

## ACP-EU COTONOU AGREEMENT

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

**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 11 October 2023  
(OR. en)**

**ACP/21/003/23**

**ACP-UE 2104/23**

### **OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS**

Subject: Outcome of proceeding of the 45th session of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers in Brussels, Belgium, on 29 November 2022

The ACP-EU Council of Ministers held its 45th meeting in Brussels, on 29 November 2022, under the chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Jiří KOZÁK, First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Czechia, President-in-Office of the Council of the European Union.

The meeting was co-chaired for the OACPS by H.E. Hon. Amery BROWNE, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago, President-in-Office of the ACP Council of Ministers.

The European Commission was represented by Ms Mairead MCGUINNESS, Commissioner for Financial services, financial stability and Capital Markets Union and Ms Jutta URPILAINEN, Commissioner for International Partnerships.

The EEAS was represented by Ms Rita LARANJINHA, Managing Director Africa.

## ITEM 1

### ADOPTION OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

[ACP/21/004/22 - ACP-UE 2104/22]

The Council adopted the agenda.

## "A" ITEMS

## ITEM 2

### ADOPTION OF

- **Outcome of proceedings of the 44th session of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers on 23-24 May 2019**

[ACP/21/001/20 - ACP-UE 2103/20]

The Council approved the outcome of proceedings of the 44th session of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers.

## ITEM 3

### RELATIONS WITH THE ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

- **Information on the activities of the Assembly from 2019 to 2022**
- **Adoption of a report to the Joint Parliamentary Assembly**

[ACP/21/003/22 - ACP-UE 2103/22]

The Council took note of the information on the activities of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly from 2019 to 2022, and adopted the report on its activities from 2019 to 2022 to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly as presented.

## "B" ITEMS

### ITEM 4

#### CURRENT GLOBAL AFFAIRS, INCLUDING FOOD AND ENERGY SECURITY

##### - Exchange of views

The EU side recalled its position condemning Russia's escalating war of aggression against Ukraine and welcomed the strong political positioning of many OACPS countries' leaders condemning Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The EU side expressed its commitment to work with partners to overcome the global consequences of this war of aggression and explained the rapid action taken by the EU and its Member States, in a Team Europe spirit, to address the negative consequences on partner countries.

The OACPS side affirmed that, because of the globalised world, the war in Ukraine affects many, causing food and energy insecurity, especially in countries hit hard and still suffering from the consequences of the COVID crisis. The OACPS side suggested to seize the current context as an opportunity to adjust the international cooperation models and especially those of economic development in order to mitigate the negative impacts of future global crises.

In conclusion, the Council welcomed the open discussion on the impact of the war in Ukraine and reaffirmed the paramount importance of the Charter of the United Nations in the promotion of the rule of law among nations. The EU and the OACPS sides reiterated their respective positions as expressed in other fora, including the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly. The Council took note of the efforts of the Parties to address food and energy security and encouraged them to continue their cooperation on these important matters.

## ITEM 5

### THE NEW EU-OACPS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

#### - Exchange of views and preparation for signature

The OACPS side expressed its deep regret over the lack of progress to signature of the new OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement. The OACPS side stated its readiness to sign and allow implementation to start, urged the EU side to resolve its remaining internal issues and requested a roadmap and a timeline for this effect.

The EU side reaffirmed its commitment to the OACPS-EU Partnership and its determination to bring the process forward towards conclusion and start the preparations for the signature of the new Agreement.

The Council took note of the state-of-play of the finalisation of the new OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement and encouraged the Parties to ensure its timely signature and preparation for its application.

## ITEM 6

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COTONOU PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

#### - Trade, economic and financial cooperation

The EU side welcomed the growing interest towards Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA), showcased by the number of requests for accession and the negotiations to deepen existing EPAs. The implementation of the EDF and NDICI-Global Europe ensures stable and predictable financial support, and the Team Europe approach allows the EU, its Member States and European Development Finance Institutions to pool their resources and thereby achieve greater impact in partner countries.

The OACPS side underlined the importance of ensuring inclusive and fair trade mechanism in the achievement of the common objective of reducing and eventually eradicating poverty. The OACPS side regretted that the EU directives adopted in relation to the Green Deal limit access to the EU market and requested consultation, as well as time and facilitation to adapt to the new norms.

The Council took note of the state-of-play of the EPA process and welcomed the recent developments. The Council called upon both the OACPS and EU Parties to remain engaged in that process and continue cooperating in a spirit of true partnership in the implementation of EPAs in order to reap their full benefit. The Council welcomed the open and constructive exchange of views on trade, economic and financial cooperation, including on access to concessional financing and loans by middle-income countries and WTO matters, and urged both sides to maintain their close coordination and pursue all outstanding issues at technical level.

**- Non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes and fight against money laundering and terrorist financing**

The OACPS side, while expressing its support to the general objective and global efforts in the fields of fiscal governance and fight against money laundering and terrorist financing, reiterated its concerns regarding the EU lists, which should be aligned with parallel multilateral processes. The OACPS side asked for assistance to build the capacity to reinforce governance in the related areas. The OACPS side also reiterated its view that the OACPS-EU Partnership should serve as a platform for dialogue to address the challenges together.

The EU side recalled its commitment to improve tax good governance, and that EU Member States also make sure that they are compliant with the same requirements. The EU side reiterated the dynamic nature of the list and that the specificities of OACPS Members were and are taken into consideration throughout the process. The EU side welcomed the convergence of EU and OACPS support to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the cooperation of the EU and OACPS Member States within the FATF. The EU side pointed out that policy measures provide for technical assistance for partners to address their strategic deficiencies.

The Council welcomed the open and sincere exchange of views on non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes and on the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing. The Council acknowledged the convergence between the Parties on the importance of these policy areas and encouraged both Parties to strengthen the dialogue on all important issues related to them. The Council took note of the OACPS concerns raised regarding the closure of bank accounts of embassies/missions of OACPS Member States.

## **ITEM 7**

### **GLOBAL GATEWAY STRATEGY, ITS RELEVANCE FOR THE OACPS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NDICI-GLOBAL EUROPE**

The EU side presented the state-of-play of EU investment in sustainable infrastructure in OACPS countries and the progress achieved on the operationalisation of the Global Gateway Strategy. The EU side explained the functioning of NDICI-Global Europe, its innovative features, as well as the state-of-play of its implementation.

The OACPS side welcomed the Global Gateway as a new instrument and encouraged the EU to continue working closely with OACPS Members to ensure reconciliation of the objectives of EU policy, as implemented through the Global Gateway, with the defined priorities of OACPS Members.

In conclusion, the Council took note of the information provided on the Global Gateway Strategy and on the implementation of the NDICI-Global Europe. The Council encouraged both Parties to remain in close contact on these matters and discuss in a spirit of partnership all issues arising during implementation.

## ITEM 8

### EU-OACPS COOPERATION IN INTERNATIONAL FORA

#### - Follow-up to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27)

Both sides reiterated their commitment to the joint OACPS-EU cooperation in international fora and notably in the area of climate action, build on the progress achieved, implement the outcomes of COP27 and maintain the climate ambition.

The Council encouraged the Parties to continue their efforts to increase and strengthen their cooperation in international fora. The Council noted the commitments of EU and OACPS Member States to continue to play a leading role in the fight against climate change. The Council welcomed the timely assessment of the outcomes of COP27 and urged the Parties to continue their cooperation to prepare for COP28. In that respect, the Council invited the EU and OACPS States to press for more climate ambition and full implementation of pledges and commitments.

#### - Preparation of the United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP15)

The OACPS side reiterated its commitment to the cooperation in international fora and processes to combat the global biodiversity crisis, and its engagement to work together to address the inter-dependent crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and ocean degradation. The OACPS side pointed out the importance and opportunity of demonstrating how biodiversity can contribute to development.

The EU side called for an ambitious, comprehensive and transformative Global Biodiversity Framework, effectively addressing the planetary crisis by mobilising all actors, supporting developing countries in their efforts, and fostering stronger cooperation.

The Council welcomed the cooperation of the Parties in the area of biological diversity and agreed to continued collaboration in order to contribute to the success of the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity of 7-19 December 2022 in Montreal, Canada.

- **Other initiatives**

On the OACPS side, Vanuatu presented its initiative to request an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on climate change, Chad called for more OACPS-EU cooperation within the WTO and Barbados presented its Bridgetown Initiative. The OACPS side also recalled and elaborated on its proposal for a joint mechanism on OACPS-EU cooperation at the international level.

On the EU side, Slovenia and Spain put forward their national initiatives regarding the UN Security Council and the International Drought and Resilience Alliance, respectively.

The Council took note of the interventions of Slovenia, Spain, Barbados, Chad and Vanuatu of their initiatives, which gave the Council the necessary information that help the Council understand their reasons and objectives. The Council also took note of the proposal of the OACPS to establish a joint mechanism for cooperation at the international level.

**ITEM 9**

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(none).

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