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LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Subject: Draft DECISION OF THE OACPS-EU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
concerning the adoption of Joint Guidelines for the conduct of the
partnership dialogue provided for in Article 3 of the Samoa Agreement

DRAFT

**DECISION No .../2025
OF THE OACPS-EU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

of ...

**concerning the adoption of Joint Guidelines for the conduct of the partnership dialogue
provided for in Article 3 of the Samoa Agreement**

THE OACPS–EU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS,

Having regard to the Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Members of the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States, of the other part¹ (‘the Samoa Agreement’), and in particular Article 3 and Article 88(4), point (c), thereof,

¹ OJ EU L, 2023/2862, 28.12.2023,
ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_international/2023/2862/oj.

Whereas:

- (1) The Samoa Agreement has been provisionally applied since 1 January 2024.
- (2) Pursuant to Article 3 of the Samoa Agreement, the Parties are to engage in regular, balanced, comprehensive and substantive partnership dialogue on all areas of that Agreement, leading to commitments and, where appropriate, actions on both sides, for its effective implementation.
- (3) Pursuant to Article 88(4), point (c), of the Samoa Agreement, the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers is to adopt policy guidelines and take decisions to give effect to specific aspects that are necessary for the implementation of the provisions of that Agreement,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The Joint Guidelines for the conduct of the partnership dialogue provided for in Article 3 of the Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States of the one part, and the Members of the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States, of the other part ('the Samoa Agreement'), as set out in the Annex to this Decision, are hereby adopted.

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at ..., ...

For the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers
The Chair

ANNEX

Joint Guidelines for the conduct of the partnership dialogue provided for in Article 3 of the Samoa Agreement

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States of the one part, and the Members of the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States, of the other part² ('the Samoa Agreement', hereinafter referred to as the 'Agreement'), was signed in Samoa on 15 November 2023, and has been provisionally applied since 1 January 2024. Article 3(1) of the Agreement calls on the Parties to engage in regular, balanced, comprehensive and substantive partnership dialogue on all areas of the Agreement, including specific issues set out in Article 9(3), Article 12(4) and 12(6), Article 18(3), Article 62, and Article 74(5) of Part II of the Agreement, as well as Article 78(5) of the Africa Regional Protocol and Article 2(2) of the Pacific Regional Protocol of the Agreement, leading to commitments, where appropriate, and actions, where required, on both sides, for the effective implementation of the Agreement.
2. As provided for in Article 1(4) of the Agreement, partnership dialogue is one of the main tools to achieve the objectives of the Agreement, together with action tailored to the specificities of the Parties.

² OJ EU L, 2023/2862, 28.12.2023,
ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_international/2023/2862/oj.

3. Pursuant to Article 3(2) of the Agreement, the objective of the partnership dialogue shall be to exchange information, foster mutual understanding and facilitate the establishment of agreed priorities and shared agendas at national, regional and international levels. Pursuant to that Article, the Parties shall cooperate and coordinate on issues of common interest and new challenges in international settings.
4. Pursuant to Article 3(3) of the Agreement, the partnership dialogue shall be conducted in a flexible and tailor-made manner, shall take place at regular intervals in the appropriate format and at the most appropriate domestic, regional or multi-country level, and shall take full advantage of all possible channels, including regional and international settings.
5. Pursuant to Article 101(4) of the Agreement, the partnership dialogue shall also be used to address divergences between the Parties, with a view to preventing situations where one Party might deem it necessary to have recourse to the consultations provided for in Article 101(5) and (6) of the Agreement.

II. OBJECTIVE

6. The aim of these Joint Guidelines is to provide joint operational guidance for the implementation of the partnership dialogue provisions of the Agreement, while taking into account the lessons learnt from political dialogue under Article 8 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 2000³ (the ‘Cotonou Agreement’).

³ OJ EC L 317, 15.12.2000, p. 3, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/2003/159/oj.

7. These Joint Guidelines are to be applied in a flexible manner, in order to ensure a tailor-made approach to the format and objectives of the partnership dialogue.

III. PARTNERSHIP DIALOGUE IMPLEMENTATION

A. Agendas

8. Partnership dialogue shall cover all areas of the Agreement, in order to contribute to the attainment of the objectives set out in Article 1 thereof.
9. The agendas for partnership dialogue meetings shall be jointly defined and may include national, regional, continental, multi-country and global issues of mutual interest or concern in a balanced manner, strengthening synergies between the national, regional and multi-country dimensions of the partnership between the OACPS and the EU.

B. Preparation

10. Partnership dialogue sessions shall be jointly prepared beforehand.
11. Relevant background information shall be shared in advance in order to contribute to more substantial exchanges and outcomes.

C. Format

12. Partnership dialogue between the Union and its Member States, on the one hand, and the relevant OACPS counterpart(s), on the other hand, shall take place at the most appropriate level, namely the national, regional or multi-country level and shall take full advantage of all possible channels, including in regional and international settings. Partnership dialogue shall also take into consideration the principles of complementarity and subsidiarity.

13. Partnership dialogue can take the format of dedicated thematic dialogues on specific issues, where appropriate.
- C.1 Partnership dialogue at national level
14. Partnership dialogue at national level shall take place at regular intervals, in principle once a year, in order to exchange information, foster mutual understanding and facilitate the establishment of agreed priorities and shared agendas at national, regional and international levels.
15. Partnership dialogue at national level may take place in the respective OACPS country or in other settings, such as in Brussels or in the margins of international or joint events.
16. Partnership dialogue at national level may also address regional and global issues of mutual interest.
17. Synergies and complementarities shall be sought between partnership dialogues and policy dialogues on specific topics, with a view to avoiding duplication.
18. Partnership dialogue may involve different ministries and services, depending on the issues to be addressed.
19. If any issue pertinent to the Agreement requires clarification, or if there are divergences between the Parties, partnership dialogue shall take place as frequently as necessary to prevent situations in which one Party might deem it necessary to have recourse to the consultations provided for in Article 101(5) and (6) of the Agreement.

C.2 Partnership dialogue at regional level

20. Partnership dialogue at regional level shall take place, at regular intervals, in order to exchange information, foster mutual understanding and facilitate the establishment of agreed priorities and shared agendas at regional and international level.
21. Partnership dialogue at regional level may take place in the margins of regional events or in other settings, such as in Brussels or in the margins of international or joint events.
22. Partnership dialogue at regional level shall also contribute to the preparation of the sessions of the Regional Councils of Ministers and of the partnership dialogue at multi-country level.

C.3 Partnership dialogue at multi-country level

23. Partnership dialogue at multi-country level shall take place, at regular intervals and in the appropriate format, in order to exchange information, foster mutual understanding and facilitate the establishment of agreed priorities and shared agendas at international level, and to cooperate and coordinate on issues of common interest and new challenges in international settings. Partnership dialogue at multi-country level should encourage cooperation with the overseas countries and territories associated with the EU, and the outermost regions of the EU, in areas of common interest.
24. Partnership dialogue at multi-country level may take place in the margins of international meetings or in other settings, such as in Brussels or in the margins of joint events.

25. Partnership dialogue may also take place between the diplomatic representations of the Parties to regional and international organisations, at regular intervals, in order to exchange information, foster mutual understanding and facilitate the establishment of agreed priorities and shared agendas at international level, and to cooperate and coordinate on issues of common interest and new challenges in international settings.

D. Participation

26. In the partnership dialogue sessions, the Parties shall be represented at political or senior official level, as appropriate, depending on content and expected results.

27. As provided for in Article 3(4) of the Agreement, parliaments and, where appropriate, representatives of civil society organisations and the private sector shall be duly informed, consulted and enabled to feed into the partnership dialogue. Regional and continental organisations shall be associated with the partnership dialogue, as appropriate.

E. Outcome and follow-up

28. Relevant commitments and follow-up actions shall be agreed during the partnership dialogue.

29. Agreed follow-up actions shall be monitored and discussed in subsequent partnership dialogue sessions.

30. Specific follow-up frameworks, such as working groups, may be established to take forward the dialogue or to take action in concrete areas.

31. The partnership dialogue shall be complemented by regular contacts between the Parties with a view to achieving the objectives of the Agreement.

IV. REVISION

32. As provided for in Article 3(3) of the Agreement, the Parties agree to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership dialogue and to adapt its scope, as appropriate. That may include the outcome of the partnership dialogue in terms of commitments and, where appropriate, actions on both sides.
 33. These Joint Guidelines may be amended, as appropriate, in light of the monitoring and evaluation referred to in point 32.
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