 April 2018.

F. Revision of Annex IC to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement

Both sides confirmed their commitment to help finance the Spotlight Initiative and the Global Partnership for Education. They agreed that both initiatives are in line with the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Committee took note of the progress made on the Revision of Annex IC of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement and agreed that the draft decision would be submitted to the ACP-EU Council of Ministers for adoption in May.

G. Economic issues

– Trade cooperation

a) Follow-up to the 75th meeting of the ACP-EU Subcommittee on Trade Cooperation

The EU side gave an oral presentation of the main outcomes of the 75th meeting of the ACP-EU Subcommittee on Trade Cooperation held in Brussels on 21 March 2018.

The ACP side confirmed that the report was a true reflection of the deliberations.

The Committee extended its thanks to the ACP-EU Subcommittee on Trade Cooperation for the work carried during its 75th meeting. It took good note of the various issues discussed and requested the two sides to pursue any outstanding issues, in preparation for the 16th Joint ACP-EU Ministerial Trade Committee scheduled to meet on 26 October 2018. In the meantime, the ACP-EU Council of Ministers would be briefed on salient points of this report, as necessary.

b) State of play of EPAs

The EU side provided a brief overview of the state-of-play of EPAs.

The ACP side welcomed the progress made in EPA implementation, while reiterated its regret that a majority of ACP states remained outside the EPA framework. The ACP side called for real efforts and joint progress in addressing those issues that are preventing more ACP States from joining the EPAs. The adoption of a flexible approach by the EU side, that takes account of the concerns and interests of ACP States, would go a long way in resolving the EPA stalemate and thereby enabling ACP States to fully embrace the EPAs.

It welcomed the launch of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which can bring a positive and interesting dimension to the EPA process. The ACP side requested technical and financial support to its members that are joining or are interested in joining EPAs to help them surmount the challenges they face in that process. It proposed that a monitoring report be considered by the Joint ACP-EU Ministerial Trade Committee.

The Committee took note of the state-of-play of the EPA process, and invited both the ACP and EU Parties in the EPA process to remain engaged in a cooperative spirit, in order to ensure that the EPAs become true instruments of development for ACP States. It agreed to define a common framework for monitoring of the various EPAs.

– European External Investment Plan

The EU side informed the Committee about the state-of-play of the implementation of the European External Investment Plan (EEIP).

The ACP side stated that it recognises the great potential in the EEIP to respond to the needs identified in ACP countries. It noticed that the general focus is on the first pillar and suggested to pay more attention to the other two pillars. The ACP side also called for the need to ensure that ACP financing institutions are involved in the delivery mechanism and the expansion of the EEIP to Caribbean and Pacific countries.

The Committee noted the development of strategic policy frameworks aiming at facilitating and promoting social and economic transformation in ACP countries and the opportunities for decent job creation identified in these policy frameworks. The Committee welcomed the launching of the European External Investment Plan as an instrument with capacity to respond adequately to the needs and priorities identified in ACP countries and endeavour to work towards associating all relevant stakeholders to the implementation of all three pillars of the EEIP. The Committee agreed that it would take appropriate measures to enhance the capacity of actors which so need to contribute adequately to the implementation of the strategic policy frameworks, particularly through the EEIP. It tasked the Co-Secretariat to work on an information session with ACP stake-holders.

H. Provisional agenda of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers

The Committee agreed the provisional agenda of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers (as set out in ACP/21/003/18 - ACP-UE 2111/18).

4. Any other business

No items were raised.