PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS MEMBER STATES, OF THE ONE PART, AND THE MEMBERS OF THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC STATES, OF THE OTHER PART

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PART I - GENERAL PROVISIONS

PART II - STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

TITLE I - HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, AND GOVERNANCE IN PEOPLE-CENTRED AND RIGHTS-BASED SOCIETIES

TITLE II - PEACE AND SECURITY

TITLE III - HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

TITLE IV - INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

TITLE V - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

TITLE VI - MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

PART III - GLOBAL ALLIANCES AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

PART IV - MEANS OF COOPERATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

PART V - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

PART VI - FINAL PROVISIONS

REGIONAL PROTOCOLS

AFRICA REGIONAL PROTOCOL

PART I - FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION

PART II - KEY AREAS OF COOPERATION

TITLE I - INCLUSIVE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

TITLE II - HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

TITLE III - ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

TITLE IV - PEACE AND SECURITY

TITLE V - HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

TITLE VI - MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

CARIBBEAN REGIONAL PROTOCOL

PART I - FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION

PART II - KEY AREAS OF COOPERATION

TITLE I - INCLUSIVE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

TITLE II - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

TITLE III - HUMAN RIGHTS, GOVERNANCE, PEACE AND SECURITY

TITLE IV- HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL COHESION AND MOBILITY

PACIFIC REGIONAL PROTOCOL

PART I - FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION

PART II - KEY AREAS OF COOPERATION

TITLE I - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

TITLE II - INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TITLE III - OCEANS, SEAS AND FISHERIES

TITLE IV - SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

TITLE V - HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: RETURN AND READMISSION PROCESSES

ANNEX II: OPERATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK

THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM,

THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA,

THE CZECH REPUBLIC,

THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK,

THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY,

THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA,

IRELAND,

THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC,

THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN,

THE FRENCH REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA,

THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS,

THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA,

THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG,

HUNGARY,

THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA,

THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS,

THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND,

THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC,

ROMANIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA,

THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND,

THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN,

Contracting Parties to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, hereinafter referred to as the "Member States of the European Union",

and

THE EUROPEAN UNION,

hereinafter jointly referred to as the "EU Party",

of the one part, and

THE REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA,

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA,

THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS,

BARBADOS,

BELIZE,

THE REPUBLIC OF BENIN,

THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA,

BURKINA FASO,

THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI,

THE REPUBLIC OF CABO VERDE,

THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON,

THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF CHAD,

THE UNION OF THE COMOROS,

THE REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO,

THE COOK ISLANDS,

THE REPUBLIC OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE,

THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO,

THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI,

THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA,

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC,

THE STATE OF ERITREA,

THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI,

THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI,

THE GABONESE REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA,

GRENADA,

THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA,

THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU,

THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA,

THE REPUBLIC OF HAITI,

JAMAICA,

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THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA,

THE REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI,

THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO,

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR,

THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI,

THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES,

THE REPUBLIC OF MALI,

THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS,

THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS,

THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE,

THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF NAURU,

THE REPUBLIC OF NIGER,

THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA,

NIUE,

THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU,

THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA,

THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA,

THE FEDERATION OF SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS,

SAINT LUCIA,

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES,

THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF SAMOA,

THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE,

THE REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL,

THE REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES,

THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE,

SOLOMON ISLANDS,

THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN,

THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME,

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA,

THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE,

THE TOGOLESE REPUBLIC,

THE KINGDOM OF TONGA,

THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,

TUVALU,

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THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA,

THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU,

THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE,

Members of the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), hereinafter referred to as the "OACPS Members", of the other part,

hereinafter jointly referred to as the "Parties",

HAVING REGARD to the Revised Georgetown Agreement establishing the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, on the one hand, and the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, on the other;

CONSIDERING their strong links and the close political, economic and cultural ties that unite them;

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REAFFIRMING their attachment to the rules-based global order, with multilateralism as its key principle and the United Nations at its core;

CONFIRMING their commitment to sustainable development in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

STRESSING the importance of regular dialogue on issues of mutual interest at all relevant levels;

REAFFIRMING their commitment to consolidating their partnership by coordinating actions in international forums based on common interests, shared values and mutual respect, and cognisant of their ability to shape global outcomes when acting jointly;

CONFIRMING their commitment to democratic principles and human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant international human rights instruments, as well as to the principles of the rule of law and good governance;

RECALLING their strong will to promote peace and security and their international obligations on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as their determination to prevent and prosecute the most serious crimes of concern to the international community;

REAFFIRMING their commitment to foster multi-stakeholder cooperation in support of the achievement of sustainable development, taking account of the different roles played by different stakeholders, while ensuring that they all operate within the rule of law;

STRESSING the urgency to tackle global environmental challenges, the importance of the Paris Agreement on climate change, the urgent need to build stable and sustainable low-carbon economies and societies resilient to climate change, and to move forward to achieve common environmental, climate change and renewable energy goals;

RECOGNISING the importance of structural economic transformation in achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development;

RECALLING their commitment to the principles and rules that govern international trade, in particular those agreed in the World Trade Organization;

RECALLING their commitment to respect labour rights, taking into account the principles laid down in conventions of the International Labour Organization;

RECOGNISING the important role of science, technology, research and innovation in accelerating the transition to knowledge-based societies, facilitated through the use of digital tools in pursuit of sustainable development;

RECALLING their commitment to fostering human and social development, eradicating poverty, and fighting discrimination and inequality, leaving no one behind;

ACKNOWLEDGING that changing demographic dynamics, combined with economic, social and environmental changes offer opportunities for, and pose challenges to, sustainable development;

REAFFIRMING that gender equality and empowerment of women and girls are essential to achieving inclusive and sustainable development;

RECOGNISING the importance of youth for shaping the future and contributing to sustainable development;

REAFFIRMING their commitment to promoting a people-centred partnership and to enhancing people-to-people contacts, including through cooperation and exchanges in the field of science, technology, innovation, education and culture;

REAFFIRMING their commitment to enhancing cooperation and dialogue on migration and mobility;

RECOGNISING the increasing risks caused by natural disasters, economic and other exogenous shocks including pandemics;

CONFIRMING their willingness to collaborate in support of regional and continental integration, particularly with a view to achieving the objectives set out in Agenda 2063 of the African Union and in the integration and cooperation frameworks of the Caribbean and Pacific;

RECALLING the principles of policy coherence for development and aid effectiveness, as well as the principles of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA);

HAVING REGARD to 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[1], as last amended (the "Cotonou Agreement"),

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

[1] OJ EC L 317, 15.12.2000, p. 3.

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PART I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 1

Objectives

1. The European Union and its Member States, hereinafter referred to as the "EU Party", of the one part, and the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) Members, of the other part, hereinafter jointly referred to as the "Parties", hereby agree to conclude this Agreement, establishing a strengthened political partnership to generate mutually beneficial outcomes on common and intersecting interests and in accordance with their shared values.

2. This Agreement shall contribute to achieving the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015 (the "2030 Agenda"), and the Paris Agreement adopted under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, done at Paris on 12 December 2015 (the "Paris Agreement"), as overarching frameworks guiding the partnership under this Agreement.

3. The objectives of this Agreement are to:

(a) promote, protect and fulfil human rights, democratic principles, the rule of law and good governance, paying particular attention to gender equality;

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(b) build peaceful and resilient states and societies, tackling ongoing and emerging threats to peace and security;

(c) foster human and social development, and in particular to eradicate poverty and address inequalities, ensuring that everyone enjoys a life of dignity and that no one is left behind, with special attention paid to women and girls;

(d) mobilise investment, support trade and foster private-sector development, with a view to achieving sustainable and inclusive growth and creating decent jobs for all;

(e) combat climate change, protect the environment and ensure the sustainable management of natural resources; and

(f) implement a comprehensive and balanced approach to migration, so as to reap the benefits of safe, orderly and regular migration and mobility, stem irregular migration while addressing its root causes, in full respect of international law and in accordance with the Parties' respective competences.

4. Partnership dialogue and action tailored to the specificities of the Parties shall constitute the main tools to achieve the objectives of this Agreement.

5. This Agreement shall facilitate the Parties' adoption of common positions on the world stage, reinforcing partnerships to promote multilateralism and the rules-based international order, with a view to driving global action forward.

ARTICLE 2

Principles

1. The Parties shall pursue the objectives of this Agreement in a spirit of shared responsibility, solidarity, reciprocity, mutual respect and accountability.

2. The Parties reaffirm their commitment to developing friendly relations among nations, based on respect for the principle of sovereign equality among all states, and to refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations (the "UN Charter").

3. The Parties agree to implement each Regional Protocol in accordance with the broad principles agreed in the General Part, while taking account of the specificities of the regions. They also agree to tailor actions to the different needs of least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked countries, small island developing states (SIDS) and low-lying coastal states, taking into consideration the diverse challenges they face.

4. The Parties shall make decisions and undertake actions at the most appropriate domestic, regional or multi-country level.

5. The Parties shall systematically promote a gender perspective and ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed across all policies.

6. The Parties shall take an integrated approach to their cooperation that incorporates political, economic, social, environmental and cultural elements.

7. The Parties shall intensify efforts to further regional integration and cooperation to best manage security concerns, reap the economic gains of globalisation and address transnational challenges and opportunities as appropriate.

8. The Parties shall promote a multi-stakeholder approach, enabling the active engagement of a wide variety of actors in partnership dialogue and cooperation processes, including parliaments, local authorities, civil society and the private sector.

9. Cooperation within formal and ad hoc regional formats may be pursued in order to meet the objectives of the partnership under this Agreement more effectively and efficiently. The Parties may also agree on provisions and flexible procedures that enable interested Parties to deepen dialogue and cooperation on specific thematic and cross-regional issues.

ARTICLE 3

Partnership dialogue

1. The Parties shall engage in regular, balanced, comprehensive and substantive partnership dialogue on all areas of this Agreement, leading to commitments and, where appropriate, actions on both sides, for the effective implementation of this Agreement.

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2. The Parties agree that 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. They shall cooperate and coordinate on issues of common interest and new challenges in international settings.

3. The Parties agree that 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 in regional and international settings. They agree to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership dialogue and to adapt its scope, as appropriate.

4. The Parties agree that 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.

ARTICLE 4

Policy coherence

1. The Parties shall work towards coherent policies at national, regional and international levels with a view to attaining the objectives of this Agreement, through a targeted, strategic and partnership-oriented approach.

2. The Parties shall individually and collectively foster synergies between policies with a view to avoiding or minimising negative impacts that their policies may have on the other Parties. The Parties shall undertake to inform and, where appropriate, consult with the other Parties on initiatives and measures that may significantly affect them.

3. The Parties reaffirm their commitment to policy coherence for development as a crucial element of achieving the SDGs.

ARTICLE 5

Actors

1. The Parties acknowledge that governments play a central role in defining and implementing priorities and strategies for their countries. They recognise the crucial role of parliaments in shaping and adopting legislation, agreeing budgets and holding governments to account. They acknowledge the role and contribution of local authorities in enhancing democratic accountability and complementing governmental action.

2. The Parties recognise the important role of sub-regional, regional, continental and intercontinental organisations in achieving the objectives of this Agreement, in particular those of the Regional Protocols.

3. The Parties acknowledge the important role and contribution of stakeholders, in all forms and national characteristics, namely civil society, economic and social partners, including trade union organisations, and the private sector, and agree to promote and strengthen their effective participation with a view to fostering more inclusive and multi-stakeholder policy processes. For those purposes, the Parties shall ensure that all those stakeholders, where appropriate, are informed and consulted on strategies and sectoral policies, provide input into the broad process of dialogue, receive capacity building in critical areas and participate in the implementation of cooperation programmes in the areas that concern them. Such participation in cooperation programmes shall be based on the extent to which they address the needs of the population and on their specific competencies, and have accountable and transparent governance structures.

ARTICLE 6

Structure

1. This Agreement consists of the General Part (Parts I to VI), three Regional Protocols ("the Regional Protocols") and Annexes.

2. The General Part and the Annexes shall be legally binding on the Parties.

3. The Regional Protocols shall be legally binding on the EU Party and on the African, the Caribbean and the Pacific OACPS Members, respectively. Nothing in the Regional Protocols and their interpretation and implementation can affect or deviate from the provisions under the General Part and the decisions of the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers.

ARTICLE 7

Cross-cutting themes

1. The Parties agree that systematic account shall be taken of the following cross-cutting themes to inform action in all areas of cooperation: human rights, democracy, gender equality, peace and security, environmental protection, the fight against climate change, culture and youth.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to support capacity building to effectively address challenges and achieve the objectives set out in this Agreement. They shall aim to foster the strengthening of institutions, promote the exchange of best practices and facilitate knowledge transfer and sharing.

3. The Parties shall strengthen the resilience of countries, communities and individuals, and particularly that of vulnerable populations, in the face of environmental and climate change-related challenges, economic shocks, conflicts and political crises and epidemics and pandemics.

PART II

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

TITLE I

HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE IN PEOPLE-CENTRED AND RIGHTS-BASED SOCIETIES

ARTICLE 8

The Parties reaffirm their determination to promote, protect and fulfil human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic principles, and to strengthen the rule of law and good governance, in compliance with the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international law, in particular international human rights law and, where relevant, international humanitarian law.

The Parties shall promote people-centred and rights-based policies, encompassing all human rights and ensuring equal access to opportunities for all members of society, directed towards sustainable development centred on the human being. The Parties recognise that respect for democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and good governance is an integral part of sustainable development.

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ARTICLE 9

Human rights, democracy and rule of law

1. The Parties, recognising that human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, shall promote, protect and fulfil all human rights, be they civil, political, economic, social or cultural. They shall protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all fundamental freedoms, such as the freedom of opinion and expression, the freedom of assembly and association, and the freedom of thought, religion and belief.

2. The Parties shall commit to the promotion of universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without discrimination based on any ground including sex, ethnic or social origin, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, disability, age, or other status. They commit to fighting all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and all forms of violence and discrimination, including all instances of advocacy of hatred. They commit to the recognition and advancement of the rights of indigenous peoples, as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

3. The Parties shall have partnership dialogue at bilateral level on the death penalty. Where the death penalty is provided for in national legislation and is still applied, the Parties shall adhere to due process and internationally agreed minimum standards.

4. The Parties reaffirm that the universally recognised democratic principles underpinning the organisation of the State ensure the legitimacy of its authority, the legality of its actions reflected in its constitutional, legislative and regulatory system, and the existence of participatory mechanisms. They shall preserve and strengthen the application of those principles by ensuring inclusive, transparent and credible elections with due respect for sovereignty, as well as by allowing and supporting participatory decision-making processes. The Parties shall promote the upholding of electoral best practices and cooperation between them, including on electoral observation within the EU Party and OACPS Members, as appropriate.

5. The Parties shall actively support the consolidation of the rule of law at national, regional and international levels, acknowledging its crucial importance for the protection of human rights and for the effective functioning of democratic institutions. That includes ensuring the existence of an independent, impartial and well-functioning judicial system, equality before the law, the right to a fair trial and due process and access to effective mechanisms of legal redress.

6. The Parties recognise the right to development based on the indivisibility, interdependence, universality and inalienability of all human rights, by virtue of which every human being and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realised. They shall support measures for the enhancement of the right to development and shall ensure, *inter alia*, equality of opportunity for all to access, and benefit from, basic resources and essential services such as education, health services, food, housing, employment and the fair distribution of income.

7. The Parties agree that respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law shall underpin their domestic and international policies and constitute an essential element of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 10

Gender equality

1. The Parties reaffirm their strong commitment to achieving gender equality, the full enjoyment of all human rights by all, as well as everyone's empowerment as a driver for sustainable development. They shall embody the principle of gender equality in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation.

2. The Parties acknowledge that gender inequality deprives women of their basic human rights and opportunities. They shall adopt and strengthen enforceable legislation, legal frameworks and sound policies, programmes and mechanisms to ensure women's and girls' equal access to, equal opportunities in, equal control over, and full and equal participation in, all spheres of life, on an equal footing with men and boys.

3. The Parties shall focus, in particular, on improving the access of women, and where appropriate girls, to all resources they need throughout life for the realisation of their full potential and the full exercise of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as in respect of quality education, health, employment opportunities, access to and control over economic resources, political decision-making, governance structures and private undertakings, with a special emphasis on women in vulnerable situations. They shall promote women's full and effective participation in, and equal opportunities for, leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life.

4. The Parties undertake to prevent, combat and prosecute all forms of sexual and gender-based violence and discrimination in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual exploitation and abuse. They shall take all necessary measures to tackle deeply rooted gender bias and eliminate all harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation and cutting.

ARTICLE 11

Inclusive and pluralistic societies

1. The Parties undertake to ensure equal opportunities for all members of society in all spheres of life. They shall prevent, prohibit and eradicate discriminatory practices and shall adopt effective measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights.

2. The Parties shall protect and promote freedom of expression, freedom of opinion, freedom of assembly, and media independence and pluralism as pillars of democracy, noting that these are not only human rights but also prerequisites for democracy, development and dialogue.

3. The Parties shall foster inclusive and pluralistic societies, including multi-party democracy. They shall promote the key role of effective, transparent and accountable national and local assemblies and political parties. They shall also promote the active and genuine participation of all stakeholders and citizens, including women and youth, in responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative political processes and decision-making at all levels.

4. The Parties shall preserve and broaden an enabling space for an active, organised, transparent civil society, acknowledging its role in promoting and monitoring democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms, social justice and inclusion, and as defender of rights holders and of the rule of law, thus strengthening domestic transparency and accountability.

5. The Parties, acknowledging that the internet offers a platform to share knowledge and ideas, shall endeavour to make full use of the potential of digital solutions to promote equal public access to information at all levels and participatory decision-making, and to enhance digital competence, while addressing the risks of abuse and promoting open attitudes towards, and respect for, diversity.

ARTICLE 12

Good governance

1. The Parties reaffirm that good governance rests on transparent, responsible, accountable and participatory governments, and appropriate oversight mechanisms. The Parties agree that good governance is critical to the respect of all human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law. They commit to universal access to public services without any discrimination. They further commit to transparency and accountability as integral elements of good governance and institution building.

2. The Parties commit to the transparent and accountable management of human, natural, economic and financial resources for the purposes of equitable benefit sharing and sustainable development.

3. The Parties commit to the creation of an enabling environment for transparency and accountability to thrive in public administration, including enhancing integrity and independence of governance institutions. The Parties shall develop and implement sound public finance management systems compatible with the fundamental principles of effectiveness, transparency and accountability, with a view to protecting public finances and improving the delivery of public services by eliminating administrative bottlenecks and tackling regulatory deficiencies.

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4. The Parties shall ensure transparency and accountability in public funding, including financial assistance, and in the delivery of public services. They shall improve revenue collection and tackle tax evasion and avoidance and illicit financial flows. They agree to cooperate in the fight against money laundering and terrorism financing and engage in timely partnership dialogue at bilateral and international levels on matters related to anti-money laundering and terrorism financing.

5. The Parties shall combat corruption at all levels and in all its forms, developing and implementing or maintaining effective, coordinated anti-corruption policies that reflect the principles of the rule of law, proper management of public affairs and public property, integrity, transparency and accountability. They shall adopt legislative and other measures to prevent and prosecute bribery and embezzlement, misappropriation or other diversion of resources by public officials for their direct or indirect benefit, and to recover and return assets obtained through corruption.

6. The Parties recognise and commit themselves to implementing the principles of good governance in the tax area, including the global standards on transparency and exchange of information, fair taxation and the minimum standards against Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS). They shall promote good governance in tax matters, improve international cooperation in the tax area and facilitate the collection of tax revenues. They shall cooperate to enhance capacity to comply with those principles and standards and reap the benefits of a thriving rules-based financial sector. They agree to engage in timely partnership dialogue at bilateral and international levels on tax matters.

7. The Parties agree that good governance shall underpin their domestic and international policies and constitutes a fundamental element of this Agreement. They also agree that serious cases of corruption, including acts of bribery leading to such corruption, constitute a violation of that element.

ARTICLE 13

Public administration

The Parties, recognising the importance of well-resourced, efficient and effective civil service systems and processes with a strong human resource base, commit to fostering collaboration in this area. They also agree to cooperate with a view to modernising their public administrations and developing an accountable, efficient, transparent and professional civil service. In that regard, efforts shall aim at, *inter alia*, improving organisational efficiency, increasing institutions' effectiveness in service delivery, accelerating the deployment of e-governance and digital services and the digitalisation of public registries, and reinforcing the processes of decentralisation, in accordance with their respective economic and social development strategies.

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ARTICLE 14

Statistics

1. The Parties, acknowledging that statistics are crucial for the achievement of sustainable development, shall develop and strengthen their statistical systems, including gathering, processing, quality control and dissemination of statistics, with a view to contributing to the long-term objective of quality, internationally comparable, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data, as those are key to inform decision-making in support of their respective social and economic development priorities, as well as to support and monitor progress.

2. The Parties commit to increasing statistical literacy and to promoting the use of data for decision-making by engaging with users in and out of government, and through the use of new technologies and data sources. They shall collaborate in the use of technology for data collection and protection and promote the dissemination of comparable statistics at national and regional levels.

3. The Parties shall ensure the professional independence of their statistical offices.

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ARTICLE 15

Personal data

1. The Parties recognise their common interest in protecting every individual's right to privacy with respect to the processing of personal data, as well as the importance of maintaining strong data protection regimes and ensuring their effective enforcement. They shall ensure, *inter alia*, that personal data are processed fairly and in a transparent manner and collected for explicit, specified and legitimate purposes and not processed in a way incompatible with those purposes.

For the purpose of this Article, "processing" means any operation or set of operations which is performed on personal data or on sets of personal data, whether or not by automated means, such as collection, recording, organisation, structuring, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, alignment or combination, restriction, erasure or destruction.

2. The Parties shall ensure a high level of protection of every individual's personal data in accordance with existing multilateral standards and international legal instruments and practices. To that end, they shall establish appropriate legal and regulatory regimes and policies, as well as appropriate administrative capacity to implement them, including independent supervisory authorities.

TITLE II

PEACE AND SECURITY

ARTICLE 16

The Parties acknowledge that peace, stability and security, including human security and resilience, are critical for sustainable development and prosperity. There cannot be sustainable development without peace and security, and without inclusive development there cannot be sustainable peace and security. The Parties shall pursue a comprehensive and integrated approach to conflict and crises including situations of fragility, counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and address all serious crimes of concern to the international community. The Parties shall address new or increasing security threats, including terrorism and its financing, violent extremism, organised crime, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, piracy and trafficking in persons, drugs, arms and other illicit goods, and cybercrime and threats to cybersecurity.

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ARTICLE 17

Conflicts and crises

1. The Parties shall apply an integrated approach to conflict and crises, including prevention, mediation, resolution and reconciliation efforts as well as crisis management, peacekeeping and peace support. They shall support transitional justice through context-specific measures promoting truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence. They shall contribute to institution- and state-building and human security, paying particular attention to situations of fragility.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to prevent and address the root causes of conflict and instability holistically. They shall pay special attention to the effective governance of natural resources, notably in relation to raw materials, so as to sustainably benefit society as a whole and ensure that illegal exploitation and trade do not contribute to causing and sustaining conflict.

3. The Parties recognise the importance of mutually respectful dialogue and consultation as a means of conflict resolution, involving local authorities and communities, as well as civil society organisations. In that context, they shall act in close cooperation with continental and regional organisations.

4. The Parties shall take all suitable action in a coordinated way to prevent an intensification of violence, to limit its territorial spread, and to facilitate the peaceful settlement of disputes. They shall pay particular attention to ensuring that financial resources are used in accordance with the principles and objectives of this Agreement, and to preventing the diversion of funds for belligerent purposes. The Parties shall also take measures to prevent mercenary activities and to address the problem of child soldiers and shall endeavour to set responsible limits on military expenditure.

5. The Parties shall take all suitable action in post-conflict situations to stabilise the situation during the transition in order to facilitate the return to a non-violent, stable and democratic situation. This may include supporting disarmament and demobilisation as well as the return and sustainable reintegration of former combatants into society. The Parties shall ensure the creation of the necessary links between emergency measures, rehabilitation and longer-term development goals.

6. The Parties shall promote the effective participation of all citizens, including women and young people, in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, mediation, resolution and humanitarian response, as well as in crisis management, peacekeeping and peace support. The Parties consider it important to address the situation of women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence in conflicts, and to address the distinct problem of crime and violence against vulnerable people and persons with disabilities.

ARTICLE 18

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

1. The Parties acknowledge that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery, both to state and non-state actors, represents one of the most serious threats to international stability and security. The Parties therefore agree to cooperate in, and contribute to, countering the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery, in full compliance with, and domestic implementation of, their existing obligations under international disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements, as well as other relevant international obligations. The Parties agree that this provision constitutes an essential element of this Agreement.

2. The Parties furthermore agree to cooperate in countering the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery: first through taking steps to sign, ratify or accede to, as appropriate, and fully implement and comply with all relevant international instruments; second through establishing and maintaining an effective system of export controls, controlling the export as well as the transit of WMD-related goods, including a WMD end-use control on dual-use technologies and containing effective sanctions for breaches of export controls; and third through cooperating in multilateral fora and export control regimes.

3. The Parties agree to establish regular partnership dialogue that will complement and consolidate their cooperation in countering the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery.

4. The Parties, considering that chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risks may have a highly disruptive effect on societies and recognising that they may stem from criminal activities, including illicit proliferation, trafficking, terrorism, accidents or natural hazards, such as pandemics, shall cooperate in order to reinforce institutional capacity to mitigate those risks.

ARTICLE 19

Serious crimes of concern to the international community

1. The Parties agree to act together to prevent genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes by making use of appropriate bilateral and multilateral frameworks, in line with the principle of responsibility to protect.

2. The Parties, reaffirming that the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole must not go unpunished, shall ensure the fair and effective investigation and prosecution thereof by taking measures at national, regional and international levels, as appropriate.

3. The Parties consider that the establishment and effective functioning of the International Criminal Court (ICC) constitutes an important development for international peace and justice. They reiterate their commitment to fully cooperate with national, regional and international criminal justice mechanisms, including the ICC, consistent with the principle of complementarity. They are encouraged to ratify and implement the Rome Statute of the ICC and related instruments, and to further enhance the effectiveness of the ICC. Efforts shall be made to strengthen criminal justice mechanisms at all levels.

ARTICLE 20

Terrorism and violent extremism

1. The Parties, reiterating their firm condemnation of all acts of terrorism and violent extremism and radicalisation, undertake to combat those acts through international cooperation, in accordance with the UN Charter and international law, relevant conventions and instruments. The Parties, recognising that the fight against terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations is a shared priority, shall work together at all levels to prevent and combat terrorism, violent extremism and radicalisation. The Parties, recognising the importance of tackling all factors contributing to violent extremism in all its forms, including religious intolerance, hate speech, xenophobia, racism as well as other forms of intolerance, commit to opposing violent extremism and foster religious tolerance and inter-religious dialogue.

2. The Parties agree that it is essential that the fight against terrorism be conducted with full respect for the rule of law and in full conformity with international law, including international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, the principles of the UN Charter, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and statements and relevant international counter-terrorism-related instruments.

3. The Parties shall cooperate in protecting critical infrastructure, addressing terrorism-related challenges affecting borders, as well as strengthening civil aviation security.

ARTICLE 21

Organised crime

1. The Parties, acknowledging the negative political, economic, cultural and social implications of organised criminal activities, shall strengthen cooperation to prevent and combat those activities more effectively. They shall work together under an integrated approach to address root causes and provide alternatives to crime. In that regard, they shall address the links between organised crime and human trafficking and migrant smuggling, the illicit trafficking of weapons, hazardous materials, narcotics and their precursors, wildlife, timber and cultural goods, and other illegal economic and financial activities.

2. The Parties commit to increasing efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons and to supporting in the drafting and implementation of appropriate legislative and institutional frameworks and strategies, with particular attention to persons in vulnerable situations, including women, children and unaccompanied minors, and to their specific needs. The Parties continue to uphold the standards of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, done at New York on 15 November 2000, and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.

3. The Parties shall enhance efforts to recover and return stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime. In that regard, they shall strengthen legal and administrative frameworks to fight money laundering and illicit financial flows, including fiscal fraud and public procurement fraud, and active and passive corruption in both the private and public sector, which can have a debilitating effect on domestic resource mobilisation.

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4. The Parties shall promote citizen security, with a particular focus on strengthening institutions and the rule of law, protecting human rights, and fostering justice and security sector reforms. They shall promote multi-disciplinary programmes aimed at addressing vulnerable groups and supporting victims of violence, including gun violence, as well as mediation and other community-based prevention and reconciliation solutions.

ARTICLE 22

Maritime security

1. The Parties agree to the strengthening of maritime security, in particular addressing different forms of crime committed at sea and illegal trafficking, countering piracy and armed robbery at sea, protecting critical maritime infrastructures, and promoting freedom of navigation and the rule of law at sea, in line with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, done at Montego Bay on 10 December 1982 (UNCLOS).

2. The Parties agree to strengthen efforts in the area of maritime law enforcement to tackle maritime threats in countries most affected by crimes committed at sea. They agree to reinforce investigation and prosecution processes as a way of countering crimes committed at sea. They also agree to promote the implementation of piracy prosecution models within the national jurisdiction as a regional criminal justice response and deterrent mechanism against crimes committed at sea such as piracy, armed robbery, marine and water pollution, smuggling of migrants, drugs and arms trafficking and shipping of nuclear waste. The Parties agree to promote regional initiatives in the areas of maritime security, the fight against piracy and protection against marine pollution.

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ARTICLE 23

Small arms and light weapons and other conventional weapons

1. The Parties acknowledge that the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons poses a grave threat to international peace and security.

2. The Parties agree to reinforce the fight against the illicit trade, excessive accumulation, and uncontrolled spread of small arms, light weapons and other conventional weapons and their ammunitions, including as a consequence of inadequately secured and improperly managed stocks and stockpiles, in line with the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The Parties agree to promote intelligence-led tracking of trafficking networks to counter more effectively the risk that the large-scale outflows of state stocks continue to pose to regional stability. They shall work towards enhancing national capacities of competent law enforcement units and focal points to collect, seize, trace and analyse illicit firearms and related criminal justice data, to enhance understanding of and monitor illicit trafficking flows, and to support information exchange and international cooperation.

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3. The Parties recognise the importance of putting in place controls on the international trade in conventional arms, including their import and export, in line with existing international standards, including the Arms Trade Treaty, done at New York on 2 April 2013, and relevant UN resolutions. They shall endeavour to apply those controls in a responsible manner, as a contribution to international and regional peace, security and stability and to the reduction of human suffering, as well as to the prevention of the diversion of conventional arms to unauthorised actors. The Parties also recognise the importance of domestic regulation of, and controls over, the legal acquisition and possession of firearms, with a view to reducing armed violence.

4. The Parties shall cooperate with a view to clearing mines and explosive remnants of war, including improvised explosive devices.

ARTICLE 24

Illicit drugs

1. The Parties shall endeavour to ensure a comprehensive, balanced, integrated and evidence-based approach towards preventing and addressing the illicit trade in drugs and new psychoactive substances, as well as promoting drug demand reduction. To that end, they shall address risk factors affecting individuals, communities and society, which may include a lack of services, infrastructure needs, drug-related violence, exclusion, marginalisation and social disintegration, in order to contribute to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies.

2. The Parties agree that drug policies and actions, including through the involvement of civil society, the scientific community and academia, shall be aimed at reinforcing structures for preventing and effectively addressing illicit drugs, reducing measurably the supply of, trafficking in, and demand for illicit drugs.

3. The Parties shall aim to reduce the adverse consequences of drug use for individuals and society as a whole, as well as to effectively reduce the diversion of and illicit trafficking in scheduled and non-scheduled precursors, including designer precursors.

4. The Parties shall cooperate closely with each other and with relevant international organisations with a view to maintaining coordinated efforts and actions against the illicit drug trade.

ARTICLE 25

Cybersecurity and cybercrime

1. The Parties recognise the importance of an open, secure and stable, accessible and peaceful information and communication technologies (ICT) environment based on the norms, rules and principles for responsible state behaviour and the application of existing international law. To that end, the Parties commit to strengthening cooperation to promote cyber security, to prevent and combat high-technology cyber and electronic crime and social media abuse, and to improve network security through the exchange of best practices that increase cyber resilience, including as regards the protection of critical infrastructure.

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2. The Parties acknowledge the need to prevent and tackle cybercrime, including online child sexual exploitation and abuse, by cooperating and exchanging best practices to fight cybercrime offences, building on existing international norms and standards, including those of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, done at Budapest on 23 November 2001, and the African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection, done at Malabo on 27 June 2014.

ARTICLE 26

Law enforcement cooperation

1. The Parties shall facilitate cooperation among regional and international law enforcement authorities, agencies and services with a view to disrupting and dismantling transnational crime and terrorist threats common to them. Such cooperation shall contribute to crime prevention and shall comprise, *inter alia*, exchanges of views on legislative frameworks, as well as administrative and technical assistance aimed at strengthening the institutional and operational capabilities of law enforcement authorities and the exchange of information and measures related to investigations.

2. The Parties, recognising the importance of secure borders, shall strive to manage existing and future challenges affecting borders, pursuing an integrated border management approach. They shall promote legitimate cross-sectoral responses aiming at preventing, detecting and, where appropriate, repressing cross-border crime and other risks.

TITLE III

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 27

The Parties reaffirm their determination to work together towards sustainable development and poverty eradication in all its forms, to tackle inequalities and to promote social cohesion. They also agree to cooperate to ensure that everyone has the necessary means to enjoy a life of dignity with an adequate standard of living, including through appropriate social protection systems and social services. They shall pay special attention to women and girls, youth, children and the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people, in line with the principles of leaving no one behind, and of reaching the furthest behind first. They also agree to work together to address the challenges and opportunities presented by rapid population growth.

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CHAPTER 1

ACCESS TO SOCIAL SERVICES

ARTICLE 28

Education

1. The Parties shall support inclusive lifelong learning and equitable quality education at all levels. They shall work to ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education and have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education, with due regard to gender gaps. They shall work to ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university. Special attention shall be given to investing in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and to promoting digital and arts education for all.

2. The Parties shall intensify efforts to ensure that everyone has the knowledge, skills and capabilities to enjoy improved quality of life, to be fully engaged in society, to contribute to the social and economic well-being of their communities, and to participate actively and equitably in democratic and cultural life.

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3. The Parties shall promote safe schools and well-functioning education systems, with adequate resources for planning, managing and ensuring the effectiveness of education and training provision, including through online and other non-conventional means. They shall cooperate to establish and strengthen quality assurance systems and the mutual recognition of qualifications. They shall facilitate the mobility of students, staff and academics between and among the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and the European Union.

ARTICLE 29

Health

1. The Parties recognise that health is central to people's lives and a key indicator of sustainable development. They reaffirm their commitment to protecting and promoting the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health for all.

2. The Parties shall strengthen national health systems with sustainable health financing mechanisms and resources, operational infrastructures, skilled health workforces, including as regards recruitment and retention, and appropriate technologies, such as digital tools, in support of mobile health development.

3. The Parties shall promote universal health coverage, equitable and universal access to comprehensive and quality healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to prevent and address communicable diseases and other major transboundary health threats such as anti-microbial resistance, and to reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases through better prevention and control. They shall cooperate to address global health crises and prevent them from escalating, *inter alia* by supporting early warning systems for a swift exchange of information, preparedness and early action in life-saving humanitarian assistance, and the development of coherent and multi-sectoral plans to enhance the capacity of health systems. They shall support research and development, and the deployment of vaccines, diagnostics and medicines.

5. The Parties shall support universal access to sexual and reproductive health commodities and healthcare services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.

ARTICLE 30

Food security and improved nutrition

1. The Parties recognise that achieving food security and improved nutrition constitutes a major global challenge in the fight against poverty and growing inequality and therefore agree to address the structural causes thereof, which include conflicts, crises, natural resource degradation and climate change.

2. The Parties shall promote resilient livelihoods, secure access to land, water and other resources, and promote inclusive and sustainable growth in agricultural production and productivity, and efficient value chains.

3. The Parties shall promote actions on adaptation to climate change and variability throughout the food production value chains.

4. The Parties shall aim to provide access for all to affordable, safe, sufficient and nutritious food, to increase the capacity for diversified food production, and to develop food security and nutrition policies and social protection mechanisms for food security and improved nutrition that enhance the resilience of the most vulnerable, particularly in countries facing recurrent crises.

5. The Parties shall strengthen coordinated, accelerated and cross-sectoral efforts to end hunger, address all forms of malnutrition and ensure that famine be avoided in all circumstances.

ARTICLE 31

Water, sanitation services and housing

1. The Parties shall promote universal access to adequate and safe drinking water, including through sustainable and integrated water resources and systems management, as well as through more efficient use of water and water recycling.

2. The Parties shall aim to ensure adequate and equitable access to sanitation services, including waste management and hygiene promotion for all, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.

3. The Parties acknowledge that adequate, safe and affordable housing has a transformative impact on vulnerable and marginalised communities, and has significant impacts on people's health and their communities' socio-economic development. The Parties shall work towards ensuring access to adequate, safe and affordable housing for all through the development of policies, strategies, planning and building codes and towards upgrading slums.

4. The Parties shall promote access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, and well-established energy systems that support, *inter alia*, the water, sanitation services and housing sectors.

CHAPTER 2

INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL COHESION

ARTICLE 32

Social cohesion and protection

1. The Parties shall aim to enhance social cohesion by progressively achieving greater equality and social inclusiveness and by ensuring that human and social development advances in parallel with economic development, leaving no one behind. Special attention shall be paid to those who are in disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalised situations, including the elderly and orphans, in line with the principles of solidarity and non-discrimination. In particular, they shall promote:

(a) economic policies oriented to a more inclusive society, allowing for better distribution of income and value created;

(b) equitable and sound fiscal and wage policies, allowing for better redistribution of wealth, ensuring adequate levels of social expenditure and reducing the informal economy;

(c) effective social policies and equitable access to social services, social assistance and security, and justice; and

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(d) employment policies designed to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and to achieve equal pay for equal work.

2. The Parties shall promote the development and implementation of policies and systems of social protection and security in order to eradicate poverty and enhance social cohesion. They acknowledge the transformative role in societies of social protection policies and systems, fostering equity, promoting social inclusion and dialogue with social partners, and strengthening inclusive and equitable economic growth. They commit to building progressively universal, nationally owned social protection systems, including the adoption of minimum social protection floors.

3. The Parties shall promote the rights of persons with disabilities to ensure their full inclusion in society and their equal participation in the labour market, taking into account their specific needs. They shall take concrete steps to sign, ratify and fully implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, done at New York on 13 December 2006.

ARTICLE 33

Decent work

1. The Parties reaffirm their commitment to achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities. To that end, they shall promote the Decent Work Agenda as set out in the 2008 International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

2. The Parties reaffirm their obligations as members of the ILO and their commitments under the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up. They reaffirm their commitment to social dialogue and to the promotion and effective implementation of the internationally recognised core labour standards, as defined by the relevant ILO conventions and protocols on the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, the abolition of forced labour and ending of modern slavery and human trafficking, the elimination of child labour with priority given to the worst forms, minimum age at work, equal remuneration and non-discrimination in respect of employment. They shall make sustained and continuous efforts to ratify or accede to, as appropriate, those conventions and protocols if they have not yet done so.

3. The Parties shall promote safe and secure working environments for all workers. They shall adopt and implement measures and policies regarding occupational safety and health, both in the formal and informal economy, and shall work towards establishing and maintaining an effective labour inspection system, in line with international labour standards as defined by the ILO.

CHAPTER 3

POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 34

Demography

1. The Parties acknowledge that demographic growth and demographic shifts can have a significant impact on development gains and economic progress, and shall work together towards an integrated approach that minimises the challenges and maximises the benefits of the demographic dividend. To that end, they shall aim to establish, support, maintain and sustain structural reforms and transformations in economic and social systems to create decent education, employment and livelihood opportunities for an emerging young population.

2. The Parties shall support inclusive policy dialogue processes and incorporate demographic trends and projections into all policies in order to empower and promote the full and active participation of children and young people in society, and to empower and safeguard the needs of the elderly and enable their active engagement.

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3. The Parties shall enhance urbanisation that is inclusive and sustainable, through effective urban governance and planning, with a view to minimising any adverse impact on the environment and addressing any other negative social and economic consequences caused by rapid population growth in urban areas. They shall work to effectively address the challenges and opportunities presented by rapid urbanisation, including through national urban policies, participatory integrated urban planning, delivery of municipal services including waste management, and financing of urban development and infrastructures, in order to create resilient and liveable cities and towns.

ARTICLE 35

Youth

1. The Parties agree to promote the active participation of young people in society, including in the development, implementation, and follow-up of policies affecting them. This shall include:

(a) support in acquiring knowledge, skills and capabilities to engage fully in society, including skills relevant to the labour market, through education, vocational and technical training, and access to digital technologies;

(b) the creation of decent employment opportunities, including through support for youth entrepreneurship; and

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(c) the promotion of youth empowerment and responsible citizenship, by opening spaces for active youth participation in political and cultural life, and in building and sustaining peace, including with a view to countering radicalisation and violent extremism.

2. The Parties agree that the provision of a safe and nurturing environment for children is a vital element in fostering a healthy young population, able to reach its full potential, including physical, psychological, social and economic dimensions. They shall work to ensure that girls' and boys' rights and needs are recognised and realised from birth and early childhood to adolescence and their transition into adulthood. They shall work to improve the protection of children and their participation in decisions that concern them.

ARTICLE 36

Gender equality and women and girls' empowerment

1. The Parties acknowledge that gender equality and women's economic empowerment are essential to achieving equitable sustainable development and inclusive growth. They shall undertake reforms, including through the creation and consolidation of legal frameworks, to give women equal rights to economic and financial resources, as well as access to, ownership of and control over land and natural resources, inheritance, and other forms of property. They shall undertake actions to increase the full and effective participation of women in political life.

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The Parties shall, in addition to equal access to employment and decent work conditions, promote the recognition of unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibilities within the household and the family at large.

2. The Parties commit to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the outcomes of their review conferences and commit to sexual and reproductive health and rights, in that context.

3. The Parties acknowledge that menstrual health management is important for women's and girls' health, as well as for their dignity, mobility and well-being, and they therefore agree to promote adequate and appropriate supporting measures.

CHAPTER 4

CULTURE

ARTICLE 37

Culture and sustainable development

1. The Parties reaffirm that culture is a key element of sustainable development and an integral component of its social, economic and environmental dimensions. They commit to the integration of a cultural perspective in their development policies and strategies, by taking into consideration cultural specificities, and local and indigenous knowledge systems.

2. The Parties shall strengthen the contribution of cultural actors to sustainable development through their participation in enhanced dialogue, professional networks and multi-stakeholder partnerships.

ARTICLE 38

Cultural diversity and mutual understanding

1. The Parties recognise that all human beings have the right to participate freely in the cultural life of the community, in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and commit to protecting and conserving cultural rights and freedom of artistic expression.

2. The Parties agree to promote a vision of human and social development that incorporates dialogue among cultures and the recognition of cultural diversity as common heritage of humanity. They commit to strengthening mutual understanding and knowledge of their respective cultures, with due respect for diversity, universal values and human rights, by fostering the cultural dimension in education, as well as cultural exchanges and joint initiatives geared towards encouraging intercultural dialogue.

3. The Parties recognise the role that culture plays in the preservation of peace and national cohesion. They affirm that respect for the diversity of cultures, tolerance, dialogue and cooperation, in a climate of mutual trust and understanding, are key to establishing and maintaining peace and security and in reconciliation processes, as well as restoring the collective memory and the social linkages among communities. They shall strengthen the role of culture in building resilience, as well as achieving sustainable post-crisis recovery and reconstruction, particularly in urban development.

ARTICLE 39

Cultural heritage and creative sectors

1. The Parties shall promote the recognition of heritage as a unifying factor, which may reflect diverse identities and legacies, while nurturing the creation of shared values. They shall work to safeguard, preserve, conserve and develop both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, in accordance with international standards and conventions as a vehicle for social cohesion, creativity and innovation.

2. The Parties agree that the cultural and creative sectors, including contemporary arts, are central to inclusive economic growth, diversification and the creation of job opportunities. To that end, they shall support cultural entrepreneurship and the long-term development of the cultural and creative sectors.

3. The Parties shall take measures, in accordance with existing international law, to prevent and combat the illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property. They shall promote conservation, capacity building and collaboration among cultural heritage professionals, source communities and cultural institutions, and shall pursue international cooperation and continuous dialogue to promote access to cultural heritage.

TITLE IV

INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 40

1. The Parties recognise the importance of strengthening their economic relations in their mutual interest and for mutual benefit, with a view to achieving structural economic transformation through inclusive, sustainable economic growth and development in line with the SDGs, taking into account their respective levels of development. They shall pursue integrated strategies that incorporate the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. They shall take appropriate measures to generate decent jobs for all and support the transition to low-emission, resource-efficient economies. They shall support the socio-economic empowerment of marginalised groups, women and youth.

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2. The Parties shall support private sector development, and shall attract and retain domestic and foreign investment, including investments from their diaspora. They shall bolster trade and cooperate on science, technology, innovation and research with a view to establishing strong, competitive and diversified economies, deepening regional integration, and fostering the integration of OACPS Members' economies into regional and global value chains. They shall work towards improved macroeconomic and financial stability to generate increased investment and strengthen sustainable economic growth. They agree to enhance productive and regulatory capacities, strengthen entrepreneurship and promote manufacturing and industrialisation, focusing on innovation and value addition in the productive and services sectors. The Parties shall cooperate to strengthen capacities to facilitate structural economic transformation and to enhance sustainable trade.

3. The Parties shall promote public-private dialogue focusing on issues that positively impact their efforts on economic transformation and sustainable economic growth, and shall engage with all relevant stakeholders and ensure respect for, and protection of, human rights and core labour standards.

CHAPTER 1

INVESTMENT

ARTICLE 41

Mobilisation of sustainable and responsible investment

1. The Parties undertake to mobilise sustainable and responsible investment with a view to enhancing inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development. To that end, they shall establish a conducive investment climate, which attracts domestic and foreign investment, including investment from their diaspora, and maintains the right to regulate through transparent, predictable and efficient regulatory, administrative and policy frameworks.

2. The Parties agree to support the necessary economic and institutional reforms and policies that are grounded in a country's overall development strategy and that are coherent and synergistic at national, regional and international levels with a view to creating a conducive environment for sustainable investment and facilitating the development of a dynamic, viable and competitive private sector.

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3. The Parties shall cooperate to establish sound financial systems to mobilise investment for sustainable projects. They shall take measures to support investment by increasing access to financing through technical assistance, grants, guarantees and innovative financial instruments to mitigate risk, boost investor confidence and leverage private and public sources of finance. In doing so, they shall also take account of the need to address market failures or sub-optimal investment situations while ensuring additionality of investment that would not have taken place without those support measures. They shall pay special attention to the priority sectors set out in Article 44(6).

4. The Parties agree to improve the regulatory environment as well as the quality, availability and accessibility of financial and non-financial services, to support the development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the context of domestic investment mobilisation.

5. The Parties understand and recognise the importance of responsible investment by the relevant actors as a means to achieving long-term sustainable economic, social and environmental value. In support of that objective, they shall promote corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices and responsible business conduct (RBC), including internationally recognised implementation guidelines, standards and applicable instruments that provide guidance to investors, governments and other actors on implementation of CSR and RBC as a complement to national laws and other applicable legislation.

ARTICLE 42

Investment facilitation and protection

1. The Parties agree to facilitate investment through legislation, regulations and policies aimed at reducing regulatory and administrative barriers, enhancing transparency and avoiding harmful competition for investment. They agree that such measures shall be developed in a transparent manner, and made publicly available to encourage public-private dialogue and provide the opportunity for all stakeholders to participate.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to promote the effective utilisation of digital tools to facilitate investment.

3. The Parties, in line with their respective strategies, agree on the importance of providing legal certainty and adequate protection to established investments, the treatment of which shall be non-discriminatory in nature and shall include effective dispute prevention and resolution mechanisms. In that regard, they reaffirm the importance of concluding international investment agreements that fully preserve their sovereign right to regulate investment for legitimate public policy purposes.

4. The Parties shall strengthen the capacity of relevant public and private institutions to effectively promote and facilitate investment, and to prevent and handle investment-related disputes.

CHAPTER 2

ECONOMIC GROWTH, DIVERSIFICATION AND INDUSTRIALISATION

ARTICLE 43

Inclusive and sustainable growth

1. The Parties agree on the importance of economic transformation, private sector development and industrial advancement for inclusive and sustainable growth. They shall promote full and productive employment and decent work for all through enhanced competitiveness, diversification, digitalisation, innovation, access to finance, value addition in the manufacturing and services sectors, and linkages among sectors and industries. They shall pay particular attention to local MSMEs and to the formalisation of informal economic activities.

2. The Parties shall promote the transition to a low-emission and resource-efficient economy. They shall support sustainable consumption and production approaches, environmentally sound waste- and chemicals-management and measures reducing all forms of pollution. The Parties agree that well-managed urbanisation is a critical element in advancing sustainable economic development. They shall therefore cooperate on effectively addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by rapid urbanisation, and shall support urban development and infrastructures and effective rural-urban linkages.

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3. The Parties agree to cooperate in the area of employment and social affairs, in particular to support the economic and social inclusion and empowerment of women, youth and the poorest and most vulnerable. They further agree to ensure respect for labour and social standards enshrined in the conventions and protocols of the ILO and to ensure access to justice under due process, including appropriate and effective remedies.

ARTICLE 44

Economic transformation and industrialisation

1. The Parties shall strengthen cooperation in the area of economic transformation, including industrialisation. They shall promote the transition from commodity dependence to diversified economies and promote beneficiation of natural resources, value addition and integration into regional and global value chains. They agree on the important role that the services sector plays in economic transformation and industrialisation.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to support the development of productive capacities, improved productivity, diversification and competitiveness. They shall endeavour to overcome supply-side constraints through, *inter-alia*, promoting technological innovation and enhancement and its dissemination, improved business and investment climates, strengthened regulatory capacities, macroeconomic stability as well as the development of efficient capital markets and sound financial systems for improved access to finance, particularly for the private sector. To that end, they affirm the importance of the digitalisation of the economy in accelerating productive capacity development. The focus shall be on sectors and industries with high value addition and high potential for decent job creation.

3. The Parties commit to improving macroeconomic and financial stability by pursuing sound and transparent fiscal and monetary policies and to promoting economic and structural reforms so as to create a conducive environment for increased investments and to foster private sector development. The Parties further recognise the importance of the independence of central banks in the setting of their policy objectives and in the conduct of monetary policies. They further agree to maintain dialogue and exchange information between their authorities, as appropriate, to improve the understanding of the fundamentals of the Parties' respective economies.

4. The Parties shall intensify efforts in technical and vocational education and training as well as in research and innovation, and link such measures more effectively to the opportunities and skills needs of the labour market. They shall cooperate to leverage each other's experiences, including in the development of productive capacities through skills development and promotion of technology transfer, fostering linkages between firms of OACPS Members and of the EU Party, with an emphasis on MSMEs.

5. The Parties reaffirm the significant role of infrastructure in addressing supply-side constraints and in the development of competitive regional and sub-regional value chains through the facilitation of the efficient movement of goods, services and capital. They shall cooperate to develop efficient and sustainable infrastructure, including air, land and sea transport, energy, water, and digital connectivity with due regard to the diverse needs of the least developed, landlocked and island economies. Accordingly, they shall cooperate to mobilise public and private resources including through investment for infrastructure development.

6. The Parties, with a commitment to pursue shared economic growth, agree to cooperate, *inter alia*, on the following areas, which shall be regarded as priority sectors: agriculture and agribusiness, livestock and leather, the blue economy, fisheries, mining and extractive industries, cultural and creative industries, sustainable tourism, sustainable energy, ICT and transport. The Parties underscore the significant role of those sectors in value addition, decent job creation, enhancing productive capacities and to the overall efforts on economic transformation. They shall accordingly cooperate to identify the drivers of growth for each sector, to mobilise investment and to address the constraints that undermine the establishment of backward and forward linkages.

7. The Parties shall promote dialogue, stimulate transfer of skills and technology, work to improve value chains, and strengthen cooperation for cross-fertilisation of experiences and dissemination of best practices in the agriculture sector. They shall also cooperate to support mechanisms and frameworks to increase sustainable and quality agricultural production.

ARTICLE 45

Private sector development

1. The Parties, recognising the importance of private sector development for economic transformation and job creation, shall aim to promote entrepreneurship and to develop and improve the competitiveness of enterprises. Particular focus shall be given to MSMEs, including start-ups, particularly through the promotion of enabling legal, administrative and institutional frameworks, with a view to their successful integration into sustainable supply and value chains. Attention shall also be paid to the informal sector and to upgrading informal economic activities into formal ones, and to encouraging the integration of sustainability-related objectives in business models. The Parties further agree to support the development of entrepreneurship among women and youth in the context of their economic empowerment and the promotion of inclusive development. They affirm the importance of building regional and national capacities in order to improve competitiveness in medium and high-tech manufacturing.

2. The Parties shall promote public-private sector dialogue and cooperation, including through private-sector business forums. They shall strengthen cooperation for cross-fertilisation of experiences and dissemination of best practices that foster entrepreneurship, promote business-to-business dialogue and contacts, and stimulate transfers of skills and technology.

3. The Parties agree on the need to set up strategies and to develop better financial inclusion policies and appropriate legislation, and to improve access to finance and to financial and non-financial services, including through innovative financing mechanisms, with particular attention to the provision of affordable credit for family farmers, smallholders, MSMEs, women and youth entrepreneurs.

4. The Parties acknowledge that both public and private sources of finance play a key role in supporting private sector development, particularly through tools and mechanisms such as public-private partnerships (PPP) and blended finance, and in stimulating investment across relevant sectors, including infrastructure development. Accordingly, they shall cooperate to develop transparent and predictable frameworks and strategies for the use of PPPs, including strengthening institutional capabilities to negotiate, implement and monitor projects under a PPP arrangement.

CHAPTER 3

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND RESEARCH

ARTICLE 46

Science, technology and innovation

1. The Parties recognise the role of science, technology and innovation (STI) in expanding the frontiers of knowledge, in accelerating transition and leapfrogging towards sustainable development through economic transformation, value-chain addition and inter-firm linkages, in fostering knowledge development and human empowerment, particularly of women and youth, and in supporting decision- and policy-makers in the pursuit of sustainable development.

2. The Parties shall work towards developing knowledge societies. They agree to invest in human capital, promote the adoption of coherent and comprehensive policy and regulatory frameworks, and develop infrastructure connectivity and digital tools.

3. The Parties shall enhance cooperation on the basis of mutual benefit, building on existing mechanisms while exploring new paths in funding STI, subject to appropriate and effective protection of intellectual property rights. They shall promote indigenous, traditional and local knowledge as a tool for bridging knowledge and technology gaps in relevant sectors.

4. The Parties shall encourage investment in the creation, diffusion and transfer of new technologies, with particular attention to clean and innovative technologies that protect the environment. They shall promote renewable energy and cooperate in the development of productive and regulatory capacity.

5. The Parties shall address the potential impact of technologies on society, tackle issues related to cybersecurity and assure protection of personal data, and consider the effects of disruptive technology, including artificial intelligence and robotics.

6. The Parties recognise the role of space as an enabler for social and economic benefits, including in the areas of environment, climate change, ocean governance, transport, energy, agriculture, mining, and forestry. They shall cooperate on matters of common interest in civil space activities such as space research, Global Navigation Satellite Systems applications and services, development of satellite augmentation systems, use of Earth Observation applications and services and Earth Science.

ARTICLE 47

Research and development

1. The Parties agree that research and development is critical in the creation of economic prosperity and opportunities for decent work, and can make a pivotal contribution to achieving the objectives of this Agreement.

2. The Parties shall encourage the generation and dissemination of new knowledge, taking account of its potential impacts, including harmful effects, on the environment and society. They shall support skills enhancement to keep pace with technological advances and innovation, and shall support mobility and training of researchers. They shall promote partnerships between industry, academia and the public sector as well as activities of the private sector aimed at gathering knowledge and testing ideas in order to generate new products with real commercial potential, paying special attention to women and youth as innovators.

3. The Parties shall promote investments in research and development especially in high added-value segments of value chains, and shall endeavour to address societal challenges especially in the areas of environment, climate change, energy, food safety and security, and health.

ARTICLE 48

ICT and the digital economy

1. The Parties shall cooperate to reduce the digital divide by promoting cooperation with regard to the development of the digital society to benefit citizens and businesses through accessibility to digital technologies, including ICT adapted to local circumstances. The Parties shall support measures that enable easy access to ICT through, among others, the use of affordable and renewable energy sources and the development and redeployment of low-cost wireless networks. They shall also work towards greater complementarity and harmonisation of communication systems and their adaptation to new technologies.

2. The Parties agree on the central role of the digital economy as an amplifier and accelerator for change that can drive significant economic diversification, create jobs and enable leapfrog growth. They agree to advance digitalisation with a view to reducing transaction costs and lessening information asymmetries, with the overarching aims of improving productivity and sustainability.

3. The Parties shall promote and support digital entrepreneurship, particularly by women and youth, and the digital transformation of MSMEs. They shall encourage the development of e-commerce to revamp supply chains and expand markets, and encourage the expansion of e-banking, including to reduce costs of remittances, and the deployment of e-governance solutions.

4. The Parties shall cooperate on developing and managing privacy and data protection policies, promoting measures to facilitate data flows, and supporting the regulatory framework to promote the production, sale and delivery of digital products and services.

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CHAPTER 4

TRADE COOPERATION

ARTICLE 49

Trade and sustainable development

1. The Parties recognise that social and economic development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. They reaffirm their commitment, with due regard to their respective levels of development, to enhancing the integration of sustainable development, which consists of economic development, social development and environmental protection, in every aspect of their trade relations in order to promote sustainable growth. To that end, the Parties shall encourage in their trade relationships a high level of environmental, social and labour protection in particular those commitments specified in Article 54, Chapters 1 to 3 of Title V and Chapter 2 of Title III of this Part, to achieve the objectives of the agreed SDGs under the 2030 Agenda. The Parties further agree that environmental and social measures should not be used for protectionist purposes.

2. The Parties agree that it is inappropriate to encourage trade and investment by lowering or offering to lower the level of domestic protection afforded in environmental or labour laws, or their enforcement.

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3. The Parties recognise their respective rights to determine sustainable development policy objectives and priorities and establish their own levels of domestic protection in the social, labour and environmental areas, including climate change, as they deem appropriate, provided that the adopted laws and policies are not inconsistent with their commitments to internationally recognised protection standards and relevant agreements.

4. The Parties shall promote trade in products obtained through the sustainable management, conservation and efficient use of natural resources. The Parties shall also cooperate to promote trade and investment in goods and services of particular relevance for climate change mitigation, including in low-carbon manufactured and remanufactured products, renewable energy, and energy-efficient products and services, in accordance with their international commitments.

5. The Parties shall cooperate to promote coherence and mutual supportiveness between trade, labour and environmental policies, and shall strengthen dialogue, and exchange of information and best practices on trade-related aspects of sustainable development, including with the involvement of relevant stakeholders. In that context, they further agree to cooperate to promote corporate social responsibility practices and responsible business conduct, including internationally recognised guidelines, standards and applicable instruments, by incorporating those practices into trade and business activities. In addition, cooperation shall aim to address the challenges and opportunities posed by the trade-related aspects of private and public voluntary sustainable assurance schemes linked, *inter alia*, to labour, the environment, conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use and management of forest resources and sustainable fishing practices and trade in sustainably managed fishery products.

6. The Parties agree to maintain or establish, where appropriate, systems to support and monitor the effective implementation of the internationally recognised social, labour and environmental standards and relevant agreements, in the context of their trade relations, including by strengthening institutional capacities to adopt and enforce relevant legislation.

ARTICLE 50

Trade arrangements

1. The Parties recognise the importance of building on the achievements of the Cotonou Agreement in the context of their trade relations. They underline the significance of trade in their overall relations and undertake to promote the intensification and diversification of trade flows to their mutual benefit, in particular with a view to the integration of OACPS Members' economies into the regional and global value chains.

2. The Parties agree that trade cooperation shall be conducted in accordance with the rules-based multilateral trading system with a view to enhancing free, fair, and open trade for achieving sustainable growth and development, especially in OACPS Members. To that end, cooperation shall be in compliance with the obligations assumed by the Parties within the World Trade Organization (WTO) framework, including provisions for special and differential treatment.

3. The Parties acknowledge the importance of concluding trade arrangements, to achieve greater trade opportunities and foster their effective integration into the global economy. The Parties recognise their respective right to enter into regional or multilateral arrangements for reduction or elimination of non-tariff measures affecting trade in goods and services. The Parties further endeavour to limit possible negative impacts of their respective trade arrangements with third parties on the competitive positions that each Party enjoys in the others' home markets.

4. The Parties, bearing in mind the need for building on their existing preferential trade arrangements and Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) as instruments of their trade cooperation, recognise that cooperation shall primarily be strengthened to support concrete implementation of those existing instruments.

5. The Parties further agree that the EPA framework shall be inclusive and take into account the heterogeneity of situations in OACPS Members and regions at various stages of the EPA process and the level of development of the OACPS Members. The signatories to the EPAs reaffirm their commitments to take all necessary measures to ensure their full implementation, which should be conducive to their economic growth and development while contributing to the deepening of the regional integration processes within Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP). The Parties recognise the importance of broadening the scope of EPAs and encouraging the accession of new Member States. The Parties agree to maintain or establish, at the appropriate levels, ACP-EU arrangements to monitor implementation of EPAs and assess their impact on the development of OACPS Members' economies across ACP regions and on their regional integration processes.

6. The Parties to the respective EPAs agree that the references contained therein to the provisions on appropriate measures in the Cotonou Agreement are understood as references to the corresponding provisions in this Agreement.

7. The Parties further agree that their cooperation shall contribute to intensifying regional integration efforts and processes within Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific and to further encouraging intra-ACP regional trade.

8. The Parties underline the importance of their active participation in the WTO as well as in other relevant international organisations by becoming members of those organisations and closely following their agenda and activities. They agree to cooperate closely in identifying and furthering their common interests in international economic and trade cooperation, in particular in the WTO. In this context, particular attention shall be paid to improving access to the European Union and other markets for goods and services originating in the OACPS Members.

9. The Parties agree on the importance of flexibility in WTO rules to take account of the different levels of development of the ACP countries and regions as well as the difficulties faced in meeting their obligations. They therefore further agree to cooperate to develop the necessary and appropriate capacity to effectively implement their WTO commitments. The Parties also recognise the innovative approach to special and differential treatment inherent in the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) that enables LDCs and developing countries to fully implement their commitments contingent on the delivery of the requisite trade support in conformity with their implementation notifications under the TFA.

10. The Parties recognise the importance of enhancing dialogue to address trade and trade-related issues of common interest. They agree to promote the involvement of civil society and the private sector in that dialogue.

ARTICLE 51

Trade in services

1. The Parties agree that trade in services is a powerful engine for the growth and development of their economies and further reaffirm their respective rights and obligations under the WTO General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

2. The Parties commit to cooperating in and enhancing trade in services, especially in modes of supply of export interest to them, including the movement of natural persons for business purposes, and in sectors that they consider as priorities, including the ICT sector, tourism, transport, environmental services, financial services, and sporting services and other priority sectors as appropriate.

3. The Parties, taking into consideration Article 39(2), shall cooperate to strengthen capacity in the supply of services related to cultural and creative industries.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to address barriers to trade in services with a view to facilitating access to markets and enhancing trade. They further agree to strengthen their cooperation to support the development of domestic regulatory frameworks and capacities, improve the ability of service providers to comply with the EU Party and OACPS Members' regulations and standards at continental, regional, national, and sub-national levels, and encourage the establishment of mutual recognition agreements, where appropriate, in the service sectors of mutual interest referred to in paragraph 2.

5. The Parties acknowledge the importance of cost-effective and efficient maritime transport services as the main mode of transportation facilitating trade. The Parties shall improve the competitiveness of maritime transport services by strengthening connectivity to improve the safe flow of goods and people in the maritime transport sector. To that end, they shall cooperate in the appropriate forums to liberalise maritime transport as the main mode of transportation to facilitate trade. They shall enable access to the international maritime transport markets and to ports and services at the ports, on a non-discriminatory and commercial basis. The Parties shall cooperate in efforts to develop and promote cost-effective and efficient maritime transport services in the OACPS Members with a view to increasing the participation of OACPS Members' operators in international shipping services.

ARTICLE 52

Trade-related areas

1. The Parties acknowledge the growing importance of non-tariff measures (NTMs) in trade as tariff barriers fall. They therefore recognise the need for cooperation with a view to monitoring and removing unnecessary obstacles to trade, thereby increasing and facilitating trade between the EU Party and OACPS Members and among OACPS Members. In this respect, the Parties agree to maintain or establish, where appropriate, arrangements to address NTMs that may negatively affect exports to the other side's market.

2. The Parties agree to enhance their cooperation in the field of standardisation and certification of goods to prevent, identify and eliminate unnecessary technical barriers to trade within the scope of the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (the "TBT Agreement") and shall endeavour to build on it by increasing and strengthening transparency. The Parties further agree to cooperate to establish and enhance technical capabilities and institutional infrastructure on matters concerning technical barriers to trade.

3. The Parties reaffirm the rights of each Party to adopt or enforce sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures to protect human, animal or plant life or health in its territory, while ensuring that such SPS measures adopted by each Party do not create unnecessary obstacles to trade, pursuant to the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures (the "SPS Agreement"). To that end, the Parties agree to enhance their collaboration for the effective implementation of the principles and disciplines of the SPS Agreement while taking account of their respective levels of development. In that context, the Parties shall cooperate to address sanitary and phytosanitary issues, including management of anti-microbial resistance, and animal welfare matters, in order to strengthen the Parties' capacities and improve access to the other Party's markets while safeguarding the appropriate level of protection of humans, animals and plants.

4. The Parties acknowledge that the intellectual property system is intended to promote economic, social and cultural progress by stimulating creative work and technological innovation, especially between the EU Party and the ACP regions, while contributing to a more sustainable and inclusive economy. In that context, the Parties reaffirm the importance of the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights, as stated in Article 7 of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (the "TRIPS Agreement"), which should contribute to the promotion of technological innovation and to the transfer and dissemination of technology, to the mutual advantage of producers and users of technological knowledge and in a manner conducive to social and economic welfare, and to a balance of rights and obligations. The Parties recognise the need to protect intellectual property rights, including copyright and related rights, trademarks, geographical indications, industrial designs, topographies of integrated circuits, plant variety rights and patents. That protection shall also include protection against unfair competition and protection of undisclosed information. The Parties underline the importance, in this context, of adherence to the TRIPS Agreement, the Convention on Biological Diversity, done at Rio de Janeiro on 5 June 1992, and the conventions referred to in Part I of the TRIPS Agreement, in line with their level of development. The Parties further underline the importance of cooperation and technical assistance in the field of intellectual property for the measures, procedures and remedies necessary to ensure the enforcement of intellectual property rights with a view to achieving an effective level of protection, especially in the OACPS Members.

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5. The Parties reaffirm that the introduction and implementation of effective and sound competition policies and rules are of crucial importance in order to improve and secure an investment-friendly climate, a sustainable industrialisation process and transparency in the access to markets. They therefore undertake to implement national or regional rules and policies to effectively tackle anti-competitive business practices, including subsidies related to economic activities granted by the Parties, which have the potential to distort the proper functioning of markets and to negatively affect the other Parties' trade interests. The Parties undertake to ensure a level playing field between public and private market participants. They also agree to reinforce cooperation in this area with a view to formulating and supporting effective competition policies with the appropriate national and regional authorities that progressively ensure the efficient enforcement of competition rules. In that context, the Parties agree to cooperate to develop the adequate capacities with a view to establishing the appropriate legal framework for competition protection and its enforcement through appropriate competition agencies, in particular in the territory of the OACPS Members.

6. The Parties agree to increase cooperation to ensure better operation of international commodity markets and market transparency.

7. The Parties recognise the importance of transparent public procurement to promote economic development and industrialisation. The Parties agree on the importance of cooperation to enhance the mutual understanding of their respective public procurement systems. The Parties commit to the principles of, and shall cooperate on, the transparency, competitiveness and predictability of procurement systems.

ARTICLE 53

Trade facilitation

The Parties recognise the importance of reducing trade costs to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth in their economies. They shall therefore cooperate to simplify import, export, transit and other customs procedures, including digitalisation of customs and clearance procedures, as well as to increase the transparency of customs and trade regulations and facilitate legitimate trade, building on their respective commitments under the TFA. In line with the TFA, the OACPS Members require adequate and predictable technical assistance to build their capacities to implement this Agreement fully. The Parties further commit to providing that assistance based on the implementation needs of the OACPS Members, as notified under the TFA.

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TITLE V

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

ARTICLE 54

1. The Parties agree that environmental degradation, unsustainable use of natural resources and climate change pose a serious threat to the attainment of sustainable development and place at risk the lives, quality of life and livelihoods of current and future generations. In that regard, the Parties reaffirm the need for a high level of environmental protection and effective conservation and sustainable management of natural resources, including biological diversity. They also reaffirm the need to agree on ambitious action to manage and reduce the negative effects of climate change and to set their economies on sustainable, resilient low-carbon growth paths, while contributing to the creation of decent jobs for all.

2. The Parties shall mainstream environmental sustainability, the fight against climate change and the pursuit of environmentally sustainable growth into all policies, plans and investments. They shall endeavour to build effective alliances in international settings on relevant issues with a view to driving global action forward and ensuring constructive engagement with local authorities, civil society and the private sector. The Parties shall effectively implement the multilateral environmental agreements to which they are parties.

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3. The Parties shall seek to build and strengthen resilience, particularly of vulnerable populations, in the face of environmental and climate change-related challenges, and of natural and man-made disasters.

4. The Parties, in promoting environmental sustainability, tackling climate change and natural disasters, shall take into account: (i) the vulnerability of SIDS, LDCs, landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and coastal populations including their efforts to adapt, especially to the threat posed by climate change and the depletion of natural resources; (ii) the exposure and vulnerability of countries to worsening droughts, floods, coastal erosion, water scarcity, land and forest degradation, biodiversity loss, deforestation and desertification problems; (iii) the need to minimise, avert and address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including slow onset events such as sea-level rise; (iv) the links between climate change strategies and disaster risk reduction, resilience and food security; (v) the crucial role of natural ecosystems for ensuring food security and nutrition, and fighting climate change; (vi) the nexus between environmental degradation and climate change with displacement and migration; and (vii) the negative impact of climate change and environmental degradation on peace and security.

CHAPTER 1

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

ARTICLE 55

Environment and natural resources

1. The Parties shall work towards preserving, protecting, improving and rehabilitating the environment. To that end, they shall promote measures at national, regional and global level, including in the areas of high biodiversity value and protection of natural ecosystems, air quality, water quality, water scarcity and droughts, waste management, industrial pollution and industrial hazards and chemicals management.

2. The Parties shall support the conservation and sustainable management and use of natural resources, including land, water, forest, biodiversity and ecosystems. They shall promote action to end trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna, and address both the demand for, and supply of, illegal wildlife products. They shall promote the sustainable governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests.

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3. The Parties shall promote legal instruments, integrated environment and development strategies, and good governance for the integration of biodiversity considerations in all relevant sectors in order to halt biodiversity loss and maintain the delivery of ecosystem services. The Parties shall promote ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions to achieve environmental objectives. They recognise the importance of ecosystems and biodiversity for addressing climate change and for the conservation and restoration of all ecosystems, including aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. They shall also establish, manage and improve the governance of protected areas.

4. The Parties recognise that natural ecosystems, in particular forests, offer habitats for animals and plants, and play a major role in mitigating and adapting to climate change, in biodiversity conservation and in preventing and combating desertification and land degradation. The Parties also recognise that forests, wetlands and savannahs provide water and soil protection and protection from natural hazards, and deliver other environmental services. Taking into account the above, the Parties shall promote the conservation and restoration of all ecosystems, including forests.

5. The Parties shall pursue the fight against desertification, land degradation and drought, and shall strive to restore and rehabilitate degraded land and soil to bring about sustainable land management and achieve a land degradation-neutral environment. They shall reduce biodiversity loss, create employment opportunities and help enhance the provision of ecosystem services and functions, including by enhancing drought risk preparedness and resilience, as well as further reducing risks and the impact of sand and dust storms.

6. The Parties shall promote fair and equitable access and benefit sharing arising from the utilisation of genetic resources and appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed.

7. The Parties shall support the promotion of circular economy approaches and sustainable consumption and production practices, and endeavour to make use of the investment opportunities offered by the best available clean technologies.

CHAPTER 2

OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES

ARTICLE 56

Ocean governance

1. The Parties recognise the increasing human pressures and their cumulative impacts on seas and oceans, and acknowledge their nature as an interconnected common good whose conservation, protection and governance is a shared responsibility that requires the collective and coordinated actions of stakeholders. The Parties reaffirm the universal and unified character of UNCLOS as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine and maritime sectors.

2. The Parties shall strengthen ocean governance and effectively address the increasing pressures on seas and oceans, which threaten marine ecosystems' resilience and their contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

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3. The Parties shall promote and improve the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems and the conservation and sustainable management of marine resources, including in areas beyond their respective jurisdiction, with a view to achieving healthy and productive oceans. They shall promote sustainable fisheries management at national, regional and global levels, by cooperating with relevant regional fisheries management organisations and by combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. The Parties shall promote the conservation of endangered aquatic species and actions to control pollution and marine litter as well as address the impacts of climate change, including ocean acidification.

4. The Parties shall promote the sustainable development of a blue economy with the aim of securing the oceans' contribution to food security and nutrition, improving livelihoods, creating job opportunities, and ensuring social equity and cultural well-being for current and future generations.

5. The Parties shall support the implementation of blue growth policies and strategies to promote an integrated ocean management that restores, protects and maintains the diversity, productivity, resilience, core functions and intrinsic value of marine ecosystems.

6. The Parties shall promote dialogue and cooperation on all aspects of ocean governance, including on matters related to climate change, sea-level rise and its possible effects and implications, seabed mining, fisheries, marine pollution and research and development.

CHAPTER 3

CLIMATE CHANGE

ARTICLE 57

Climate commitments

1. The Parties acknowledge that the adverse impacts of climate change and climate variability pose a threat to the lives and livelihoods of people. They confirm their commitment to take urgent action to prevent climate change, to address its impacts and to cooperate in an urgent and coordinated manner at international, regional, inter-regional and national levels in order to strengthen the global response to climate change.

2. The Parties shall effectively implement the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, done at New York on 9 May 1992, and the Paris Agreement.

3. The Parties are committed to meeting the overall goal of holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, enhancing the ability to adapt, reducing vulnerabilities and strengthening resilience, making all investments and financial flows consistent with the Paris Agreement.

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ARTICLE 58

Climate action

1. The Parties agree to undertake climate action to address adaptation, mitigation, as well as means of implementation and to be focused on the most vulnerable countries, including SIDS, low-lying coastal states, LDCs and LLDCs.

2. The Parties agree to implement and track progress towards their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and to strive to formulate and communicate mid-century, long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies in order to achieve the temperature goal agreed in the Paris Agreement, while taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances. They commit to enhancing the linkages between NDCs, the 2030 Agenda and their national strategies.

3. The Parties agree to engage in adaptation planning, implementation and monitor progress in the implementation of national adaptation plans (NAPs) and other strategies. They commit to setting up and strengthening effective governance structures for that purpose. They recognise the need to further strengthen the integration of NAPs and other adaptation strategies into national strategies and processes in order to achieve climate-resilient sustainable development.

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ARTICLE 59

Climate change and security

The Parties shall address the security threat that climate change and environmental degradation pose, particularly in situations of fragility and on the most vulnerable countries. The Parties shall develop resilience strategies taking into account the security threat.

CHAPTER 4

NATURAL DISASTERS

ARTICLE 60

Disaster risk reduction and management

1. The Parties recognise the negative impacts on sustainable development of natural disasters, including tsunamis, earthquake and volcanic eruptions, as well as the increasing frequency and intensity of climate-related phenomena such as cyclones and hurricanes, flooding and droughts.

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2. The Parties shall promote coherent policies and strategies at all levels to identify vulnerabilities and other drivers of risk. They shall cooperate to enhance disaster resilience to the short and long-term impacts of disasters and pay particular attention to coordination, complementarity and synergies between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies. The Parties shall undertake early warning and preventive action and improve risk reduction and preparedness by strengthening grassroots-level communication and risk governance and by effectively integrating disaster risk reduction into development strategies.

3. The Parties shall systematically integrate comprehensive risk assessment, management and resilience into their action, ensuring that individuals, communities, institutions and countries can better prepare for, withstand, adapt to and quickly recover from shocks and aftershocks, including when impacts exceed best efforts to adapt, without compromising long-term development prospects.

4. The Parties shall address disaster risks taking an integrated multi-hazard approach, covering the understanding of disaster risk, the strengthening of its governance, and building institutional capacities for effective implementation of risk-informed investments. They shall ensure inclusive and equitable outcomes to build the resilience of the most vulnerable.

5. The Parties shall develop strategies to strengthen urban and rural resilience with a view to improving disaster risk management, with particular attention to unplanned settlements.

ARTICLE 61

Disaster response and recovery

1. The Parties agree that early and coordinated response to natural disasters is critical for rehabilitation and post-disaster recovery. The Parties agree on the importance of coordinated needs assessments, enhanced disaster preparedness and capacity for local, early and effective responses that meet the needs of crisis-affected people, including through effective communication strategies.

2. The Parties agree that disaster response and recovery efforts shall prioritise, in the short term, emergency assistance and rehabilitation, including support for early recovery. They agree that post-emergency assistance shall aim at linking the short-term relief with longer-term development through a sustainable recovery process, building back better, including reconstruction efforts and the rehabilitation of the social-economic and cultural fabric. This entails enhanced coordination between humanitarian and development stakeholders from the onset of the crisis to properly build resilience of affected populations.

TITLE VI

MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

ARTICLE 62

The Parties reaffirm their commitment to enhancing cooperation on migration and mobility, guided by the principles of solidarity, partnership and shared responsibility. They shall adopt a comprehensive, coherent, pragmatic and balanced approach, in full respect of international law, including international human rights law and, where applicable, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, and the principle of sovereignty taking into account their respective competences. They recognise that migration and mobility can have positive impacts on sustainable development when well managed and acknowledge the need to address the negative impacts irregular migration can have on countries of origin, transit and destination. The Parties agree to work on enhancing capacities with the aim of efficient and effective management of migration in all its aspects. They reiterate their commitment to ensuring respect for the dignity of all refugees and migrants and protection of their human rights. The Parties shall address all relevant aspects of migration and mobility referred to in this Title in their regular partnership dialogue.

CHAPTER 1

LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

ARTICLE 63

Legal migration and mobility

1. The Parties shall seek to reap the dividends of safe, orderly and regular migration and mobility, in full respect of international law and in accordance with their respective competences. In that regard, they shall work to develop and use legal pathways for migration, including labour migration and other mobility schemes, taking into account national priorities and labour market needs.

2. The Parties shall work to implement transparent and effective requirements for admission and residence for the purpose of work, research, studies, training and voluntary service, with a view to facilitating circular migration and mobility. The Parties shall strengthen transparency of information regarding applicable migration rules.

3. The Parties shall consider circular migration as a means to foster growth and development in countries of origin and destination. To that end, they shall consider schemes for circular migration, and shall implement and improve, as appropriate, the legal frameworks for facilitating the re-entry procedures of nationals of a Member State of the European Union or of an OACPS Member who reside legally in the territories of the OACPS Members or the Member States of the European Union, respectively, and consider aspects of their reintegration in the countries of origin to ensure that their gained experience or qualifications can benefit the local labour market and community.

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4. The Parties shall dialogue on procedures guiding legal migration, including family reunification and, as appropriate, portability of pension rights. The Parties shall further pursue an open exchange on visa issues and on the facilitation of mobility and people-to-people contacts, including in areas such as tourism, culture, sports, education, research, and business, with a view to fostering mutual understanding and promoting shared values.

5. The Parties shall promote cooperation between relevant agencies and institutions, local authorities, civil society and social partners, with a view to encouraging joint research projects, identification of skills gaps as well as investment and job opportunities and the evaluation of labour migration policies and strategies.

6. The Parties shall cooperate to improve transparency and comparability of all qualifications, with the aim of facilitating their recognition for access to further learning as well as their acceptance in the labour market.

7. The Parties shall cooperate to improve and modernise civil status registry systems, with a view to enhancing the security and issuance of identity cards and passports.

ARTICLE 64

Integration and non-discrimination

1. The Parties shall pursue efforts to adopt effective integration policies for those who reside legally in their territories which are aimed at granting rights and imposing obligations comparable to those of their citizens and to promote social cohesion. In that respect, the Parties shall support the development and implementation of strategies to integrate nationals of a Member State of the European Union or of an OACPS Member who reside legally in the territories of the OACPS Members or the Member States of the European Union, respectively, into labour markets and host societies, supporting and strengthening cooperation and coordination of various actors working on integration at national, regional and local levels, including local government and civil society.

2. The Parties agree to ensure fair treatment of nationals of a Member State of the European Union or of an OACPS Member who reside legally in the territories of the OACPS Members or the Member States of the European Union, respectively, enhancement of non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural life, as well as the development of measures against racism and xenophobia.

3. The Parties agree that the treatment accorded to nationals of a Member State of the European Union or of an OACPS Member who reside legally in the territories of the OACPS Members or the Member States of the European Union, respectively, shall be free from any discrimination based on nationality as regards working conditions, remuneration and dismissal, in relation to the own nationals of each Member State of the European Union and the OACPS Member, respectively. To that end, the Parties shall cooperate to ensure that migration rules and recruitment mechanisms are guided by fair and ethical principles that ensure that all nationals of a Member State of the European Union or of an OACPS Member who reside legally in the territories of the OACPS Members or the Member States of the European Union, respectively, are treated fairly and with dignity in the host countries and are protected against exploitation.

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CHAPTER 2

MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 65

Migration and development

The Parties agree that well-managed migration can be a source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development and further agree to cooperate and support countries of origin, *inter alia* by boosting growth and employment opportunities, promoting investment, private sector development, trade and innovation, education and vocational training, health, social protection and security, especially for youth and women. The Parties shall cooperate to create conditions that would limit the negative impact of the loss of skills on the development of countries of origin.

ARTICLE 66

Diaspora and development

The Parties acknowledge the meaningful role of diasporas and the different forms of contributions that diaspora members make to the development of their countries of origin, including through finance, investment, transfer of knowledge, expertise and technology, cultural linkages, networks and mechanisms, as well as in national reconciliation processes.

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ARTICLE 67

Remittances

1. The Parties shall seek to promote cheaper, more secure, faster and legally compliant transfer of remittances, so as to facilitate productive domestic investments, including through the use of new technologies and innovative instruments.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to reduce the transaction costs of remittances to less than 3 % and to eliminate remittances corridors with costs higher than 5 %, in accordance with internationally agreed targets, and to improve regulatory frameworks for enhanced involvement of non-traditional players.

ARTICLE 68

South-south migration

1. The Parties acknowledge the relevance of south-south migration in terms of both challenges and opportunities, including the potential benefits of well-managed south-south migration for the sustainable development of origin, transit and destination countries. To that end, the Parties shall support policies and actions to promote economic and social development in origin, transit and destination countries.

2. The Parties shall exchange experience and best practices on mitigating the social and economic impact of south-south migration flows on countries of origin, transit and destination, and shall enhance cooperation at national and regional levels.

ARTICLE 69

Natural disasters, climate change and environmental degradation

1. The Parties shall take into account the nexus between migration, including displacement, and natural disasters, climate change and environmental degradation.

2. The Parties shall take action to address the needs of displaced persons by adopting strategies towards mitigation, adaptation and resilience to natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation, at all relevant levels, including inter-regional levels.

CHAPTER 3

IRREGULAR MIGRATION

ARTICLE 70

Root causes of irregular migration

1. The Parties confirm the shared political commitment to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement and to develop adequate responses thereto.

2. The Parties reaffirm their determination to stem the flows of irregular migration, in full respect of international law and human rights. In that regard, they acknowledge the negative impacts of irregular migration on countries of origin, transit and destination, including related humanitarian and security challenges. The Parties acknowledge the increased risk of migrants experiencing human rights violations and becoming victims of trafficking and abuse and agree to implement measures to protect those migrants from all forms of exploitation and abuse.

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ARTICLE 71

Smuggling of migrants

1. The Parties shall increase joint efforts to prevent cross-border crime of migrant smuggling, and jointly enhance efforts to end the impunity of criminal organisations through effective investigation and prosecution.

2. The Parties shall ensure that appropriate legislative and institutional frameworks are in place, in line with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, in particular its Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air. They also commit to improving information sharing and to fostering operational, police and judicial cooperation.

ARTICLE 72

Trafficking in persons

The Parties shall combat trafficking in persons in line with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. The Parties shall also enhance prevention, including by countering the impunity of all perpetrators, and ensure that all victims have access to the rights they are entitled to, taking into account in particular the vulnerability of women and children.

ARTICLE 73

Integrated border management

The Parties shall promote and support integrated border management, including border control, information and intelligence gathering and sharing, and the prevention of the production and use of fraudulent documentation, as well as operational, police and judicial cooperation on investigations and criminal prosecutions.

CHAPTER 4

RETURN, READMISSION AND REINTEGRATION

ARTICLE 74

Return and readmission

1. The Parties reaffirm their right to return illegally staying migrants and reaffirm the legal obligation of each Member State of the European Union and each OACPS Member to readmit their own nationals illegally present on the territories of the OACPS Members or the Member States of the European Union, respectively, without conditionality and without further formalities other than the verification provided for in paragraph 3. To that end, the Parties shall cooperate on return and readmission and shall ensure that the rights and dignity of individuals are fully protected and respected, including in any procedure initiated to return illegally staying migrants to their countries of origin.

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2. Each Member State of the European Union shall accept the return of and readmission of any of its nationals who is illegally present on the territory of an OACPS Member, at that State's request without further formalities than the verification provided for in paragraph 3 for those persons who do not hold a valid travel document.

Each OACPS Member shall accept the return and the readmission of any of its nationals who is illegally present on the territory of a Member State of the European Union, at that Member State's request without further formalities than the verification provided for in paragraph 3 for those persons who do not hold a valid travel document.

In respect of the Member States of the European Union, the obligations set out in this paragraph apply only with regard to persons who hold the nationality of a Member State of the European Union. In respect of the OACPS Members, the obligations set out in this paragraph apply only with regard to persons who are considered as their nationals in accordance with their respective legal system.

3. The Member States of the European Union and the OACPS Members shall respond swiftly to readmission requests of each other. They shall carry out verification processes using the most appropriate and most efficient identification procedures with a view to ascertaining the nationality of the person concerned and to issue appropriate travel documents for return purposes, as set out in Annex I. Nothing in that Annex shall prevent the return of a person under formal or informal arrangements between the State to which a readmission request is submitted and the State submitting a readmission request.

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4. Notwithstanding the procedures provided for in Article 101(5), if a Party considers that another Party has failed to respect the time limit referred to in Annex I in line with Standard 5.26 of Chapter 5 of Annex 9 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, it shall notify the other Party accordingly. If that other Party continues to fail to comply with those obligations, the notifying Party may take proportionate measures starting as from 30 days of the notification.

5. The Parties agree to monitor the implementation of these commitments in the framework of the regular partnership dialogue.

ARTICLE 75

Reintegration

The Parties shall explore ways to cooperate in order to promote voluntary return and to facilitate sustainable reintegration of returned persons including, where relevant, through sustainable reintegration programmes. Particular attention shall be paid to the needs of returning persons in vulnerable situations, such as children, older persons, persons with disabilities and victims of trafficking.

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CHAPTER 5

PROTECTION AND ASYLUM

ARTICLE 76

Refugees and other displaced persons

1. The Parties are committed to reinforcing the protection and dignity of refugees and other displaced persons in accordance with international law and international human rights law, including the principle of non-refoulement, and, where applicable, international refugee law and international humanitarian law.

2. The Parties shall support the integration of refugees and other displaced persons in host countries as appropriate and strengthen the capacities of first asylum, transit and destination countries. The Parties shall cooperate to provide refugees and displaced persons in transit and host countries with security in refugee camps, and access to justice, legal assistance, witness protection, medical and socio-psychological support.

3. The Parties shall pay particular attention to persons in vulnerable situations and to their specific needs, including women, children and unaccompanied minors, taking into account the principle of the best interests of the child.

PART III

GLOBAL ALLIANCES AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

ARTICLE 77

The Parties reaffirm the importance of cooperating at the international level with a view to promoting and defending their common interests and preserving and strengthening multilateralism. They commit to joining forces for a more peaceful, cooperative and just world which rests solidly on the common values of peace, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, gender equality, sustainable development, preservation of the environment and the fight against climate change. They agree on the importance of building and reinforcing global alliances to achieve an effective multilateral system that delivers results in tackling global challenges for a safer and better world for all.

ARTICLE 78

Multilateralism and global governance

1. The Parties are committed to the rules-based international order with multilateralism as its key principle and the UN at its core. They shall promote international dialogue and seek multilateral solutions to drive global action forward.

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2. The Parties shall take the necessary steps for the ratification of or accession to, as appropriate, the implementation and the domestication of relevant international treaties and conventions.

3. The Parties shall endeavour to strengthen global governance and to support necessary reforms and the modernisation of multilateral institutions to make them more representative, responsive, effective, efficient, inclusive, transparent, democratic and accountable.

4. The Parties shall deepen their multi-stakeholder approach to multilateralism by more effectively engaging civil society, the private sector and social partners in developing responses to global challenges.

ARTICLE 79

Cooperation in international organisations and forums

1. The Parties shall strive to adopt joint resolutions, declarations and statements, to coordinate positions and, where appropriate, voting, and to take joint actions based on a commonality of interests, mutual respect and equality, so as to ensure enhanced presence and a stronger voice in international and regional organisations and forums.

2. The Parties shall establish appropriate operational modalities for effective cooperation and coordination at the international level, including through convening ministerial meetings at OACPS Members-EU Party level. They shall endeavour to identify on a regular basis, at both political and operational levels, common ground on a series of strategic themes and to join forces on issues of mutual and global interest to drive global action forward.

3. The Parties may actively seek to closely cooperate and establish strategic partnerships with third countries and groupings that share their values and interests, with a view to maximising cooperative solutions to common challenges wherever possible.

ARTICLE 80

Areas of international action

1. The Parties agree to cooperate and undertake joint actions on issues related to the strategic priorities identified in Part II, as well as in other areas of concern as they deem necessary.

2. The Parties shall strengthen cooperation and dialogue to secure international peace and security. They shall adopt an inclusive and integrated approach to prevent and address conflicts and crises, rooted in broad, deep and durable regional and international partnerships. They shall work at national, regional and international levels to enhance the effectiveness of multilateral engagement for sustainable peace and security through strengthened partnerships with the UN and regional and sub-regional actors. They shall address serious crimes of concern to the international community and international security threats such as organised crime, terrorism and violent extremism, and shall cooperate to promote and strengthen the international arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, as well as to enhance cyber security and combat cybercrimes.

3. The Parties shall engage in international forums to uphold international norms and agreements to promote and protect human rights for all, to achieve gender equality, and to enhance democracy and the rule of law. They shall cooperate with the UN's human rights bodies and mechanisms and fully support the work of the UN Human Rights Council. They shall establish cross-regional alliances to serve common values and interests, as appropriate.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to advance the attainment of the SDGs and other internationally agreed roadmaps for the promotion of human and social development. They shall cooperate closely at the international level to:

(a) end extreme poverty and hunger;

(b) address and respond to food insecurity;

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(c) promote universal access to quality and affordable social services such as education, health, water, sanitation and housing;

(d) empower women and youth; and

(e) protect the most vulnerable in society and facilitate their inclusion in, and contribution to, economic, social and political life, leaving no one behind.

They shall cooperate to strengthen the coherence and consistency of the international financial and monetary system to secure enhanced access to development financing in support of sustainable development.

5. The Parties shall work together at the international level to achieve inclusive, sustainable economic growth and development through measures aimed at structural economic transformation, the creation of decent jobs for all, and the integration of the OACPS Members into the global economy, including through regional and continental integration. The Parties shall preserve and reinforce the rules-based multilateral trading system, with the WTO at its core, in all its functions, to ensure that it can effectively address global trade challenges and harness the development potential of trade.

6. The Parties shall intensify cooperation to promote strong and decisive collective action on environmental sustainability and on climate change, raising global ambition and leading the way to reach the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement. They shall uphold international norms and agreements that provide global public goods and protect future generations, including efforts to strengthen international ocean governance.

7. The Parties shall work with partners around the world to pursue a comprehensive and holistic approach on all aspects related to migration and mobility, based on the principles of solidarity, shared responsibility, and partnership.

PART IV

MEANS OF COOPERATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

ARTICLE 81

Effective and diversified means of cooperation

1. The Parties agree to mobilise both financial and non-financial resources in order to achieve the objectives set out in this Agreement on the basis of mutual interests, in the spirit of genuine partnership, and in line with the principle of "leaving no one behind". They underscore the importance of financing for development as being key to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

2. The Parties agree that means of cooperation shall be diversified, encompassing a range of policies and instruments, from all available sources and actors. They also agree that means of cooperation shall be tailored to reflect, and be implemented on the basis of, the objectives, strategies and priorities of different countries and regions established at national, regional, continental and inter-regional levels.

3. The Parties reaffirm their commitment to the development effectiveness principles, namely ownership of development priorities by partner countries, inclusive partnerships, focus on results, transparency and mutual accountability.

ARTICLE 82

International development cooperation

1. The EU Party reaffirms their political commitment to enhance development cooperation resources with a view to achieving sustainable development, particularly by eradicating poverty and combating environmental degradation and climate change. The EU Party commits to making available the appropriate level of financial resources in line with its internal regulations and procedures.

2. The Parties agree that, in the allocation of resources, priority shall be given to countries most in need, where such resources can have most impact, in particular LDCs, low-income countries, countries in crisis and conflict, post-crisis and/or post-conflict fragile and vulnerable situations, including SIDS, and LLDCs. Due attention shall also be paid to the specific challenges faced by middle-income countries, particularly in relation to inequality, social exclusion and their access to resources.

3. The EU Party shall mobilise resources to support programmes in African, Caribbean and Pacific States and shall contribute to regional, inter-regional and intercontinental cooperation and initiatives aimed at strengthening cooperation between the Parties on issues of mutual interest and common concern.

4. The Parties agree that cooperation may take different forms, such as sector policy support programmes, administrative and technical cooperation measures, capacity building, triangular arrangements, and may be provided through different types of financing and procedures, including budget support, budgetary guarantees and blending operations.

5. The EU Party and the more advanced OACPS Members shall undertake to develop new forms of engagement, including innovative financial instruments and co-financing.

6. The Parties shall cooperate and promote the use of financial resources to foster domestic resource mobilisation, to provide humanitarian and emergency assistance, to address unforeseen circumstances, new needs or emerging challenges, to facilitate trade, and to promote international initiatives or priorities.

7. The Parties agree that any decision to provide budget support shall:

(a) be based on a clear set of eligibility criteria and a careful assessment of the risks and benefits;

(b) be based on country ownership, mutual accountability and a shared commitment to universal values and principles;

(c) include reinforced policy dialogue, improved governance and complementing efforts to collect more and spend better; and

(d) be differentiated in such a way as to respond better to the political, economic and social context of the beneficiary country.

8. The Parties agree to promote predictability and security of resource flows and step up efforts to further improve the way in which they manage and implement development cooperation, notably through greater coordination and coherence and by taking into account their respective comparative advantages, including transition experiences.

9. The Parties agree that programming shall be based on an early, continuous and inclusive dialogue between the EU Party and the OACPS Members, including national and local authorities, regional, continental and international organisations, and involving parliaments, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders in order to enhance democratic ownership of the process and to encourage support for national and regional strategies. They agree that, where appropriate, programming shall be synchronised with the strategy cycles of beneficiaries and commit to the use of their institutions, systems and procedures. They also agree that programming shall provide a specific, tailor-made multi-annual framework for cooperation, including diversified means of cooperation.

10. The Parties agree that cooperation with third countries and other actors, including south-south and triangular cooperation, shall be encouraged in case of a clear added value and proven comparative advantage.

11. The Parties may decide to conduct a review of the management and impact of financial resources, at a mutually agreeable time, with a view to improving the effectiveness of aid programming and allocations.

12. The Parties shall strengthen dialogue and cooperation in the sound use of financial resources, including through cooperation with the European Anti-Fraud Office, where appropriate.

ARTICLE 83

Domestic public resources

1. The OACPS Members that are parties to this Agreement reaffirm their commitment to enhancing domestic resources mobilisation. They shall promote environments that increase domestic private flows and boost trade as an engine for development.

2. The OACPS Members that are parties to this Agreement shall endeavour to enhance revenue collection through modernised tax systems, improved tax policy, more efficient tax collection, and strengthened and reformed tax administration. They shall work towards improving the fairness, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of their tax systems, including by broadening the tax base and continuing efforts to integrate the informal sector into the formal economy in line with country circumstances. They shall strengthen fiscal legitimacy by enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of their public expenditure.

3. The Parties agree to increase efforts to combat illicit financial flows with a view to eradicating them, to cooperate in the recovery of lost assets and capital, and to strengthen good practices on assets return in order to foster sustainable development. They shall promote anti-corruption, anti-fraud and anti-money laundering measures, and undertake measures to tackle tax avoidance, tax evasion and other harmful tax practices, through increased international cooperation, improved domestic regulation as well as strengthened capacities and exchange of information.

4. The Parties shall enhance and cooperate to strengthen good financial and tax governance, transparency, and accountability. They commit to scaling up international tax cooperation in an inclusive, fair and transparent manner and, in that regard, agree to cooperate in international forums on international tax matters.

ARTICLE 84

Domestic and international private resources

1. The Parties acknowledge that private capital flows are vital complements of national development efforts. They shall develop policies and, where appropriate, strengthen regulatory frameworks and instruments to better align private sector incentives with public goals. They shall cooperate to mobilise sustainable and responsible investment, to encourage the private sector to engage as a partner in the development process, and to invest in areas critical to sustainable development.

2. The Parties shall endeavour to use blending of grants and loans as well as guarantees as levers to attract private finance and address market failures, while limiting market distortions.

3. The Parties acknowledge that remittances are a key private source of financing for sustainable development. They shall put in place relevant legislation and regulatory frameworks to create a competitive and transparent market for cheaper, faster and safer transfers of money through legal and official channels in both source and recipient countries, and to establish innovative and affordable transfer solutions. They shall encourage the generation of innovative financial products and create incentives to strengthen their diaspora's contribution to development. They shall promote dialogue among all relevant public and private stakeholders to facilitate remittance flows with a view to enhancing their impact on development.

ARTICLE 85

Debt and debt sustainability

1. The Parties commit to making debt sustainable in the long term through coordinated policies geared towards financing, mitigating, restructuring or managing debt as appropriate. They agree to assist countries in building debt management capacities and developing medium- and long-term debt strategies.

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2. The Parties underscore the importance of debtors and creditors working together to prevent and resolve debt crises. They agree on the need to strengthen dialogue, information sharing and transparency, so that debt sustainability assessments and analyses are based on comprehensive, objective and reliable data.

3. The Parties, considering the links between debt and economic growth, commit to engaging in dialogue and cooperation in the context of international discussions on the general problem of debt, without prejudice to specific discussions taking place in relevant forums.

4. The Parties agree to contribute, as appropriate, to internationally approved debt relief initiatives in order to alleviate the debt-servicing burden of OACPS Members.

PART V

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

ARTICLE 86

Joint institutions

1. The Parties hereby establish the following joint institutions at the level of the members of the OACPS and the EU Party: the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers, the OACPS-EU Ambassadorial Level Senior Officials Committee (OACPS-EU ALSOC) and the OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. The Parties hereby also establish, as joint institutions for each of the Regional Protocols, a Council of Ministers, a Joint Committee and a Parliamentary Assembly.

2. The Parties shall endeavour to ensure coordination and complementarity between the joint institutions of this Agreement and the joint institutions of other frameworks or agreements to which they are party, including the EPAs, without prejudice to relevant provisions therein.

ARTICLE 87

Summit of Heads of State or Government

The Parties may meet at the level of Heads of State or Government, upon joint agreement, in an appropriate format, on the basis of a mutually agreed timetable and agenda.

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ARTICLE 88

OACPS-EU Council of Ministers

1. The OACPS-EU Council of Ministers shall comprise, on the one hand, a representative of each OACPS Member at ministerial level and, on the other hand, representatives of the European Union and of its Member States at ministerial level. It shall be co-chaired by the Chair nominated by the OACPS Members on the one hand and by the Chair nominated by the EU Party on the other hand.

2. The OACPS-EU Council of Ministers shall meet in principle every three years and whenever it is deemed necessary on the initiative of the Co-chairs, in a form and composition appropriate to the issues to be addressed. Observers may take part in meetings as appropriate.

3. The OACPS-EU Council of Ministers may set up committees and working groups to deal with specific issues more effectively and efficiently, such as issues on trade and development finance. It may also delegate powers to the OACPS-EU ALSOC.

4. The functions of the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers shall be to:

(a) provide strategic political guidance;

(b) oversee the effective and consistent implementation of this Agreement;

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(c) adopt policy guidelines and take decisions to give effect to specific aspects necessary for the implementation of the provisions of this Agreement; and

(d) adopt joint positions and agree on joint actions on international cooperation and facilitate coordination in international organisations and forums.

5. The OACPS-EU Council of Ministers shall adopt decisions that are binding on all Parties unless otherwise specified, or make recommendations concerning any of its functions listed in paragraph 4 by common agreement of the Parties. Its proceedings shall be valid only if the representatives of the European Union**,** at least half of the Member States of the European Union and at least two thirds of the members representing the governments of the OACPS Members are present. Any member of the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers unable to attend may be represented. The representative shall exercise all the rights of that member. The OACPS-EU Council of Ministers shall submit a report to the Joint Parliamentary Assembly on the implementation of this Agreement. It shall examine and take into consideration resolutions and recommendations adopted by the Joint Parliamentary Assembly.

6. The OACPS-EU Council of Ministers may take decisions or make recommendations by written procedure. The use of a written procedure may be proposed by any of the Parties and may be initiated following the agreement of the Co-chairs. The rules laid down in paragraph 5 shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the written procedure.

7. The OACPS-EU Council of Ministers shall adopt its rules of procedure at its first meeting, but no later than six months after the entry into force of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 89

OACPS-EU Ambassadorial Level Senior Officials Committee

1. The OACPS-EU Ambassadorial Level Senior Officials Committee (OACPS-EU ALSOC) shall comprise, on the one hand, a representative of each OACPS Member at ambassadorial or senior official level and the Secretary General of the OACPS in an *ex officio* capacity and, on the other hand, representatives of the European Union and of its Member States at ambassadorial or senior official level. The OACPS-EU ALSOC shall meet annually and in special sessions at the request of the Co-chairs, and in particular to prepare for the sessions of the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers. It shall be co-chaired by the same Parties that hold the office of Co-chairs of the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers. It shall take its decisions and make recommendations by common agreement of the Parties. Observers may take part in meetings as appropriate.

2. The OACPS-EU ALSOC shall prepare the sessions of, and assist, the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers in the fulfilment of its tasks and carry out any mandate entrusted to it by the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers.

3. The OACPS-EU ALSOC shall adopt its rules of procedure at its first meeting, but no later than six months after the entry into force of this Agreement.

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ARTICLE 90

OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly

1. Each Member of the three Regional Parliamentary Assemblies shall be member of the OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. The OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly shall meet once every year, as further set out in its rules of procedure as referred to in paragraph 3. It shall be co-chaired by a member of the European Parliament and a member of parliament of the OACPS Members, nominated according to their respective procedures.

2. The functions of the OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, as a consultative body, shall be as follows:

(a) adopt resolutions and make recommendations with a view to achieving the objectives of this Agreement; and

(b) promote democratic processes, foster cooperation between parliaments, and facilitate greater understanding between the peoples of the OACPS Members and those of the European Union.

3. The OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly shall adopt its rules of procedure at its first meeting, but no later than six months after the entry into force of this Agreement.

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ARTICLE 91

Regional Summit

The Parties to each Regional Protocol may decide to meet at the level of Heads of State or Government at intervals to be agreed upon by the respective Parties on the basis of a mutually agreed timetable and agenda.

ARTICLE 92

Regional Councils of Ministers

1. The Parties hereby establish a Council of Ministers for each of the three Regional Protocols:

(a) the Africa-EU Council of Ministers shall comprise, on the one hand, a representative of each State Party in Africa at ministerial level and, on the other hand, representatives of the European Union and of its Member States at ministerial level;

(b) the Caribbean-EU Council of Ministers shall comprise, on the one hand, a representative of each State Party in the Caribbean at ministerial level and, on the other hand, representatives of the European Union and of its Member States at ministerial level; and

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(c) the Pacific-EU Council of Ministers shall comprise, on the one hand, a representative of each State Party in the Pacific at ministerial level and, on the other hand, representatives of the European Union and of its Member States at ministerial level.

Each Regional Council of Ministers shall be co-chaired by the Chair nominated respectively by the African, Caribbean or Pacific States Parties, on the one hand, and by the Chair nominated by the EU Party on the other hand, according to their own procedures.

Each Regional Council of Ministers shall meet at intervals to be agreed upon by the respective Parties, in a composition appropriate to the issues to be addressed and on the initiative of the Co-chairs, and shall take decisions by common agreement.

2. The functions of each Regional Council of Ministers shall be to:

(a) set priorities and, as appropriate, establish plans of action in relation to the objectives of their respective Regional Protocol;

(b) adopt decisions and make recommendations to give effect to specific aspects of their respective Regional Protocol, including decisions concerning the revision or amendment thereof, in accordance with Article 99(5); the decisions shall be binding on all Parties to the respective Regional Protocol, unless otherwise specified; and

(c) conduct dialogue and exchange views on any issues of common interest.

3. Each Regional Council of Ministers shall adopt decisions or make recommendations by common agreement. Its proceedings shall be valid only if the representatives of the European Union, at least half of the Member States of the European Union and at least two thirds of the members representing the respective African, Caribbean and Pacific region are present. Any member of any Regional Council of Ministers unable to attend may be represented. The representative shall exercise all the rights of that member.

4. Each Regional Council of Ministers:

(a) may adopt decisions or make recommendations by written procedure; the rules laid down in Article 88 shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the written procedure of the Regional Council of Ministers;

(b) may set up subcommittees and working groups to deal with specific issues more effectively and efficiently, and may delegate powers to the respective Regional Joint Committee;

(c) shall submit a report to the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers on the implementation of its respective Protocol; and

(d) shall adopt its rules of procedure at its first meeting, but no later than six months after the entry into force of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 93

Regional Joint Committees

1. Each Regional Joint Committee shall comprise, on the one hand, a representative of each African OACPS Member for the Africa-EU Protocol, each Caribbean OACPS Member for the Caribbean-EU Protocol, and each Pacific OACPS Member for the Pacific-EU Protocol, at ambassadorial or senior official level, and, on the other hand, representatives of the European Union and of its Member States at ambassadorial or senior official level.

2. Each Regional Joint Committee shall be co-chaired by the same Parties that hold the office of Co-chairs of the respective Regional Council of Ministers. When appropriate, it may decide to invite observers on the proposal of any Party following the agreement of the Co-chairs.

3. Each Regional Joint Committee shall prepare the sessions and assist the respective Regional Council of Ministers in the fulfilment of its tasks and carry out any mandate entrusted to it by the respective Regional Council of Ministers.

4. Each Regional Joint Committee shall adopt its rules of procedure at its first meeting, but no later than six months after the entry into force of this Agreement.

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ARTICLE 94

Regional Parliamentary Assemblies

1. The Parties hereby establish a Regional Parliamentary Assembly for each of the three Regional Protocols that shall be co-chaired by a Member of the European Parliament, on the one hand, and a Member of the Parliament from the respective African, Caribbean or Pacific Parties, nominated as Chair, on the other hand, in accordance with their own procedures:

(a) the Africa-EU Parliamentary Assembly shall comprise, on the one hand, Members of the European Parliament and, on the other hand, Members of Parliament of each State Party in Africa, in equal number;

(b) the Caribbean-EU Parliamentary Assembly shall comprise, on the one hand, Members of the European Parliament and, on the other hand, Members of Parliament of each State Party in the Caribbean, in equal number;

(c) the Pacific-EU Parliamentary Assembly shall comprise, on the one hand, Members of the European Parliament and, on the other hand, Members of Parliament of each State Party in the Pacific, in equal number.

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2. As a consultative body, each Regional Parliamentary Assembly shall meet in particular in advance of meetings of the relevant Regional Council of Ministers. In that regard, each Regional Parliamentary Assembly shall be supplied in a timely manner with the agenda of the relevant Regional Council of Ministers, on the basis of which it may make recommendations to that Council of Ministers, and shall be informed of the decisions and recommendations of the relevant Regional Council of Ministers.

3. Each Regional Parliamentary Assembly:

(a) may adopt resolutions and discuss any issues pertaining to their respective Regional Protocol;

(b) may promote democratic processes through dialogue and consultation and facilitate greater understanding between the peoples of the European Unionand those of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific;

(c) shall liaise with the OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on issues pertaining to this Agreement, in order to ensure coordination and coherence; and

(d) shall adopt its rules of procedure at its first meeting, but no later than six months after the entry into force of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 95

Engagement with stakeholders

1. The Parties agree that engagement with stakeholders, notably local authorities, civil society, and private sector representatives, is integral to well-informed decision-making and to furthering the objectives of this Partnership.

2. Stakeholders shall be informed in a timely manner and be able to provide inputs into the broad process of dialogue, particularly in view of the meetings of the respective Council of Ministers.

3. In order to promote such engagement, open and transparent mechanisms for structured consultation with stakeholders shall be set up as appropriate.

4. The results of the consultations with stakeholders shall be communicated to the relevant Council of Ministers, Joint Committee or Parliamentary Assembly, as appropriate.

PART VI

FINAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 96

Territorial application

This Agreement shall apply, on the one hand, to the territories in which the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union apply and under the conditions laid down in those Treaties, and, on the other hand, to the territories of the OACPS Members.

ARTICLE 97

Other agreements or arrangements

No treaty, convention, agreement or arrangement of any kind between one or more Member States of the European Union and one or more OACPS Members shall impede the implementation of this Agreement.

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ARTICLE 98

Consent to be bound, entry into force and provisional application

1. The Parties shall express their consent to be bound by this Agreement in accordance with their respective internal rules and procedures.

2. This Agreement shall enter into force on the first day of the second month following the date on which the European Union and its Member States and at least two thirds of the OACPS Members have completed their respective internal procedures for that purpose and deposited their instruments expressing their consent to be bound with the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union (the "depositary"), which shall send a certified copy to the OACPS Secretariat.

3. An OACPS Member that has not completed the procedures set out in paragraph 2 by the date on which this Agreement enters into force in accordance with paragraph 2 may do so only within 12 months of that date. For such OACPS Members, this Agreement shall become applicable on the first day of the second month following the deposit of their instruments expressing their consent to be bound with the depositary, which shall send a certified copy to the OACPS Secretariat. Such OACPS Members shall recognise the validity of any measure taken to implement this Agreement after the date of its entry into force in accordance with paragraph 2.

4. Notwithstanding paragraphs 2 and 3, the European Union and the OACPS Members may apply this Agreement provisionally in whole or in part, pending its entry into force and in accordance with their respective internal procedures. Provisional application shall commence on the first day of the second month after the date of signature of this Agreement. Before the commencement of the provisional application, the European Union shall notify the OACPS Members of the parts of this Agreement that shall be provisionally applied.

ARTICLE 99

Duration and revision

1. This Agreement is concluded for an initial period of 20 years. Three years prior to the end of that initial period, the Parties shall enter into a dialogue with a view to reviewing the provisions that shall subsequently govern their relations. This Agreement shall be tacitly extended for a single period of five years unless a decision terminating or extending it is agreed upon by the Parties before the end of the initial period of 20 years.

2. The Parties may submit proposals for amendments to this Agreement to the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers no later than six months prior to the relevant meeting of the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers. Any amendments shall be approved by the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers and be subject to the procedures laid down in Article 98 for the entry into force and provisional application of this Agreement.

3. Within six months of the expiry of the 2030 Agenda, the Parties shall enter into negotiations with a view to reviewing and revising the strategic priorities of this Agreement, including the Africa Regional Protocol, the Caribbean Regional Protocol and the Pacific Regional Protocol, and to introducing any other necessary amendments. The amended Agreement shall enter into force in accordance with the procedures laid down for the entry into force and provisional application of this Agreement.

4. The Parties may submit proposals for amendments to the Annexes to this Agreement to the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers no later than six months prior to the relevant meeting of the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers. Any amendments shall be approved by the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers.

5. The Parties to the respective Regional Protocol may submit proposals for amendments to their Protocol to the respective Regional Council of Ministers and to the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers no later than 120 days prior to the relevant meeting of the respective Regional Council of Ministers. Any amendments shall be adopted by the respective Regional Council of Ministers and immediately notified to the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers, which may give its consent within 120 days of the date of notification, including through written procedure or delegation of power to the OACPS-EU ALSOC. The OACPS-EU Council of Ministers may refuse to give its consent for an amendment deemed not to be consistent with this Agreement, and shall notify the relevant Regional Council of Ministers of the reasons for its refusal. The absence of a refusal of consent within 120 days of the date of notification is deemed to constitute consent. The amended Regional Protocol shall enter into force on the first day of the second month following the date of consent.

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6. The OACPS-EU Council of Ministers may adopt any transitional measures necessary if a new agreement is envisaged between the Parties and until such agreement enters into force or is provisionally applied.

ARTICLE 100

Termination

This Agreement may be terminated by the EU Party in respect of each OACPS Member and by each OACPS Member in respect of the EU Party. The termination shall take effect six months after receipt by the depositary of the written notification thereof, which shall send a certified copy to the OACPS Secretariat.

ARTICLE 101

Dispute settlement and fulfilment of obligations

1. The Parties shall take any general or specific measures required to fulfil their obligations under this Agreement. They shall address divergences and disputes over the application of this Agreement between them and address questions of interpretation related to this Agreement in accordance with this Article.

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2. Without prejudice to the procedures referred to in paragraphs 3 to 9 of this Article and Article 74(4), any question related to the interpretation of this Agreement may be resolved through consultations within the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers or, upon the Parties' agreement, a special subcommittee or any other appropriate mechanism reporting to the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers. The Parties shall present the relevant information required for a thorough examination of the matter, with a view to addressing it in a timely and amicable manner.

3. For the purposes of paragraphs 4 to 9, the term "Party" refers to the European Union and its Member States, on the one part, and each OACPS Member, on the other part.

4. The Parties shall address divergences between them within the partnership dialogue, with a view to preventing situations arising in which one party might deem it necessary to have recourse to the consultations provided for in paragraphs 5 and 6.

5. If either Party considers that the other Party has failed to fulfil any of the obligations under this Agreement, it shall notify the other Party, presenting all relevant information required for a thorough examination of the situation, with a view to reaching a mutually acceptable solution within 90 days of the date of notification. Should this be deemed not sufficient, the Parties shall hold structured and systematic consultations. Where they are unable to reach a mutually acceptable solution within 120 days of the commencement of consultations, the notifying Party may take measures proportionate to the failure to fulfil the specific obligation.

6. Notwithstanding paragraph 5, if either Party considers that the other Party is in violation of any of the essential elements as set out in Articles 9 and 18, except in case of special urgency, or in serious cases of corruption as set out in Article 12, it shall notify the other Party, presenting all relevant information required for a thorough examination of the situation, with a view to seeking a mutually acceptable solution within 60 days of the date of notification. Should this be deemed not sufficient, the Parties shall hold structured and systematic consultations. While preserving the bilateral character of the consultations, a special joint committee shall be involved upon agreement of the Parties concerned during the structured and systematic consultations phase. The Special Joint Committee, consisting of an equal number of representatives of the EU Party and OACPS Members abiding by the principles of genuine partnership and mutual accountability, shall provide advice on the fulfilment of obligations and assist as appropriate so that the Party concerned takes the necessary actions to comply with the obligations arising from this Agreement. The Party concerned remains solely responsible for complying with its obligations under this Agreement. Where they are unable to reach a mutually acceptable solution within 90 days of the commencement of consultations, the notifying Party may take appropriate measures.

7. If either Party considers that a violation of any of the essential elements constitutes a case of special urgency, it may take appropriate measures with immediate effect, without prior consultations. Cases of special urgency shall refer to exceptional cases of a particularly serious and flagrant violation of one of the essential elements referred to in Articles 9 and 18.

8. "Appropriate measures" referred to in paragraphs 6 and 7 shall be taken in full respect of international law and shall be proportionate to the failure to implement obligations under this Agreement. Priority shall be given to those which least disturb the functioning of this Agreement. Appropriate measures may include the suspension, in part or in full, of this Agreement. After taking the appropriate measures, at the request of either Party, consultations may be called in order to examine the situation thoroughly and find solutions allowing the withdrawal of appropriate measures.

9. The Parties agree that consultations shall be conducted at the level, and in the form, considered most conducive to reaching a mutually acceptable solution. They agree that, while preserving the bilateral character of the consultations, relevant regional and international actors may be involved in the consultation process upon agreement of the Parties concerned.

ARTICLE 102

Accession

1. Any new Member State of the European Union shall become a Party to this Agreement from the date of its accession to the European Union by means of a clause to that effect in the act of accession. If the act of accession to the European Union does not provide for such automatic accession of the new Member State to this Agreement, the Member State concerned shall accede to this Agreement by depositing an act of accession with the depositary, which shall send a certified copy to the OACPS Secretariat.

2. Any request for accession to this Agreement made by an independent state that is a member of the OACPS or any other independent state whose structural characteristics and economic and social situation are comparable to those of the members of the OACPS, shall be presented to the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers. If the request is approved by the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers, the state concerned shall accede to this Agreement by depositing an act of accession with the depositary, which shall send a certified copy to the OACPS Secretariat.

3. The Parties shall review the effects on this Agreement of the accession to it of new states.

4. The OACPS-EU Council of Ministers may decide on any transitional or amending measures that might be necessary.

ARTICLE 103

Observer status

In pursuit of the objectives of this Agreement, third actors, including regional and continental organisations, may be granted the status of observer in the institutions established by Part V of the General Part of this Agreement by decision of the relevant joint institution.

ARTICLE 104

Authentic texts

This Agreement is drawn up in duplicate in the Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish and Swedish languages, each text being equally authentic.

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