REGIONAL PROTOCOLS

AFRICA REGIONAL PROTOCOL

PART I

FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION

CHAPTER 1

NATURE AND SCOPE

ARTICLE 1

Genuine partnership

1. For the purposes of this Protocol, "Parties" means the relevant parties bound by this Protocol pursuant to Article 6 of the General Part of this Agreement.

2. Relations between the Parties shall be governed by the provisions of the General Part of this Agreement and the strategic priorities under this Protocol, which shall be complementary and mutually reinforcing, in accordance with Article 6 of the General Part of this Agreement.

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3. The Parties shall implement this Protocol in a spirit of shared ownership, reciprocity, mutual accountability and transparency, with complementary responsibilities at national, regional and international levels.

ARTICLE 2

Strategic priorities

1. The Parties shall take specific measures in the following key areas of engagement set out in Part II of this Protocol:

(a) inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development;

(b) human and social development;

(c) environment, natural resources management and climate change;

(d) peace and security;

(e) human rights, democracy and governance;

(f) migration and mobility.

2. The Parties may agree on other areas of engagement and cooperation by mutual consent.

ARTICLE 3

Regional and continental integration and cooperation

1. The Parties shall foster interconnections and strategic linkages between Africa and the European Union.

2. The Parties shall support regional and continental integration in Africa as effective ways to achieve peace and prosperity and to deliver on the priorities of this Protocol, taking into consideration the objectives of Agenda 2063 of the African Union (AU) ("Agenda 2063") and other relevant regional frameworks.

3. The Parties shall support regional economic integration in Africa through, inter alia, the build-up of larger markets, greater interconnectivity and the free movement of persons, goods, services, capital, labour and technology, in the context of the implementation of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, done at Abuja on 3 June 1991, and the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area, done at Kigali on 21 March 2018.

4. The Parties shall support the AU and regional organisations in promoting peace, security, democracy and governance in the context of regional and continental mechanisms such as the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the African Governance Architecture (AGA).

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5. The Parties agree to ensure coherence and complementarity between this Protocol and the continent-to-continent partnership as defined in successive AU-EU Summits and related outcome documents. In their aspiration to achieve the continental priorities as articulated in Agenda 2063, the Parties recognise the role of the AU as well as of regional economic communities (RECs) on continental and cross-regional issues. In that context, they may engage in dialogue and cooperation on cross-regional and continental issues with African countries that are not party to this Agreement.

6. The Parties agree to engage and strengthen cooperation with the RECs, acknowledging their role as building blocks under the African integration agenda. They also agree to cooperate with other relevant regional and continental actors that are willing and able to promote common goals.

7. The Parties shall encourage regional cooperation with the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) associated with the EU and the outermost regions of the EU in areas of common interest.

CHAPTER 2

ACTORS AND PROCESSES

ARTICLE 4

Institutional provisions

1. The joint institutions established by this Protocol, the composition and function of which are defined in the General Part of this Agreement, are as follows:

(a) the Africa-EU Council of Ministers;

(b) the Africa-EU Joint Committee;

(c) the Africa-EU Parliamentary Assembly.

2. The Parties shall take account of the strategic and political guidance of the AU-EU Summits in their cooperation and in the implementation of this Protocol.

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ARTICLE 5

Consultation with stakeholders

The Parties shall set up mechanisms for open and transparent consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including local authorities, representatives of civil society and the private sector, in order to keep them informed and gather their input for the political processes and implementation of this Protocol, in accordance with Article 5(3) of the General Part of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 6

Implementation and monitoring

1. The Parties, for each area of engagement, shall promote effective cooperation arrangements and shall carry out the related activities at the most appropriate domestic, regional, multi-country and continental level. To that end, they recognise the role of regional and continental organisations in implementing this Protocol and shall seek to reinforce the involvement of relevant stakeholders.

2. The Parties shall monitor the implementation of this Protocol, including through a multi-stakeholder approach. They may review it on a regular basis and, as appropriate, may revise and expand its scope in existing and new areas of engagement, in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 99(5) of the General Part of this Agreement.

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PART II

KEY AREAS OF COOPERATION

TITLE I

INCLUSIVE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 7

The Parties shall promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development for mutual interest and benefit by fostering structural economic transformation and diversification, creating quality jobs with decent work conditions, and advancing regional economic integration. They shall invest in human capital and skills, promote a sound macro-economic framework and create a business environment that is conducive to greater flows of investment and private sector development. They shall take measures and cooperate to strengthen capacities in order to mitigate climate change and minimise other environmental risks, supporting a paradigm shift in production and consumption, and promoting climate-resilient infrastructures, renewable energy and clean technologies, sound management of waste and chemicals, and integrated water management, with a view to decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation and to enabling a gradual transition to circular economies. They shall harness key sectors with high growth and high potential for decent job creation, leading to integration into regional and global high-value chains. They shall endeavour to ensure that everyone benefits from unlocked business opportunities, paying special attention to women and youth, and that core labour standards are promoted and implemented, including through effective social dialogue.

CHAPTER 1

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

ARTICLE 8

Economic governance

1. The Parties shall improve macro-economic stability and promote structural reforms and appropriate economic, fiscal and monetary policies that create the much-needed space for investment expansion, job creation and private sector development, and strengthen resilience to economic shocks. They shall facilitate the process of economic reform by improving shared understanding and exchange of information on the fundamentals of their economies and the formulation and implementation of economic policies.

2. The Parties agree to support the principles of good economic governance, adopt measures to improve public finance management, work towards public debt sustainability, strengthen national and regional statistical systems and regional, multilateral surveillance mechanisms, and promote transparent budget execution with public access to documents, effective control systems and a competitive, transparent and accountable public procurement system.

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ARTICLE 9

Human capital and skills

1. The Parties shall strengthen human capital by investing in the areas of education, skills enhancement and capacity building with a view to matching the demands of the labour market and enhancing labour productivity, paying particular attention to the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination. They shall ensure that national education systems and curricula are geared towards future employment requirements and deliver on national capacity needs.

2. The Parties shall promote demand-driven technical and vocational education and training systems, including by partnering with the private sector, which are adapted to the needs and opportunities of local and regional labour markets, in particular, in rural and remote areas.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to develop and implement policies that improve digital skills and literacy and integrate them into the education system.

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ARTICLE 10

Business environment and investment climate

1. The Parties shall improve national and regional regulatory frameworks and simplify business regulations and processes, reduce and streamline administrative formalities, reinforce cooperation and build capacities to implement effective competition policies. They shall adopt open, transparent and clear regulatory frameworks for business and investment, with protection for property rights, land rights and intellectual property rights. They shall ensure effective, transparent and predictable tax systems and improve the role of customs authorities in facilitating trade, while enforcing the rules in place to combat fraud and other infringements. They shall promote policies that enhance the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of labour market institutions, striking the right balance between flexibility and worker protection.

2. The Parties shall support financial sector reforms through measures that promote the improvement of access to finance and financial services, especially for micro, small and medium-size enterprises (MSMEs), the development and interconnectivity of financial markets, and the integration of capital markets so as to ensure the efficient allocation of savings to productive investment and the private sector. They shall aim to foster competition between financial service providers, to develop viable banking and non-banking financial sectors and to strengthen mobile and digital financial services with a view to increasing access to finance, especially for MSMEs. They shall also aim to enhance their collaboration in the implementation of international standards and to ensure open markets, protection of consumers and other users and increased access to mobile services.

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3. The Parties shall endeavour to provide business and investors with relevant and easily accessible information on business opportunities and on how to set up new businesses in Africa and the EU. They shall support structured public-private dialogue, networking between economic operators and the development of business partnerships, to ensure that private sector perspectives are taken into account in efforts to reduce investment risks and in addressing obstacles to sustainable investment while prioritising investment-climate reform agendas.

4. The Parties shall support capacity building of public authorities to pursue policy improvements and regulatory reforms to the business environment and investment climate, including through training and expertise and knowledge transfers.

5. The Parties agree that business environment and investment climate related issues shall be appropriately reflected upon in their dialogue.

ARTICLE 11

Infrastructure

1. The Parties shall support sustainable and resilient development in key infrastructures such as energy, transport, information and communications technology (ICT) and digital connectivity to facilitate the transformation of their economies, taking into consideration the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa.

2. The Parties shall cooperate in identifying, promoting and jointly financing projects expected to facilitate the transformation of their economies. They shall cooperate to build and maintain well-targeted infrastructure, including industrial parks and export-processing zones, in order to support competitive industries and sectors linked to global markets.

3. The Parties shall improve the governance of the infrastructure sector. They shall mobilise investment, enhance domestic resource mobilisation, encourage public-private partnerships and harness private sector skills and innovation in the provision of infrastructure and related services.

4. The Parties agree to facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development and maintenance through enhanced financial, technological and technical support, with particular attention to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states (SIDS).

ARTICLE 12

Intellectual property

1. The Parties shall strengthen cooperation on intellectual property rights, including in the formulation of the regulatory framework for their promotion, protection and enforcement, taking into account the underlying policy objectives.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to strengthen capacities to promote, protect and enforce intellectual property rights at domestic, regional and continental levels.

3. The Parties shall ensure that enforcement procedures are available under their law so as to enable right holders to take effective action against any act of infringement of intellectual property rights.

4. The Parties shall build capacities to promote the registration and protection of geographical indications (GIs) for both African and European agricultural and food products. They shall undertake actions to support the implementation of the AU Continental Strategy for Geographical Indications in Africa, as well as support local communities to take full advantage of GIs to move up regional and global value chains.

ARTICLE 13

Investment

1. The Parties undertake to work jointly to unlock sustainable and responsible investment from domestic and foreign, public and private sources. They shall pay particular attention to sectors that are essential for economic development, have high potential for sustainable job creation, particularly in value-adding sectors, and foster environmental sustainability.

2. The Parties agree to facilitate investment through legislation, regulation and policies, which they shall develop in a transparent manner, encouraging public-private dialogue and providing all stakeholders with the opportunity to participate.

3. The Parties shall boost efforts towards improving the investment climate and business environment. They shall support measures that bridge gaps in foreign investors' knowledge of local investment conditions. They shall promote business contacts and information networks, and facilitate joint investments and joint ventures.

4. The Parties shall promote effective and more strategic use of public investment to crowd in private sector investment through blending, guarantees and other innovative financial instruments, in order to leverage additional resources from capital markets, de-risk investment and facilitate access to finance. The Parties shall take into account other initiatives that contribute to the financing and promotion of private sector investment in Africa in order to ensure coherence.

5. The Parties shall promote corporate social responsibility (CSR) and responsible business conduct (RBC) throughout the entire value chain, by providing supportive policy frameworks that encourage businesses' uptake of relevant practices and supporting adherence to, and the implementation, follow-up and dissemination of, relevant international standards, such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprise and Social Policy. They shall recognise the contribution to sustainability and CSR of other voluntary initiatives, including industry self-regulation.

ARTICLE 14

Industrialisation

1. The Parties shall promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation in Africa through innovation and technological development, with a focus on high added-value and labour-intensive sectors.

2. The Parties shall promote the transformation of African economies and their transition from commodity dependence to diversified economies through the local treatment and processing of raw materials, added-value manufacturing and integration into regional and global value chains, including by taking into consideration the Strategy for Accelerated Industrial Development in Africa.

3. The Parties shall work towards unlocking bottlenecks that hamper industrial development. They shall address supply-side constraints, promote improved productivity, encourage the use of advanced ICT and artificial intelligence, and support digital transformation, taking into account social, mobility, analytics and cloud (SMAC) technologies. They shall foster climate-smart and environment-friendly practices and the use of clean, affordable energy.

4. The Parties shall seek to create industrial linkages through greater value addition for, *inter alia*, agriculture and resource-rich countries. They shall foster relations between smaller and larger industries in Africa. They shall develop the services sector to ensure that it contributes efficiently to industrialisation.

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5. The Parties shall facilitate the development of MSMEs in Africa, including by developing linkages within Africa and synergies with EU companies. They shall support policies for the development of entrepreneurship among youth and women in the context of their economic empowerment and the promotion of inclusive development.

ARTICLE 15

Private sector development

1. The Parties shall promote and strengthen the role of the private sector as an effective driver of sustainable development based on CSR and RBC. They shall provide an enabling environment to unlock the potential of opportunity-driven entrepreneurship and to better harness Africa's entrepreneurial base, combining a mix of tools such as financing, services and training, business culture and regulatory frameworks, innovation and the application of modern technologies. They shall pay particular attention to the informal sector and the formalisation of informal economic activities.

2. The Parties shall establish the right business framework and support MSMEs and start-ups to seize growth opportunities, including by promoting initiatives for their internationalisation. They shall strengthen MSME support services by focusing on accompanying measures, market access, capacity building and business upgrading. They shall promote and support innovation and entrepreneurship, especially among youth and women.

3. The Parties shall support structured dialogue between African and EU private sectors and cooperation between African and EU MSMEs to help create an improved business environment enabling growth in all economic sectors.

4. The Parties shall promote private sector commitment and action on green business development and the circular economy, including through the development of social entrepreneurship and the facilitation of access to sustainable finance.

5. The Parties shall encourage and facilitate wider use of their respective currencies in their international transactions.

ARTICLE 16

Trade cooperation

1. The Parties, acknowledging the importance of trade as a major contributor to economic growth and development, shall bolster trade opportunities for their mutual benefit. They shall cooperate to build trade capacity and to put in place the framework conditions and policies to facilitate increased trade flows between them.

2. The Parties agree that trade cooperation shall be implemented in full conformity with the provisions of the WTO, including special and differential treatment.

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3. The Parties agree that trade cooperation shall primarily build on existing preferential trade arrangements and Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs).

4. Signatories to the EPAs shall support their implementation, including the possibility of broadening their scope and the accession of new members where appropriate.

5. The Parties shall cooperate to support, with their respective means, the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

6. The Parties agree that the implementation of the EPAs, the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area and other applicable trading arrangements are complementary and mutually supportive and contribute to the deepening of the regional and continental integration process under the AU trade and structural transformation agenda.

7. The Parties agree to maintain or establish, at the appropriate levels, joint arrangements to monitor implementation of the EPAs and discuss other applicable trading arrangements, and assess their impact on the development of African economies and on their regional and continental integration processes.

8. The Parties shall support regional economic integration processes, including through trade facilitation and regulatory harmonisation and shall promote intra-African trade and the integration of African countries into regional and global value chains. They also agree to facilitate and stimulate the creation and consolidation of regional markets for goods and services.

9. The Parties shall support initiatives that reduce and eliminate unnecessary technical barriers to trade within the scope of the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (the "TBT Agreement"). They shall cooperate to strengthen sanitary and phyto-sanitary regulations and practices pursuant to the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) measures (the "SPS Agreement"). In particular, the Parties shall cooperate to develop international standards that support the relevant policy frameworks of the Parties. They shall cooperate to enhance transparency in the development of regulatory measures and the implementation of standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures (testing, certification, calibration). They shall address among others, issues of metrology and accreditation of laboratories and other conformity assessment bodies combined with adequate market surveillance infrastructure.

10. The Parties shall cooperate in the area of trade facilitation, building on their respective commitments under the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). They shall adopt measures, including technical assistance, to implement the TBT Agreement, the SPS Agreement and the TFA, and shall support compliance with international standards through appropriate capacity building.

11. The Parties shall stimulate market development through infrastructure linkages and prioritise the removal of unnecessary barriers and constraints facing exports between Africa and the European Union.

12. The Parties, according to their level of development and priorities, commit to enhancing market access for goods to African and EU markets, in order to maximise the benefits of existing trade agreements.

CHAPTER 2

KEY SECTORS

ARTICLE 17

Agriculture

1. The Parties shall cooperate to increase sustainable and quality agricultural production, productivity and processing, with a view to enhancing food and nutrition security, improving livelihoods, creating decent jobs, improving value chains and increasing incomes. They shall strengthen climate-resilient practices, promote the sustainable management and use of natural resources and ecosystem services, eliminate incentives that generate unsustainable production patterns, and utilise the most sustainable, energy-efficient and low-carbon technologies. They shall ensure the transition to sustainable food systems by paying attention to all dimensions of sustainability and shall strengthen the resilience of their agri-food systems to climate and environmental risks and exogenous shocks.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to boost public and private investment, better link African and EU businesses in the agri-food sector, exchange best practices and bring together EU and African expertise for agricultural development. They shall support the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

3. The Parties shall bolster investment, putting in place investor-friendly rules and regulations to promote responsible private investment and allow it to thrive in the agri-food sector. They shall support the development of sustainable agri-food value chains, *inter alia* through improved rural infrastructures, enhanced vocational training and education, agricultural research and technologies, and facilitated access to finance and markets.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to improve opportunities for agricultural producers, processors and exporters to access national, regional and international markets. They shall promote capacity building in the area of SPS standards, fair-trade schemes for agro-processing, access to services, agricultural advice and appropriate technologies, with a particular focus on the capacity of young farmers, women, smallholders and family farmers. They shall build the capacities of family farming organisations and MSMEs in production and processing techniques through empowerment policies, particularly for young people and women.

5. The Parties shall cooperate on agriculture sector governance, notably through support measures for information and early warning systems to prevent crises, through inclusive policy-making and by building the capacities of professional organisations at national, regional and continental levels. They shall facilitate access to agricultural land and inheritance rights, including for family farmers, young people and women.

ARTICLE 18

Livestock and leather

1. The Parties shall cooperate to improve sustainable livestock production, pastoralism and cross-border transhumance, to develop livestock value chains, including by enhancing the capacity of professional organisations, and to support the processing, conservation, trade and development of animal products such as leather, milk and meat, taking account of environmental sustainability, climate resilience, socio-economic development and inclusive growth. They shall also cooperate to modernise infrastructure for processing and marketing livestock and livestock products with a view to facilitating access to markets and strengthening inter-regional markets in Africa.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to develop and modernise the livestock sector in keeping with the objectives of the CAADP, taking into consideration the Livestock Development Strategy for Africa.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to improve animal health, enhance veterinary services and ensure the sustainable management of agro-pastoral resources. They shall encourage the establishment of appropriate national and regional regulatory frameworks and the strengthening of veterinary research capabilities. They shall cooperate to address the risks emerging from transboundary animal diseases by strengthening monitoring mechanisms and cross-border epidemiological cooperation.

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ARTICLE 19

Blue economy and fisheries

1. The Parties shall support the blue economy, reconciling sustainable economic growth with improved livelihoods, social equity, the conservation of marine and inland ecosystems and their biodiversity, and resilience to climate change, and strengthening food security and transparent, reliable and secure food systems.

2. The Parties agree to promote sustainable and responsible investment in the blue economy and support targeted intervention to stimulate greater private sector investment. They shall promote integrated watershed management and marine spatial planning to reconcile multiple-use demands and environmental protection. They shall further promote technology development and transfer and the sharing of knowledge, innovations, best practices and lessons learned with regard to a sustainable blue economy.

3. The Parties shall promote sustainable marine and inland fisheries for job creation, income generation, the fight against poverty, and enhanced food security and improved nutrition. They shall facilitate joint ventures, promote value-addition and address post-harvest losses through appropriate measures, and foster improved access to markets. They shall enhance the social and economic benefits of small-scale fisheries including artisanal fisheries by building sustainable fisheries value chains and strengthening investments and local capacities while paying attention to the participation of vulnerable and marginalised persons.

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4. The Parties shall ensure the conservation and sustainable management and use of marine and inland fisheries resources in order to maintain fish stocks at sustainable levels, prevent overfishing, support the implementation of climate-smart policies and minimise the negative impacts of fishing on the natural environment. They shall promote regional cooperation and foster best practices in fisheries management, including the promotion of collecting and reporting of fisheries data and statistics.

5. The Parties shall cooperate to develop sustainable marine and inland aquaculture through effective spatial planning, an ecosystem-based approach, better access to finance and an enhanced level playing field for investors, while ensuring that it meets the concerns of local communities.

6. The Parties shall promote the sustainable development of coastal and maritime tourism that generates revenue and creates jobs, with due consideration to the environmental and social dimensions.

7. The Parties shall explore the potential of innovative, new and emerging sustainable maritime activities, including tidal energy. They shall establish the necessary regulatory and policy frameworks for future development, supporting research and reducing technical bottlenecks to facilitate access for investors while avoiding risks to the marine environment.

8. The Parties shall support the implementation of blue economy strategies and action plans. They shall facilitate the engagement of the private sector and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of a sustainable blue economy. They shall pay due attention to the development of SIDS, recognising their dependence on the ocean.

ARTICLE 20

Extractive industries and processing

1. The Parties shall promote the extractive industries sector to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth and development and the transformation of African economies. The Parties shall encourage investment in extractive industries and processing, taking into account the principle of countries' sovereignty over natural resources. They shall promote greater integration between African and EU value chains.

2. The Parties shall promote fair, responsible and undistorted access to extractive resources, fully respecting countries' sovereignty over their natural resources, and shall foster sustainable trade between African and EU operators, upholding the rights of affected communities. They shall support the development, harmonisation and implementation of coherent policies and robust regulatory and legal frameworks for the exploration, exploitation, handling, licensing, contracting, taxation, processing and exporting of extractive resources. They shall encourage local MSMEs' participation in the extractive industries sector by facilitating the transfer of skills and technology so as to contribute to their competitiveness, with a view to them becoming full actors in the value chains.

3. The Parties shall promote good governance in the extractive sector for socioeconomic development. They shall strengthen domestic legislation to ensure compliance with internationally recognised principles and guidelines, taking into consideration regional strategies as appropriate. They shall combat tax fraud and tax evasion, and ensure that all operators pay the taxes, fees and royalties due to host countries. They shall use national, regional and international legal means to fight illegal exploitation and trade in mineral resources.

4. The Parties shall support national, regional and international initiatives to improve transparency and accountability in the use and management of extractive resources, including by promoting the Kimberley Process and the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative and other relevant initiatives on the responsible and sustainable extraction and sourcing of minerals, such as the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas.

5. The Parties shall support the development of appropriate legislation and mechanisms, taking into account the needs of artisanal and small-scale miners, local communities and civil society, while fostering their engagement, to ensure the inclusive and sustainable exploitation of extractive resources. They shall promote environmental sustainability, climate-smart practices, decent work conditions, the health and safety of local communities and respect for human rights, in line with international obligations and commitments. They shall cooperate to build the productive capacities of local entrepreneurs in the extractive value chains and artisanal and small-scale miners, and shall encourage social partnerships between mining companies, local communities and other relevant stakeholders. They shall promote national and regional mapping and exploration activities to improve the quality of geological information and geo-data management systems in Africa.

ARTICLE 21

Manufacturing

1. The Parties shall cooperate to foster sustainable manufacturing in Africa, developing tailor-made strategies designed to reduce dependency on low-end primary production and to create value addition at local and regional levels.

2. The Parties shall develop policies to attract more domestic and foreign direct investment in the manufacturing sector. They shall cooperate to support the capacity of MSMEs. They shall promote innovation and advanced manufacturing clusters, networks and partnerships.

3. The Parties shall endeavour to increase the proportion of labour-intensive manufacturing. They shall cooperate to assimilate new and emerging technologies with a view to transforming supply chains and modernising production.

4. The Parties shall support efforts to increase trade in manufactured goods through linkages with markets and trade facilitation, including for enhanced quality standards and infrastructure. They shall strengthen regional integration to unlock Africa's manufacturing potential and improve its competitiveness in global markets.

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ARTICLE 22

Services

1. The Parties shall take measures that support the development of a vibrant and robust services sector to pave the way for increased trade in services, exports and investments, and strengthened regional integration and inter-regional cooperation.

2. The Parties shall develop sector-specific policies and measures to address regulatory hurdles, improve institutional and regulatory frameworks and strengthen capacity in the supply of services. They shall support the implementation of the WTO General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), deepen regional cooperation, reduce the fragmentation of services markets in Africa, strengthen the generation and analysis of data on trade in services, and support the monitoring of services integration and the impact of reforms in lowering trade costs.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to enhance trade in services, including the movement of natural persons for business purposes between Africa and the EU, with a particular focus on key sectors for their economic growth and development, such as ICT, health, financial services, distribution, tourism, construction and related engineering services, in line with existing international agreements.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to strengthen capacity in the supply of services relating to cultural and creative industries.

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ARTICLE 23

Transport

1. The Parties shall cooperate towards achieving modern, safe, secure and sustainable transport systems, enhancing interconnectivity within Africa and between Africa and the EU.

2. The Parties shall improve the overall governance of the transport sector, developing and implementing efficient regulations that allow fair competition within and between transport modes. They shall aim to reduce the environmental impact of transport modes by promoting clean energy through improved fuel standards and energy-efficient technologies.

3. The Parties shall bolster investment to support the further development of transport infrastructures and networks (namely road, air, water, rail), paying particular attention to missing-link infrastructures and their maintenance, taking into account the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa. They shall improve access to basic infrastructures for rural and remote communities in order to enhance their socio-economic development. They shall work towards strengthening sustainable port infrastructure and facilities and shall explore the possibility of creating green ports.

4. The Parties shall cooperate in the aviation sector, including by supporting the establishment and strengthening of the single African air transport market. They shall bolster investment, broaden and deepen regulatory cooperation and enhance safety and security and airspace surveillance, including their capability to respond to related threats and risks.

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ARTICLE 24

Sustainable energy

1. The Parties shall endeavour to accelerate access to sustainable and affordable energy, to develop resilient energy infrastructures, particularly in rural areas, and to promote the development of renewable energy and efficient energy use. They shall promote the use of the most efficient energy and low-carbon technologies in all sectors, particularly in agriculture, manufacturing, extractive industries and tourism.

2. The Parties shall promote energy security and establish and reinforce effective energy interconnections within Africa and between Africa and the EU, so as to ensure reliable and affordable energy supply. They shall address regulatory, economic, societal and other challenges related to the development of strategic sustainable energy corridors.

3. The Parties shall facilitate open, transparent, competitive and functioning energy markets by adopting legal and regulatory frameworks that drive investment in sustainable energy, energy storage and energy efficiency. They shall phase out environmentally harmful fossil fuel subsidies. They undertake to strengthen the partnership between African and EU private sectors, and the engagement of their public and private sectors, in order to boost investment in sustainable energy generation, energy efficiency and energy access. They shall mobilise investment in a diversified and clean energy mix for electricity, favouring renewable resources. They shall support the implementation of relevant national and regional energy initiatives in Africa, including by contributing to the objectives of the African Renewable Energy Initiative.

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4. The Parties shall promote energy efficiency and energy savings at all stages of the energy chain, from generation to consumption. They agree to work towards increasing sustainable energy generation and storage capacity, and to improve transmission and distribution infrastructure by promoting solutions that are safe, sustainable, resource-efficient and climate-smart, and that contribute more effectively to eradicating poverty.

5. The Parties shall support the development and uptake of clean, diverse, cost-effective and sustainable energy technologies, with a focus on renewable and low-emission energy technologies and on energy efficiency and energy saving measures, by strengthening capacities and promoting Africa-EU partnerships, linkages and joint ventures between economic operators. They shall promote joint networks for research and innovation on renewable energy and energy efficiency.

6. The Parties shall support sectoral reforms and the development of appropriate regulatory and policy frameworks to ensure regional interconnectivity and cooperation in the area of energy. They shall strengthen regional power pools as a vehicle for integrated cross-border energy markets and trading.

ARTICLE 25

ICT and the digital economy

1. The Parties shall increase access to open, affordable and secure ICT, including by supporting private and public investments. They shall endeavour to establish the necessary regulatory institutions to license service providers, promote competitive behaviour and ensure the fair treatment of consumers and data and consumer protection.

2. The Parties shall improve access to digital technologies and services, and establish affordable digital connectivity, including through a conducive policy and regulatory framework. They shall improve the business environment and facilitate access to finance and business support services to foster digitally enabled entrepreneurship and mainstream digitalisation, so as to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of interventions in all economic sectors with the objective of achieving inclusive economic growth and transformation.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to create an enabling environment, specifically through the establishment and adaptation of appropriate, legal and institutional frameworks, to unlock the potential of the digital economy, including e-commerce, in job creation and economic development, with a particular focus on women and youth.

4. The Parties shall support the transition towards knowledge-based economies.

ARTICLE 26

Tourism

1. The Parties shall cooperate to create an enabling environment for a balanced and sustainable development of tourism, which fosters economic development, generates employment and promotes the integration of environmental, cultural and social considerations, including by addressing challenges particular to the tourism industry.

2. The Parties shall bolster investment in the promotion and development of tourism products, with due regard to the competitive position of MSMEs. They shall strengthen linkages between tourism and other relevant economic sectors, such as agriculture, forestry, transport, the blue economy, cultural industries and heritage, with a view to optimising the socio-economic benefits of tourism.

3. The Parties shall enhance the protection and promotion of cultural heritage and natural resources, paying particular attention to environmental and wildlife protection. They shall respect the integrity and interests of local communities and maximise their involvement in the process of tourism development, in particular rural and community tourism and ecotourism.

4. The Parties shall develop initiatives that promote sustainable tourism and improve service standards. They shall promote training and exchanges of experiences and share information and statistics of mutual interest in the tourism sector.

CHAPTER 3

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

ARTICLE 27

Science and technology development

The Parties shall strengthen cooperation in the areas of science and technology for mutual benefit, with the aim of promoting social and economic development, tackling global societal challenges and improving regional competitiveness.

ARTICLE 28

Research and innovation

1. The Parties agree to mobilise resources to foster research and innovation activities aimed at supporting inclusive economic growth and development, and the transition towards knowledge-based societies and economies.

2. The Parties shall encourage the development of research infrastructures and facilities. They shall foster basic and applied research, including in the areas of engineering and artificial intelligence, and encourage open data in pursuit of mutually beneficial scientific excellence. They shall promote research undertaken in African universities, institutes and research centres, paying special attention to capacity building and the transfer of technology and know-how. They shall enhance participation in global research, technology development and transfer, innovation and knowledge production.

3. The Parties shall promote and support innovative mobility and training schemes for students, academics and researchers, and build the capacity of higher education institutions to network effectively in research and innovation. They shall encourage dialogue, knowledge exchange and collaboration between the academic community, researchers and innovators, and the private sector, with a view to enhancing productivity and competitiveness and strengthening entrepreneurial ecosystems.

ARTICLE 29

Space and geospatial technology

1. The Parties shall harness the potential benefits of space science, technology, innovation and applications on matters of common interest in the area of civil space activities, such as space research, global navigation satellite systems applications and services, the development of satellite augmentation systems, earth observation and earth science, particularly the use of early warning and surveillance. They shall cooperate to develop a responsible and sustainable space market and industry that promotes and responds to their respective needs.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to conduct activities that exploit space technologies and applications for sustainable development and for the improvement of people's welfare and that address Africa's socio-economic opportunities and challenges taking into consideration the African Space Policy and Strategy. They shall improve access to space-derived data, information, services and products.

TITLE II

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 30

The Parties shall work towards eradicating poverty in all its forms by 2030, combating inequality, achieving gender equality, and creating the conditions to enable everyone to enjoy a life of dignity, participate in democratic life and make an active contribution to sustainable economic growth. They shall foster social protection, with a view to eradicating poverty and fighting inequalities, and as a means of creating a self-strengthening cycle towards inclusive, equitable and sustainable development. They shall invest in human capital as an integral part of human and social development, and a way to increase the employability of young people for enhanced productivity and entrepreneurship.

CHAPTER 1

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 31

Education

1. The Parties shall aim to achieve universal, inclusive and equitable access to quality education at all levels, from pre-school to higher education, including improved enrolment and retention rates. They shall enhance the quality of formal education and non-formal learning, cooperate in curriculum development and improve infrastructure and equipment in education centres. They shall pay particular attention to the specific needs of women and girls, as well as to the most vulnerable and marginalised groups, including persons with disabilities, and those in situations of emergency and fragility.

2. The Parties shall promote the expanded delivery and application of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and arts, for all. They shall promote the use of accessible and affordable digital technologies and the development of digital skills and literacy for all.

3. The Parties shall endeavour to boost enrolment and quality in tertiary education, technical and vocational training, and work-based and adult learning, to build a critical mass of skilled innovation workers and highly educated people and to respond effectively to specific economic needs.

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4. The Parties shall work together to encourage the recognition and transparency of qualifications, and improved quality assurance and relevance. They shall increase support for specific initiatives to facilitate the mobility of students, staff, academics and researchers between Africa and the EU. They shall foster partnerships between institutions and promote the development and transfer of knowledge.

ARTICLE 32

Health

1. The Parties shall aim at achieving universal health coverage and equitable access to quality essential healthcare services, including through strengthened national health systems and functioning modern healthcare facilities.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to eliminate preventable maternal, child and neo-natal mortality and morbidity. They shall aim to deliver universal access to sexual and reproductive health services. They shall cooperate to address the growing incidence and burden of non-communicable diseases.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to tackle communicable and vector-borne diseases, including neglected tropical diseases. They shall cooperate to address pandemics such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, and to reduce substantially the rate of resultant deaths. They shall support access to safe and affordable essential medicines, vaccines and diagnostics, including universal access to anti-retroviral treatment for people with HIV/AIDS.

4. The Parties shall strengthen capacity for emergency preparedness and response to detect, prevent and respond to disease outbreaks and other health threats, such as antimicrobial resistance, taking a "one health" approach. They agree to scale up support for national and regional health prevention, surveillance and monitoring systems.

5. The Parties shall cooperate in the promotion of local knowledge and regulation of traditional medicine in public health activities.

ARTICLE 33

Water, sanitation and housing

1. The Parties shall work towards ensuring that everyone has access to modern and liveable habitats with quality basic services.

2. The Parties shall promote access to affordable and decent housing for all in sustainable human settlements, taking account of effective territorial planning and land tenure, and of use and management systems when enacting housing policies. They shall work towards reducing the proportion of people living in slums and shall cooperate to upgrade slums and informal settlements.

3. The Parties shall foster universal access to sufficient, safe, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic use, including through sustainable and integrated water resources and systems management, and more efficient water use and recycling.

4. The Parties shall boost physical, affordable and acceptable access to sanitation for all, in all spheres of life, that is safe, hygienic, secure, and socially and culturally acceptable, and that provides privacy and ensures dignity.

5. The Parties shall increase access to sustainable energy services for all and support efficiency in households' energy usage.

ARTICLE 34

Food security and improved nutrition

1. The Parties shall enhance access to safe and nutritious food with a view to achieving the zero hunger target and eradicating famines and other types of food crises. They shall support the establishment of adequate systems of food supply and storage.

2. The Parties shall fight all forms of malnutrition, including through improved food production and distribution, and better sanitation and environmental conditions. They shall support sustainable agricultural production and productivity, including at the level of small-scale fisheries to unleash their full potential as critical sources for food and nutrition security, by inter alia improved access to finance for small producers and developed irrigation, storage and transport infrastructure to facilitate market access and ensure food product safety and quality.

3. The Parties shall build resilience of the most vulnerable populations to food-related shocks through strengthened social safety nets. They shall enhance coordination between development and humanitarian action, so as to better anticipate, prevent and prepare for famines and other types of food crisis, and ensure timely action to make food locally available.

CHAPTER 2

INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL COHESION

ARTICLE 35

Inequality and social protection

1. The Parties shall promote the development and implementation of policies and systems of social protection and security, in order to eradicate poverty, fight inequalities and enhance social cohesion.

2. The Parties shall support the transformative role of social protection policies and systems, which foster equity, promote social inclusion and dialogue with social partners, and strengthen inclusive, equitable and sustainable economic growth. They shall aim at building progressively universal, nationally owned social protection systems, including through the adoption of minimum social protection floors, with particular attention to persons in vulnerable situations.

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3. The Parties shall cooperate in support of attaining and sustaining income growth of the bottom 40 % of the population at a rate higher than the national average.

4. The Parties shall endeavour to ensure that all persons working in the formal sector are provided with social security. They shall also endeavour to boost the number of people in the informal sector and rural economy that have access to social security, with the goal of progressively reaching universality.

5. The Parties shall develop initiatives to support the transition from the informal to the formal economy, including access to credit and micro-finance, and strengthened social protection measures.

6. The Parties shall promote and facilitate dialogue between employers' and workers' organisations in the formal and informal economy, and civil society organisations, including through capacity building.

ARTICLE 36

Decent work

1. The Parties shall support the development and implementation of macroeconomic, employment and social policies that focus on the creation of full and productive employment and decent work for all, particularly for youth and women as well as for vulnerable persons and groups.

2. The Parties shall develop and maintain inclusive and well-functioning labour markets and shall adopt measures that address the informal economy and prevent unfair labour practices.

3. The Parties shall support measures that ensure equal employment opportunities and equal remuneration for work of equal value and guarantee adequate paid parental leave in both the public and private sectors. They shall adopt prevention and protection measures against all forms of discrimination in the workplace, ensure respect for fundamental rights at work and enhance healthy and safe conditions for workers.

4. The Parties shall work towards the elimination of child labour, prioritising the worst forms of it.

ARTICLE 37

Persons with disabilities

1. The Parties shall promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by all persons with disabilities, in view of the effective implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

2. The Parties shall take measures to ensure the full inclusion in society of persons with disabilities and their participation in all spheres of public and private life, including in democratic and political affairs and decision-making processes. They shall prevent, combat and eliminate any harmful practices and all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse or discrimination against persons with disabilities and shall protect relatives, caregivers or intermediaries from discrimination on the basis of their association with persons with disabilities.

3. The Parties shall promote equal and barrier-free access to social services, transportation and other physical infrastructure as well as to recreational and cultural activities for persons with disabilities, and shall support alternative methods of communication, where appropriate, to enable their full inclusion in society.

4. The Parties shall promote equal access to labour markets, prohibiting any discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all forms and conditions of employment. They shall support the employment of persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors through targeted policies and incentive measures, including for self-employment and entrepreneurship.

ARTICLE 38

Culture, sport and people-to-people contacts

1. The Parties shall support culture as an engine for sustainable and economic development. They shall create an enabling environment for cultural innovation, diversity and development, as well as for the creation, protection, production and distribution of cultural works. They shall encourage the use of new information and communication technologies to promote their culture.

2. The Parties shall enhance the protection and promotion of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and the diversity of cultural expression, with a view to enhancing mutual understanding and fostering balanced cultural exchanges.

3. The Parties shall endeavour to promote the mobility of culture professionals and the circulation of works of art, and to carry out joint initiatives in various cultural and creative sectors. They shall encourage intercultural exchanges and dialogue among youth organisations and civil society from Africa and the EU.

4. The Parties shall support the development of creative industries. They shall work towards putting in place support measures with a view to stimulating artistic creation and facilitating exchange of artistic expression.

5. The Parties shall promote sport as a driver for sustainable development, social inclusion, non-discrimination and the advancement of human rights. They shall endeavour to develop adequate facilities and to encourage people's participation in sporting and other physical education activities. They shall also support sport as a means for intercultural dialogue and cooperation between nations, prevention of conflict and violence, and post-conflict reconciliation.

CHAPTER 3

POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 39

Demography

1. The Parties acknowledge the need to manage the opportunities and challenges of demographic change in order to better meet the aspirations and hopes of future generations in Africa and the EU.

2. The Parties shall ensure the systematic collection, analysis, storage and dissemination of statistics and data on all the population in accordance with ethical, confidentiality and privacy standards and shall take data and trends into account in their development plans.

3. The Parties shall empower and invest in youth and women, acknowledging their critical role in demographic processes. They shall promote the human rights of women and youth and shall provide them with the education and skills they need. They shall mobilise investment and unlock economic opportunities, so as to harness the potential of large youth populations.

ARTICLE 40

Gender equality and empowerment of women

1. The Parties shall strengthen cooperation aimed at improving and expanding equal participation and opportunities for all, in all sectors of political, economic, social and cultural life. They shall ensure that the gender perspective is systematically mainstreamed across all policies and programmes.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to promote the human and social development of women and girls. They shall endeavour to remove all barriers in health and education in order to eliminate gender disparities. They shall work towards universal and equal access to formal education and vocational training in order to reach the full potential of women and girls and help realise their aspirations. They shall ensure that learning materials and teaching methods are gender-responsive and shall encourage women and girls to undertake studies in the STEM disciplines.

3. The Parties shall facilitate equal access by women to economic opportunities, employment, credit and financial services, and control over and use of land and other productive assets. They shall support women entrepreneurs, eliminate the gender pay gap and remove discriminatory regulations and practices. They shall take effective measures to identify and take action against acts of sexism and to address root causes of gender discrimination such as negative social norms and gender stereotypes, including in mass media.

4. The Parties shall strengthen the voices of women and girls and their participation in political life through measures to achieve gender parity in electoral, policy and governance processes and in senior government positions, including constitutional bodies and state-owned businesses, and shall promote their active role in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts.

5. The Parties shall enact and enforce legislation that protects women and girls from all forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, and trafficking.

6. The Parties shall 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. They shall further stress the need for universal access to quality and affordable comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and education, taking into consideration the UNESCO international technical guidance on sexuality education, as well as the need for the delivery of relevant health-care services. They shall promote and encourage the ratification and the effective implementation of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, done at Banjul, 26 June 1981 (the "Maputo Protocol"), and support the effective implementation of the Maputo Plan of Action 2016-2030, as appropriate.

ARTICLE 41

Youth

1. The Parties shall support youth entrepreneurship and shall undertake to secure decent employment for young people, including by supporting them in acquiring labour market-relevant skills through education, vocational and technical training, and enhanced access to digital technologies, and to facilitate access to land and credit. They shall establish youth-friendly employment services to connect young people to employment opportunities.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to empower young people and shall work to open space for their active inclusion in decision-making processes and their participation in democratic and political life as well as in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts. They shall promote policies and programmes for marginalised youth, including youth advocacy programmes, to offer them the opportunity and motivation to reintegrate into society.

3. The Parties shall support initiatives aimed at ensuring access to quality basic services for all children, preventing the recruitment and use of children in conflict situations and ending all forms of violence and harmful practices against children, including child, early, and forced marriage, child labour, child abuse and corporal punishment, with a special focus on children in situations of vulnerability.

ARTICLE 42

Sustainable urbanisation and rural development

1. The Parties shall boost the potential of cities as hubs for sustainable and inclusive growth and for innovation.

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2. The Parties shall promote sustainable land-use planning and equitable management of land markets, paying particular attention to transparent and regulated land acquisitions and property rights. They shall also promote sustainable urban mobility and smart, safe cities that make use of opportunities from digitalisation and technologies. They shall integrate sustainable energy production and energy-efficiency solutions, encourage productive use of energy, improve the management of waste and address all forms of pollution. They shall enhance urban mobility solutions and ensure that the provision of services and infrastructure is designed to be climate- and environment-friendly and that resources are used efficiently. They shall build cities' resilience to shocks and harness opportunities for a low-emission and climate-resilient economy.

3. The Parties shall promote a balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities, with a special focus on employment and income generation. They shall accelerate rural diversification through adding value to local products and exploiting natural and cultural resources. They shall promote inclusive, balanced and integrated territorial and urban policies, multi-level governmental coordination actively engaging local authorities and communities, and forging stronger links between rural and urban areas.

TITLE III

ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

ARTICLE 43

The Parties shall take ambitious action to mitigate and adapt to climate change, protect and improve the quality of the environment, and manage natural resources sustainably, with a view to stopping and reversing climate change and environmental degradation, and attaining sustainable development. They shall adopt specific measures to reduce and prevent loss of biodiversity, maintain and restore ecosystems, protect and fight illegal trade in wildlife, promote the sustainable management of water, land and other natural resources, strengthen ocean governance, combat all forms of pollution, promote sound waste management, and build resilience to natural disasters. They shall work together to prevent climate change impacts and environmental degradation from continuing to act as threat multipliers with serious implications for peace and security. They shall accelerate the transition to greener pathways for development in key economic sectors, promote circular economies and resource efficiency, and support clean and sustainable energy and low-carbon technologies, ensuring that economic growth goes hand in hand with the transition to low emissions and environmental sustainability. They shall endeavour to build effective alliances in international settings, with a view to driving global action forward. They shall build capacity to implement multilateral environmental agreements to which they are party and shall mainstream environmental sustainability, climate change objectives and the pursuit of environmentally sustainable growth in national and local policies, plans and investments. They shall promote the constructive engagement of local authorities, civil society and the private sector, and respect for the rights of all, including indigenous peoples as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and local communities.

CHAPTER 1

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

ARTICLE 44

Biodiversity and ecosystems

1. The Parties shall cooperate to ensure that biodiversity and ecosystems are preserved, protected and restored, so that the significant economic, social and cultural services they provide continue to support human well-being and economic growth. They shall develop and implement national biodiversity strategies and action plans in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Protocols.

2. The Parties shall enact legislation and adopt integrated strategies for the incorporation of biodiversity considerations in all relevant sectors. They shall support innovative options, such as nature-based solutions or agro-ecology, as well as valuing ecosystems services, in maximising mainstreaming of biodiversity.

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3. The Parties shall take an inclusive approach to address key drivers of habitat loss such as land use change, the expansion of subsistence agriculture, and the development of commercial agriculture, urban areas and energy infrastructures. They shall take measures to control forest exploitation, land clearing for cultivation, fires, grazing by animals and invasive species. They shall protect, conserve and promote the sustainable use and rehabilitation of forests, woodlands, rangelands, wetlands and other areas with vegetation cover. They shall maintain and enhance species and the genetic diversity of plants and animals whether terrestrial, fresh-water or marine.

4. The Parties shall step up their efforts to establish, effectively manage and improve the governance of protected areas for biodiversity conservation.

5. The Parties shall strengthen the involvement of local communities and indigenous peoples, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), in the conservation of ecosystems, including through the promotion of environment-friendly and sustainable tourism and the creation of jobs and other economic opportunities.

ARTICLE 45

Circular economy

1. The Parties shall prevent or minimise the generation of waste at source. They shall improve product reusability, recyclability and resource efficiency in order to adapt production and consumption to the achievement of a circular economy, including through adequate waste collection and sorting services and environmentally sound recycling initiatives and facilities. They undertake to adopt policies on the circular economy in order to protect the environment and human health, make products more energy- and resource-efficient, broaden consumer choice and improve waste management.

2. The Parties shall establish the necessary domestic regulatory frameworks and enforcement mechanisms for the environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste and for the implementation of relevant multilateral agreements. They shall take the necessary measures to combat dumping and illegal trade in hazardous waste, including radioactive materials, chemical and organic waste, in conformity with the provisions of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal, done at Basel on 22 March 1989, and taking into consideration the provisions of the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa, done at Bamako on 30 January 1991. They shall prevent or minimise hazardous substances in material cycles and manage chemicals in products throughout their lifecycle. They shall support informed decision-making on appropriate measures to protect the environment and human health, including against pollution resulting from inappropriately managed waste, and to remediate associated environmental damage.

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3. The Parties shall effectively address all forms of pollution. They shall take measures aimed at the detection, prevention and reporting of pollution. They shall increase efforts to prevent plastic pollution and to remove plastics and micro-plastics from the environment. They shall explore opportunities for strengthened cooperation on combating air pollution. They shall raise awareness of the public health and environmental risks of pollution and the multiple benefits of improved air quality, including through public outreach campaigns.

ARTICLE 46

Ocean governance

1. The Parties shall strengthen ocean governance in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to ensure safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed oceans, reducing the pressures on oceans and seas and promoting the sustainable development of the blue economy and strengthening ocean knowledge.

2. The Parties shall ensure the conservation and sustainable management and use of living marine resources at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels, particularly in the context of sustainable fisheries partnership agreements and regional fisheries management organisations.

3. The Parties shall maintain or adopt initiatives to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including, where appropriate, the implementation of policies and measures to exclude IUU products from trade flows. They shall promote and effectively implement and enforce monitoring, control and surveillance measures, such as observer schemes, vessel-monitoring systems, fishing licences and authorisations, catch recording and reporting, transhipment control, inspections and port state control as well as associated measures to ensure compliance, including sanctions according to domestic regulations, aimed at the conservation of fish stocks and the prevention of overfishing.

4. The Parties agree to take the necessary steps to prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, to eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing and to refrain from introducing such new subsidies, recognising that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for African developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiation.

5. The Parties shall reduce the pressures on the oceans by protecting, preserving and restoring coastal and marine ecosystems, valorising marine and coastal natural capital and fighting marine pollution, including oil spills, the destruction of the seabed, noise pollution and marine litter, including plastics and micro-plastics from land- and sea-based sources. They shall support and strive for the regulation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions from ships and shall actively support the urgent implementation of the initial International Maritime Organization strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from ships. They shall scale up ocean and coastal clean-up operations, paying particular attention to accumulation zones in ocean gyres.

6. The Parties shall take actions related to oceans that contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

7. The Parties shall develop measures related to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity on the basis of the best available scientific information.

8. The Parties recognise the general concerns raised about the impact of seabed mining on the marine environment and its biodiversity. They shall use the best available science, apply the precautionary principle and ecosystem approach, promote research and share best practices in fields of mutual interest related to seabed mineral resources, in order to ensure sound environmental management of activities for the protection and preservation of the marine environment and its biodiversity.

ARTICLE 47

Land management and land degradation

1. The Parties shall cooperate to prevent land degradation and to develop long-term integrated strategies for the conservation and sustainable management of land.

2. The Parties shall promote integrated approaches and adopt measures for the conservation and improvement of soil. They shall combat soil erosion and degradation, and the deterioration of its physical, chemical and biological properties. They shall address pollution caused specifically by agricultural activities, including aquaculture and animal husbandry. They shall ensure sustainable and equitable land rights and tenure and sustainable land, water and forest resource management, and shall create sustainable economic opportunities for people living in rural areas. They shall ensure that non-agricultural forms of land use, including but not limited to public works, mining and the disposal of waste, do not result in erosion, pollution or any other form of land degradation.

3. The Parties shall take measures for effective land-use planning and infrastructure that strengthen resilience in hazard-prone countries, while enhancing disaster-response capabilities. They shall plan and implement mitigation and rehabilitation measures based on best practices, best scientific knowledge and local knowledge and experience in areas affected by land degradation.

ARTICLE 48

Forests

1. The Parties shall promote sustainable forest management and use of forest resources. They shall halt deforestation and forest degradation, and combat illegal logging and associated trade.

2. The Parties shall support forest landscape restoration initiatives to reverse deforestation, establish forest reserves, restore degraded forest landscapes, carry out afforestation programmes where necessary and limit forest grazing to seasons and intensities that will allow forest regeneration.

3. The Parties shall promote sustainable value chains of agriculture and forest commodities, prioritising the creation of jobs and other economic opportunities in the conservation of ecosystems.

4. The Parties shall support the implementation of the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan, including by concluding and implementing voluntary partnership agreements. They shall strengthen coherence and positive interactions at country level between the FLEGT Action Plan and the Warsaw Framework for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+).

5. The Parties shall strengthen the involvement of local authorities and communities in forest protection. They shall raise public awareness of deforestation at all levels and encourage the consumption of resource- and energy-efficient products from sustainably managed forests. They shall promote and support the use of alternative and sustainable cooking fuel for local populations.

ARTICLE 49

Wildlife

1. The Parties shall support *in situ* conservation of Africa's key landscapes for biodiversity conservation, particularly trans-border protected areas that are habitats for key wildlife species, and enable adequate connectivity to allow for wildlife migration and species-range adaptation to climate change. They shall also strengthen agencies responsible for protected areas and promote the involvement of rural communities in the sustainable management of wildlife and woodlands.

2. The Parties shall combat wildlife trafficking by supporting the formulation and enforcement of policies and laws to make it a serious crime, strengthening anti-poaching measures and law enforcement monitoring, and promoting international coordination in the context of the International Consortium to Combat Wildlife Crime (ICCWC), including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), done at Washington on 3 March 1973, and other relevant international frameworks. They shall raise public awareness, educating and influencing consumers, destroy stockpiles and promote high-profile diplomacy and advocacy.

3. The Parties shall support efforts to promote sustainable consumption of bush-meat, while developing affordable alternative sources of protein and developing sustainable livelihoods.

ARTICLE 50

Water and freshwater management

1. The Parties shall manage their water resources in a sustainable manner, with a view to maintaining high levels in terms of quantity and quality. They shall promote integrated water resources management and implement policies for the planning, conservation, management, use and development of underground and surface water, and for the harvesting and use of rainwater. They shall protect and restore water sources and ecosystems, prevent water pollution, collect and treat wastewater, and enable environmentally sound urban development. They shall optimise the contribution of the water sector in order to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

2. The Parties shall promote cooperation for transboundary water-resource management, with a view to achieving freshwater sustainability, preventing land degradation and desertification, building resilience to water-related hazards, for example floods, droughts and pollution, including through water collection and storage systems, and preventing the risks of conflicts.

3. The Parties shall support sustainable water management and good water governance at all levels. They shall strengthen dialogue and encourage partnerships between public authorities, the private sector and civil society.

4. The Parties shall promote the sustainable exploitation and management of freshwater fisheries with a view to maintaining healthy fish stocks and minimising any negative impacts on the natural environment. They shall combat IUU fishing that is in violation of domestic laws. They shall strengthen capacities, promote regional cooperation, and adopt measures to improve the management and governance of freshwater fisheries at national and regional levels. They shall mainstream climate change mitigation and adaptation in freshwater fisheries and aquaculture, promote the restoration and conservation of aquatic ecosystems and their biodiversity, and combat all forms of pollution affecting lakes and rivers.

CHAPTER 2

CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURAL DISASTERS

ARTICLE 51

Climate action

1. The Parties shall pursue the objectives and be guided by the principles of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. They shall enact comprehensive and inclusive domestic climate policies and programmes to accelerate the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

2. The Parties shall formulate, communicate and maintain successive and ambitious nationally determined contributions (NDCs), develop and implement ambitious national adaptation plans, as appropriate, develop long-term visions towards low emissions and climate-resilient development, and invest in climate change mitigation and adaptation capacities. They shall develop monitoring, reporting and verification as well as evaluation systems to track progress on climate action.

3. The Parties shall design long-term strategies to reduce emissions arising from the transport sector (road, aviation and maritime). They shall promote smart urban mobility and foster the implementation of policy approaches and positive incentives for reducing emissions from unsustainable land management, deforestation and forest degradation. They shall engage in promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency and encourage countries to engage in energy transition. They shall phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption and minimise the possible adverse impacts on their development, in a manner that protects the poor and the affected communities. They shall strengthen international cooperation to conserve and enhance, as appropriate, GHG sinks and reservoirs.

4. The Parties shall promote an ambitious phase-down of hydrofluorocarbons under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, done at Montreal on 16 September 1987, by cooperating to support the ratification of the Kigali Amendment thereto and shall work towards ensuring its swift implementation to achieve an ambitious global phase-down of the production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons.

5. The Parties shall recognise and act on the threat that climate change and environmental degradation pose to peace and security, particularly in situations of fragility and in the most vulnerable countries. They shall take measures for and work together in strengthening adaptation and resilience measures to ensure conflict prevention through early-warning systems, taking into account the security challenges linked to adverse effects of climate change and environmental risk factors, and strengthen the link between early warning and early action across policy areas, including through risk and impact assessments.

6. The Parties shall aim at averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and slow onset events, in their domestic and international efforts, and, in that context, shall recognise the important role of sustainable development in reducing the risk of loss and damage.

7. The Parties shall take action to align financial flows with a pathway towards low GHG emissions and climate-resilient development.

8. The Parties shall aim at enhancing knowledge and capacity on policy options and instruments and best practices to improve resource efficiency along the entire life-cycle of natural resources and products. They shall work together towards strengthening scientific and technical, human and institutional capacity for climate action and environmental management and monitoring at all relevant levels, with particular attention to the most vulnerable countries. They shall promote the use of space technologies and information systems.

9. The Parties shall strengthen coordination across all levels of governance to encourage and enable local authorities to make and implement ambitious climate and energy commitments. They shall promote synergies between public administration, civil society organisations and private businesses and foster participation of the private sector towards a low GHG emission and climate-resilient economy, including through joint research. They shall promote existing initiatives such as the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and shall support the implementation of their action plans.

ARTICLE 52

Drought and desertification

1. The Parties shall combat desertification through improvement in land governance, the fight against land degradation and the sustainable management of land and water. They shall accelerate progress towards the implementation of the national action plans and the land degradation neutrality targets of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, done at Paris on 17 June 1994, as well as other relevant international and regional initiatives, including the Great Green Wall initiative.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to prepare for and respond to emergencies caused by drought and shall work to increase resilience to environmental degradation, desertification, related health threats and humanitarian crises by addressing factors that cause vulnerability.

ARTICLE 53

Resilience to natural disasters

1. The Parties shall cooperate to build the resilience of people, societies and infrastructure to natural disasters, taking into account the impact of climate change. They shall promote the exchange of information and good practices on the implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 through national and local integrated strategies.

2. The Parties shall promote disaster risk management, including the comprehensive assessment of risks, the implementation of risk reduction plans at all levels, strengthening the link between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, and the collection and use of disaster statistics and loss data. They shall promote the development of a culture of risk prevention and financial protection, including through appropriate and innovative tools such as risk transfer mechanisms.

3. The Parties shall prepare for and respond to emergencies caused by extreme weather events and natural disasters such as floods and rising sea levels, coastal erosion and silting. They shall cooperate to assess and alleviate the impact of extreme weather events and natural disasters.

4. The Parties shall strengthen capacity for regional disaster and emergency response, including civil protection mechanisms, and the capacity of local communities and institutions, focusing on the most vulnerable and marginalised households and groups.

5. The Parties shall support the use of space technologies and information systems to improve prevention, preparedness, response and recovery measures.

TITLE IV

PEACE AND SECURITY

ARTICLE 54

The Parties shall foster cooperation and coordination at regional, inter-regional, continental and global levels in the promotion and maintenance of peace and security in Africa and Europe. They shall buttress joint efforts and mechanisms to secure peace, prevent and combat terrorism and violent extremism, address all forms of organised crime and security threats, and enhance maritime security, taking account of the complexity of all those challenges and the need to address their root causes. They shall cooperate to ensure sustainable financing for all peace and security activities.

ARTICLE 55

Regional and multilateral cooperation

1. The Parties shall strengthen dialogue and institutional cooperation to address peace and security challenges. They shall strengthen support for a more efficient operationalisation of APSA, as envisioned in Agenda 2063. They shall encourage synergies between APSA and AGA in line with the AU's reform agenda.

2. The Parties shall support efforts of the AU and the RECs and regional mechanisms and other regional security cooperation arrangements in achieving peaceful, inclusive and resilient societies. They shall strengthen cooperation between the AU, the EU and the UN, and multilateral cooperation with other relevant international and organisations and third countries, as appropriate.

3. The Parties shall promote local ownership, inclusiveness, resilience and sustainability of all actions, engaging with national and local authorities, communities and civil society.

ARTICLE 56

Conflicts and crises

1. The Parties shall work towards ensuring the peaceful resolution of all inter- and intra-state conflicts in Africa. They shall implement an integrated approach to conflicts and crises compliant with international human rights law and international humanitarian law, deepening their strategic cooperation and enhancing joint action in all phases of the conflict cycle, from prevention and early-warning to lasting peacebuilding, through mediation, crisis management, stabilisation, as well as security sector reform.

2. The Parties shall support initiatives and mechanisms to prevent conflicts and avoid endangering peace and security. They shall take coordinated action to address the root causes of conflicts and crises, tackle the risks of emerging and escalating violent conflicts, and reinforce support for diplomatic initiatives, mediation efforts and multi-party dialogue to resolve disputes and conflicts by peaceful means. To that end, they shall support the full operationalisation of the Continental Early Warning System.

3. The Parties shall cooperate in the areas of crisis management and peaceful conflict resolution, including through cooperation between African-led peace support operations, EU crisis management operations and UN peacekeeping operations, where such operations are deployed in the same zone.

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4. The Parties shall cooperate in relation to post-conflict stabilisation, consolidate and support the implementation of crisis settlement processes, accompany constitutional and electoral processes, and promote transitional justice, reconciliation processes and reintegration measures for victims of armed conflicts and wars. They shall support the rehabilitation and reconstruction of areas devastated by war.

5. The Parties shall promote the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agendas and shall strengthen the active role of women and youth in peace and security, from early warning, mediation, resolution of conflicts, peacebuilding and peacekeeping, in line with the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs), notably UNSCRs 1325 (2000) and 2250 (2015), as well as AU and EU policies and decisions.

ARTICLE 57

Terrorism, violent extremism and radicalisation

1. The Parties shall prevent and combat terrorism in all its forms, addressing those factors that may create an environment conducive to violent extremism and radicalisation, including through fostered religious tolerance and inter-religious dialogue, and responding to the challenges posed by the links between terrorism and transnational organised crime, in full respect of the rule of law and international law, including human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law.

2. The Parties shall enhance cooperation to enable individuals and communities to prevent and increase resilience against acts of terrorism, violent extremism and radicalisation. They shall endeavour to engage with all relevant stakeholders, including youth, religious leaders and civil society, to promote mutual understanding, diversity and inter-faith dialogue, to identify tailor-made interventions, and to counter online and offline recruitment, radicalisation and incitement to commit terrorist acts. They shall cooperate on enhanced support for the victims of terrorism.

3. The Parties shall cooperate towards the implementation of all relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council, including UNSCRs 2396 (2017) and 2462 (2019), and the UN General Assembly, and of international conventions and instruments, including the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

4. The Parties shall intensify efforts in exchanging information and expertise on terrorist groups and their support networks, fully respecting the rule of law and international human rights law. They shall support initiatives for law enforcement cooperation and strengthen capacity to fight terrorism in a human rights compliant manner, including through training and professionalisation of security forces. They shall cooperate to suppress the financing of terrorism by identifying, detecting, confiscating and freezing or seizing any funds and any other assets used or allocated for the purpose of committing a terrorist act.

5. The Parties shall prevent perpetrators of terrorist acts, violent extremism and radicalisation from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

ARTICLE 58

Organised crime

1. The Parties shall tackle all forms of organised crime, in particular, trafficking in persons, small arms and light weapons, illicit drugs, hazardous materials, cultural goods and wildlife, as well as environmental crime, through enhanced border control management, information and data gathering and sharing, and the exchange of expertise and technical assistance. They shall adopt legislative and other measures in compliance with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementing Protocols.

2. The Parties shall appropriately address trafficking in persons, in line with the standards of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. They shall prevent trafficking in persons by strengthening law enforcement and judicial cooperation to counter impunity for all perpetrators involved in the trafficking chain, and by discouraging the demand behind all forms of exploitation. They shall ensure appropriate protection of victims, taking into account the gender specificity of the crime, with women and girls disproportionately targeted and mainly for sexual exploitation.

3. The Parties shall adopt legislative and other measures to prevent and combat migrant smuggling by strengthening law enforcement and judicial cooperation to investigate and prosecute the smuggling of migrants and related crimes in compliance with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementing Protocols, including the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

4. The Parties shall strengthen cooperation with a view to preventing and combating the use of their financial institutions and designated non-financial businesses and professions to finance terrorism and launder the proceeds of criminal activities, including corruption. They shall exchange information and enforce the proper measures to fight against money laundering and terrorism financing to ensure the full and effective implementation of the Financial Action Task Force recommendations. They shall support the establishment of national asset recovery legislation and bodies, as well as the confiscation of criminal assets and their mobilisation for public benefit purposes extending criminal liability of crime perpetrators and facilitators and ensuring the disruption of illicit financial flows, depriving criminals from profits.

5. The Parties shall enact legislation and develop initiatives to tackle crime, including urban crime and violence. They shall promote firearms control with a view to preventing and reducing the negative effects of armed violence on society and people and creating a safe environment for sustainable development. They shall combat all forms of violence and shall support victims of violence.

ARTICLE 59

Small arms and light weapons

1. The Parties shall promote the effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty and the UN Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition. They shall support the Action Plan for the Implementation of the African Union Strategy on the Control of Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons, and the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

2. The Parties shall cooperate against the illicit proliferation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons that sustains armed conflict and terrorism and fuels armed crime such as cattle rustling and poaching, including through improved stockpile management, destruction of surplus weapons and ammunition, marking, record-keeping and tracing, and export and import controls.

ARTICLE 60

Cybersecurity and cybercrime

1. The Parties shall endeavour to develop and implement legislation and measures to uphold an open, free, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful information and communications technology environment. They shall work to promote the development and implementation, within the framework of the UN, of internationally accepted norms of responsible behaviour in cyberspace, in full compliance with international human rights obligations.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to prevent and combat cybercrime and the distribution of illegal content online. They shall exchange information on the education and training of cybercrime investigators, the investigation of cybercrime and digital forensic science, while ensuring a high level of data protection. They shall promote a culture of cybersecurity and shall cooperate to prevent and fight cybercrime, building on existing international norms and standards, including those of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime and the AU Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection.

ARTICLE 61

Illicit drugs

1. The Parties shall strengthen the balanced, integrated and evidence-based approach of their drugs policies. They shall endeavour to prevent and counter the cultivation, production and trafficking of illicit drugs and psychoactive substances, including by adopting more effective drug-related crime prevention and law enforcement measures, in conformity with applicable international human rights obligations.

2. The Parties shall intensify and accelerate efforts on the demand side, engage in prevention and education programmes, and take the necessary measures to address the health and social impacts of drugs. They shall foster dialogue with relevant stakeholders, including civil society, the scientific community and academia, in order to effectively address illicit drug use.

ARTICLE 62

Maritime security

1. The Parties shall take initiatives at national, regional and continental levels that contribute to the advancement of maritime security, notably in the Red Sea, the Horn of Africa, the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Guinea. They shall foster cooperation between the AU, the EU and the UN, and with regional and sub-regional organisations, and encourage complementarity of efforts.

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2. The Parties shall cooperate to combat all kinds of transnational organised crime at sea, including trafficking in persons, small arms and light weapons, illicit drugs and wildlife, and the smuggling of migrants. They shall deter, prevent and repress acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea, including thefts of oil and gas, with a view to ensuring secure and open trade routes.

3. The Parties shall increase multilateral efforts to respond effectively to crimes committed on the high seas. They shall develop measures to enhance coastal states' and regional organisations' law enforcement capacity and ownership, and shall promote regional coordination and information exchange to tackle maritime threats and counter different forms of crime committed at sea.

4. The Parties shall develop and enhance inter-regional information-sharing mechanisms and shall encourage maritime surveillance and domain awareness and cooperation between coast guards and navies of coastal states.

5. The Parties shall promote and respect the freedom of the high seas, the freedom of navigation and other principles, rights and obligations laid down in international law, while promoting the universal application of UNCLOS, as well as other relevant international legal instruments.

ARTICLE 63

Law enforcement cooperation

1. The Parties shall strengthen dialogue and cooperation on law enforcement, including through strategic cooperation between AU bodies such as AFRIPOL and EU bodies such as EUROPOL, to facilitate the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of activities of transnational organised criminal and terrorist networks in the Africa region and the EU.

2. The Parties shall cooperate in the area of search and rescue and in other emergency situations, and shall encourage states to conclude bilateral agreements in that context.

3. The Parties shall enhance cooperation on integrated border management and improve information and data gathering and sharing.

4. The Parties agree to work to enhance police capacities, including through targeted police training programmes at strategic, operational and tactical levels, adapted to the realities of the African context.

TITLE V

HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

ARTICLE 64

The Parties shall promote resilient, sustainable and inclusive societies rooted in accountable, effective and transparent institutions and decision-making processes at all levels, where human rights, fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and democratic principles are respected, promoted and fulfilled. They shall work to accelerate progress towards gender equality. They shall ensure an open and enabling space for individuals and civil society to voice their aspirations and concerns, express their opinions and make contributions to all political, economic, social and cultural matters, contributing to increasing confidence in public institutions.

ARTICLE 65

Human rights

1. The Parties shall enact and implement legislation that contributes to the protection, promotion and fulfilment of human rights, whether they are civil, political, economic, social or cultural. They shall support the ratification, domestication and implementation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, as well as the AGA instruments.

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2. The Parties shall apply in full the principle of non-discrimination based on any ground including sex, ethnic or social origin, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, disability, age, or other status, while prioritising the adoption of comprehensive equality and anti-discrimination law. They shall take steps to achieve full enjoyment of all human rights by women and girls and their empowerment, including by encouraging the signing, ratification, where still needed, and implemention of the Maputo Protocol. They shall make every effort to promote and protect the rights of the child, including by encouraging the signing, ratification, where still needed, and implemention of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. They shall adopt measures to promote the full enjoyment of human rights by persons belonging to minorities, persons with disabilities and persons with albinism, as well as indigenous peoples as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

3. The Parties shall effectively fight against impunity, ensuring the rule of law and the independent, impartial and effective functioning of the justice system. They shall guarantee the right of victims and survivors to adequate, effective and prompt reparation.

4. The Parties shall support the African human rights system, notably the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, in guiding African states to comply with international human rights law obligations. They shall observe and preserve the integrity and independence of those bodies and shall ensure that all African states respect the judgements of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.

5. The Parties shall strengthen the capacity of civil society and protect human rights defenders acting at national, regional and continental level. They shall cooperate to raise awareness on human rights, including through cooperation with national human rights institutions, education systems and the media.

ARTICLE 66

Gender equality

1. The Parties shall ensure equality before the law and equal access to justice, protection and benefit of the law for all. They shall take measures aimed at ensuring, improving and expanding equal participation and opportunities in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life. They shall ensure that the gender perspective is systematically mainstreamed across all policies and programmes.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to prevent and eliminate all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, discrimination and harassment, as well as domestic violence, and shall combat trafficking in persons. They shall undertake all necessary measures to mobilise a concerted drive to end child, early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation and cutting and other harmful practices that discriminate against women and girls. They shall provide support to victims and survivors of all forms of violence. The Parties commit to the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, done at New York on 18 December 1979, as well as its Optional Protocol.

3. The Parties shall ensure that women's and girls' social rights are respected and promoted, notably by removing all barriers in the area of quality education and health and eliminating gender disparities. They shall reinforce the economic rights of women and girls.

4. The Parties shall ensure that the legislation in place recognises women's and girls' right to fully participate in all domains of public life and create conditions and opportunities for women to take up equal positions, including in political leadership and decision-making. They shall strengthen the role of women and advance their participation at all levels in the field of peace and security, as well as prevention and resolution of conflicts, violence and extremism.

ARTICLE 67

Democracy

1. The Parties shall promote and strengthen the universal values and principles of democracy. They shall protect the separation of powers, promote political pluralism and strengthen transparency, participation and confidence in democratic processes as well as trust between political leaders and the people, including by supporting the ratification and implementation of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

2. The Parties shall ensure the integrity of electoral processes by guaranteeing inclusive, transparent and credible elections respecting electoral cycles and constitutional provisions, with due respect for sovereignty. They shall promote international and regional standards and best practices in the management of elections as well as strengthen independent and impartial election commissions, ensuring a level playing field between all political parties and candidates. They shall enhance cooperation on electoral observation, including follow-up on electoral observation recommendations, as appropriate, and shall strengthen cooperation with the AU and the RECs. They shall strengthen national mechanisms that redress election-related disputes in a timely manner.

3. The Parties shall strengthen the capacity of elected parliaments to perform their legislative, budgetary and oversight roles, respecting the prerogatives of all their members.

4. The Parties shall enact domestic laws and regulations recognising different levels of government that have the mandate to exercise their competencies in accordance with delegated powers. They shall strengthen local administration and decentralise power to democratically elected local authorities as provided for in national laws.

5. The Parties shall promote inclusive and pluralistic societies. They shall remove any restrictions to freedom of association, freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly. They shall preserve and broaden an enabling space for civil society in advocacy and policy shaping, as well as ensuring free and independent media, to hold governments to the highest levels of transparency and accountability in the management of public affairs. The Parties shall foster constructive state-citizen relations and shall raise awareness of democratic principles and human rights, including through education systems and the media.

ARTICLE 68

Rule of law and justice

1. The Parties shall cooperate in consolidating the rule of law and strengthening institutions at all levels in the administration of justice. They shall uphold the independence of the judiciary and aim to ensure the independent, impartial and effective functioning of the justice system and to enhance citizens' effective and equitable access to justice and legal aid.

2. The Parties shall prevent, condemn and eradicate all forms of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment by state and non-state actors in all contexts, including in the contexts of terrorism, crisis management and migration, while supporting the ratification and effective implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, done at New York on 10 December 1984, and its Optional Protocol.

3. The Parties shall ensure that violations and abuses of international human rights law and violations of international humanitarian law, including war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, as well as the recruitment of child soldiers and sexual and gender and identity-based violence, are properly investigated and prosecuted. They shall strengthen domestic legislation and domestic judicial systems, including through effective inter-state cooperation and mutual legal assistance for States wishing to conduct domestic prosecutions of the most serious international crimes.

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4. The Parties shall facilitate justice reforms, ensuring modernised, transparent and efficient court systems and procedures, providing adequate training and improving access to legislation, case-law and other legal information, modernising penitentiary systems and maximising their rehabilitative role, and tackling human rights violations by security forces.

ARTICLE 69

Good governance

1. The Parties shall support efforts to consolidate good governance by promoting democratic culture and practices, building and strengthening accountable, transparent and responsive governance institutions at all levels, and inculcating political pluralism, transparency and tolerance. They shall support the full implementation of the AGA instruments and encourage effective coordination and harmonisation of governance policies among African states.

2. The Parties shall enhance the ability of governments at all levels to deliver quality public services, to ensure effective, transparent, accountable and inclusive public administration, to promote the impartiality and effectiveness of law enforcement bodies and to foster citizens' participation and access to public information.

3. The Parties shall support the use of digital technologies and accelerate the deployment of user-friendly and simplified e-governance solutions as a means to enhance access to and the availability of public information and services, and to improve transparency and accountability, while preventing abuse and promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

ARTICLE 70

Public administration, statistics and personal data

1. The Parties shall build capacities for policy design and implementation, develop a professional and efficient civil service, improve legislative and governance mechanisms and strengthen the ability of governments to deliver quality public services.

2. The Parties shall ensure impartiality, fairness, due process, and continuity in the delivery of public services, and support institutions that are accountable, inclusive and transparent with respect to the delivery of effective and efficient public services, including by promoting the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration.

3. The Parties shall support the production, storage, management and dissemination of statistical data and information at national, regional and continental levels, including by promoting the African Charter on Statistics as the policy framework for statistics development in Africa. They shall develop robust, secure and inclusive identification systems to ensure the provision of a legal identity for every citizen, including by strengthening the system of civil registration and vital statistics.

4. The Parties shall ensure a high level of protection of every individual's right to privacy with respect to the processing of personal data, in accordance with existing multilateral standards and international legal instruments and practices. They shall endeavour to maintain strong data protection regimes and to ensure their effective enforcement through independent supervisory authorities.

ARTICLE 71

Corruption

1. The Parties shall establish and strengthen legislation, institutions and other measures to prevent and combat corruption in all its forms, fraud, financial corporate crimes and related offences in the public and private sectors, including by implementing and promoting relevant international standards and instruments, notably the UN Convention against Corruption, done at New York on 31 October 2003. They shall adopt legislative and other measures that are required to prevent corruption and to ensure that corruption legislation is effectively enforced, that impartial investigations and prosecutions are conducted and that effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions for corruption and corruption-related crimes are applied. They shall adopt legislative and other measures to provide effective protection from potential retaliation, including in the work-related context, and from intimidation of whistle-blowers who report on corruption and related offences and of witnesses who give testimony about such offences, including the protection of their identities.

2. The Parties shall adopt legislative measures to enable the freezing and confiscation of proceeds and instrumentalities, or of other property the value of which corresponds to that of such proceeds and instrumentalities, derived from acts of corruption and related offences. They shall cooperate to recover such proceeds and instrumentalities and to return them to their prior legitimate owners in the country of origin, in accordance with the UN Convention against Corruption. They shall adopt legislative and other measures to combat the laundering of the proceeds of corruption.

3. The Parties shall ensure transparency and accountability in the management of public resources, including recovered and returned assets. They shall encourage actions that support the values of a culture of transparency, integrity and legality and a change in people's attitudes to corrupt practices. They shall strengthen the capacity and expertise of public administration in fighting corruption. They shall promote the establishment of specialised bodies in the field of anticorruption.

4. The Parties shall cooperate in the investigations of acts of corruption and related offences, including when committed in international business transactions.

ARTICLE 72

Financial governance

1. The Parties shall promote sound public financial management, including effective and transparent domestic revenue mobilisation, budget management and the use of public revenues in line with the principles of the Addis Tax Initiative. They shall promote sustainable public debt management, sustainable procurement systems and support for national oversight bodies.

2. The Parties shall improve the governance and revenue management of natural resources, enabling communities and societies to thrive from their use, including through compliance with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and the Kimberley Process.

3. The Parties shall combat tax fraud, tax evasion, tax avoidance and illicit financial flows and shall strengthen asset recovery. They shall work towards ensuring the efficiency, effectiveness, certainty, transparency and fairness of tax systems.

4. The Parties shall take concrete measures, including by enacting legislation, and strengthen relevant institutions and mechanisms to implement the principles of good governance in the tax area.

TITLE VI

MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

ARTICLE 73

The Parties shall adopt a comprehensive and balanced approach to address migration. They reaffirm their commitment to protect the human rights of all refugees and migrants and shall address migration in a spirit of solidarity, genuine partnership, shared responsibility, and in accordance with their respective competences, as well as in full respect of international law, including international human rights law. They acknowledge that African and European interests on migration are intertwined and that, when well-managed, migration and mobility can be a source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development. They shall engage in dialogue and cooperate on all aspects linked to legal and irregular migration, including by taking concrete measures on legal migration, stemming irregular migration and tackling its root causes, preventing and combating the smuggling of migrants, addressing trafficking in persons, saving lives and ensuring protection, strengthening diaspora engagement and investment for sustainable development, maximising the impact of remittances, enhancing cooperation on return, readmission and sustainable reintegration of returnees, as well as paying particular attention to persons in vulnerable situations, such as women, children and unaccompanied minors, and to their specific needs. The Parties agree to cooperate in pursuing an integrated border management approach to facilitate the legitimate movement of people across the borders and stem irregular migration. They shall deepen cooperation and dialogue building on existing initiatives, notably the follow-up to the Joint Valletta Action Plan, the Rabat and Khartoum Processes, and the AU-EU Continent-to-Continent Migration and Mobility Dialogue. The Parties shall encourage triangular cooperation between sub-Saharan, Mediterranean and European countries on migration-related issues. The Parties shall foster dialogue in addressing all migration issues and shall cooperate to foster appropriate and relevant response strategies.

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ARTICLE 74

Legal migration and mobility

1. The Parties shall endeavour to increase knowledge transfer and sharing and enhance mobility schemes that facilitate academic exchanges for students, researchers, academic professionals and institutions.

2. The Parties shall endeavour to facilitate visits for business and investment purposes.

3. The Parties shall aim to develop pathways in accordance with their respective competences, towards the effective management of labour migration and mobility, including appropriate social protection measures and the fight against all forms of exploitation.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to improve transparency and comparability of qualifications, with the aim of facilitating their recognition as well as their acceptance in the labour market.

5. The Parties shall dialogue, as appropriate, on procedures guiding portability of pension rights for legally residing migrants.

6. The Parties shall cooperate on awareness raising campaigns related to legal migration in order to inform the decisions of migrants and inform them on the possibilities regarding safe and legal migration pathways. They shall also make available information about possibilities of change of status in their respective legal orders.

7. 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.

8. The Parties shall facilitate access to procedures for family reunification for migrants taking into account the best interests of the child.

9. The Parties shall cooperate to improve and modernise civil registration systems and to issue biometric travel documents based on the specifications of the International Civil Aviation Organization, including by making efforts to combat identity fraud and document forgery.

ARTICLE 75

Intra-African mobility

1. The Parties acknowledge the relevance of intra-African mobility and its potential significant benefits as regards regional integration and the sustainable development of host countries and countries of origin.

2. The Parties commit to further supporting intra-African cooperation to manage migration, taking into consideration the AU Migration Policy Framework for Africa.

ARTICLE 76

Diaspora, remittances and sustainable development

1. The Parties shall encourage and support diaspora engagement in the sustainable development of their countries of origin. They shall cooperate to promote and facilitate diaspora investment, and business creation as a means of boosting local development and entrepreneurship in countries of origin, as well as of transferring knowledge, experience and technology.

2. The Parties shall aim to significantly reduce the transaction costs of remittances to less than 3 %, especially for low and middle-income countries, and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 % in accordance with internationally agreed targets, cooperate to increase access points for remittance services, particularly in rural areas, promote financial inclusion, including via innovative financial instruments and new technologies, and improve regulatory frameworks for enhanced involvement of non-traditional players.

3. The Parties shall support the work of institutions that assist in the implementation of strategies and instruments for use of diaspora remittances and investment for sustainable development.

ARTICLE 77

Irregular migration, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons

1. The Parties shall cooperate to address and develop adequate responses to the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement. They shall cooperate to support countries of origin with appropriate strategies, including with the aim of promoting economic growth and sustainable development.

2. The Parties undertake to stem irregular migration through enhanced cooperation on integrated border management, on improved information and data gathering and sharing, and on the fostering of police and judicial cooperation, with particular reference to countries of origin and transit of migratory flows. They shall cooperate to develop and maintain, where appropriate, communication networks to support maritime surveillance and save lives at sea.

3. The Parties shall establish and implement legislation, strengthen institutions and shallincrease collaborative efforts to address trafficking in persons, including protecting and assisting victims of trafficking, and prevent and combat smuggling of migrants in accordance with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementing Protocols, in particular the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to monitor irregular migration routes, step up national, regional and cross-regional actions, and enhance joint efforts to dismantle the criminal networks that smuggle migrants and traffic persons. They shall cooperate to share relevant information and criminal intelligence on trafficking and smuggling routes and criminal networks, including as regards modus operandi and financial transactions, to improve data collection and to strengthen analysis and dissemination strategies. They shall ensure effective implementation of relevant legislation and measures against those who exploit irregular migrants. They shall intensify efforts on investigations and criminal prosecutions of perpetrators.

5. The Parties shall support awareness campaigns on the risks related to irregular migration, using all available means at regional, national and local levels in line with relevant strategies and programmes.

ARTICLE 78

Return, readmission and reintegration

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.

2. Each Member State of the European Union shall accept the return and the 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 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.

4. Notwithstanding the procedures provided for in Article 101(5) of the General Part of this Agreement, 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 79

Protection and asylum

1. The Parties undertake to secure a high level of protection and assistance to forcibly displaced persons, including refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons, in full compliance with international law, international human rights law and, where applicable, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, including the fundamental principle of non-refoulement.

2. The Parties recognise that refugee camps should be the exception and, to the extent possible, a temporary measure in response to an emergency, and that sustainable integration of refugees should be preferred. They shall strengthen cooperation to facilitate sustainable integration of refugees in host communities and their countries of asylum. They shall support the implementation of the UN Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.

3. The Parties shall ensure that refugees and asylum seekers can exercise their human rights through safe access to basic services, in line with international obligations.

4. The Parties shall uphold the best interests of the child at all times, and shall grant full access to the education system in safe learning environments for all refugee children. They shall apply a gender-responsive approach in addressing the vulnerabilities of children and ensure that children are not criminalised or subject to punitive measures because of their refugee status or that of their parents.

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CARIBBEAN REGIONAL PROTOCOL

PART I

FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION

CHAPTER 1

NATURE AND SCOPE

ARTICLE 1

Genuine partnership

1. For the purposes of this Protocol, "Parties" means the relevant parties bound by this Protocol pursuant to Article 6 of the General Part of this Agreement.

2. Relations between the Parties shall be governed by the provisions of the General Part of this Agreement and this Protocol, which are complementary and mutually reinforcing, in accordance with Article 6 of the General Part of this Agreement.

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3. The Parties agree that this Protocol shall be implemented, with complementary responsibilities at national, regional and international levels, based on the principles of mutual respect and accountability, equality and shared ownership, and by engaging all relevant stakeholders. They shall implement this Protocol in a manner that builds on and advances the deep political, economic and cultural ties among the Parties to this Agreement.

4. The Parties shall support regional integration and cooperation processes, intensify efforts in support of multilateralism and the rules-based global order, and develop and implement multi-dimensional and coherent policies and measures in pursuit of all dimensions of sustainable development, taking into consideration their respective policy frameworks and relevant international agreements.

ARTICLE 2

Strategic priorities

1. The Parties reaffirm the broad and comprehensive nature of the Caribbean Regional Partnership and agree that the strategic priorities of this Protocol are, *inter alia*, to:

(a) strengthen their political partnership, which shall be underpinned by regular and effective dialogue and the promotion of common interests;

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(b) deepen economic relations, promote transformation and diversification, and support inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development through trade, investment, private sector development and sustainable industrialisation;

(c) improve environmental sustainability and climate resilience, pursue the sustainable management of natural resources and strengthen disaster management;

(d) build inclusive, peaceful and secure societies, with a special focus on advancing human rights, gender equality, justice and governance, including financial governance, and citizen security;

(e) invest in human and social development, addressing poverty and growing inequalities, harnessing migration, leveraging the diaspora's knowledge, entrepreneurial skills and investment, and ensuring that nobody is left behind.

2. The Parties shall accord special attention to Haiti as the only least developed country in the Caribbean, with a view to addressing its structural weaknesses while supporting the consolidation of its institutions, improving governance and reducing poverty and social inequalities.

ARTICLE 3

Multilateralism and alliance-building

1. The Parties reaffirm their strong commitment to multilateralism. They shall enhance cooperation and, where appropriate, establish common positions in the framework of the United Nations (UN) and other international and regional organisations and forums.

2. The Parties shall strengthen dialogue and consultations to build strategic alliances on global issues of common concern, including climate change, ocean governance, sustainable development, human and social development, human rights and issues related to peace and security, and conflict prevention and resolution. They shall cooperate to address the vulnerabilities of small island developing states (SIDS) within relevant global policy frameworks.

3. The Parties undertake to sign, ratify or accede to, as appropriate, and implement key relevant and applicable international treaties and conventions.

ARTICLE 4

Regional integration and cooperation

1. The Parties shall promote regional integration and cooperation in the Caribbean region as an important means of achieving peace and prosperity, building sustainable and resilient economies and societies, and increasing competitiveness in international markets. They shall support the establishment and strengthening of complementary domestic policies and capacity, thereby contributing to the fostering of regional stability, cohesion and prosperity in the Caribbean.

2. The Parties agree to advance the universal recognition of the Caribbean as a zone of peace. They shall also promote the sustainable development of the Caribbean Sea in light of its role as enabler of regional integration and cooperation in the region.

3. The Parties shall enhance cooperation with regional integration organisations and countries and territories that share the same values and are willing and able to promote common goals, and contribute to the economic, social and political development of the Caribbean region as a whole. They shall support, where appropriate, the development of regional approaches to issues of common concern, including with the wider Caribbean and Latin America.

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CHAPTER 2

ACTORS AND PROCESSES

ARTICLE 5

Institutional provisions

1. The institutions established by this Protocol, the composition and functions of which are defined in the General Part of this Agreement, are as follows:

(a) the Caribbean-EU Council of Ministers;

(b) the Caribbean-EU Joint Committee;

(c) the Caribbean-EU Parliamentary Assembly.

2. The Parties may decide to meet at the level of Heads of State or Government to provide strategic political steering to, and oversight of, the Caribbean-EU partnership.

ARTICLE 6

Overseas Countries and Territories and outermost regions in the Caribbean region

1. The Parties shall strengthen the close and historic economic, cultural and people-based ties between Caribbean OACPS Members and the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) associated with the EU and the outermost regions of the EU (ORs). The Parties shall facilitate the participation of the OCTs and the ORs in regional integration and cooperation processes, as well as regional organisations, where appropriate, especially in the areas of: trade, investment and economic cooperation; private sector development; energy; connectivity and digitalisation; human and social development; and climate change, environmental sustainability, sustainable management of natural resources and tourism.

2. The Parties agree that the OCTs in the Caribbean region shall be granted the role of observers in the joint institutions established by this Protocol.

ARTICLE 7

Consultation with stakeholders

The Parties shall establish and develop consultation and dialogue mechanisms with all relevant stakeholders, including local authorities, representatives of civil society and the private sector, to inform, advise and consult them, and to secure their input to political processes and for the implementation of this Protocol. Consultation and dialogue shall take place with a view to providing inputs to the meetings of the Caribbean-EU Council of Ministers.

ARTICLE 8

Implementation and monitoring

1. The Parties shall implement their commitments at the most appropriate level, in accordance with their respective policy frameworks. They shall develop and apply measures to maximise the impact of the implementation of this Protocol and reinforce the involvement of all interested stakeholders.

2. The Parties shall monitor and review this Protocol to ensure that implementation adheres fully to the principle of genuine partnership and accords with its strategic priorities. They may review it on a regular basis and, as mutually agreed, expand its scope, notably to new areas of engagement, in line with the procedure set out in Article 99 of the General Part of this Agreement.

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PART II

KEY AREAS OF COOPERATION

TITLE I

INCLUSIVE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 9

The Parties shall promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth and development through economic transformation and diversification, reinforced economic resilience, advanced regional integration and cooperation, strengthened economic and trade relations, and improved transition towards full employment and decent work for all. They shall cooperate to facilitate greater flows of trade and investment, by improving macroeconomic and financial stability and the business environment, to promote digital transformation, to advance private sector development and industrialisation, and to promote low-emission and climate-resilient economies, ensuring that all people benefit from unlocked business opportunities. They shall respect and protect human rights and core labour standards, including through social dialogue, promote environmental sustainability and foster shared prosperity. They agree to concentrate efforts on key and emerging economic sectors, with a multiplier effect on sustainable growth, value addition, job creation and poverty eradication.

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CHAPTER 1

OVERALL ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK

ARTICLE 10

Enablers of economic development

1. The Parties shall improve macro-economic and financial stability, strengthen public finance management and work towards public debt sustainability. They shall support Caribbean regional economic integration and cooperation to enable countries to benefit from deeper integration into regional and global value chains. They shall harmonise and simplify business regulations and processes, adopt sound competition policies, including transparency on public subsidies, and ensure effective and predictable tax systems, including at intra-regional level.

2. The Parties shall create an enabling legal environment, strengthen the efficiency of public administrations and judicial systems, improve the business climate through reform of regulatory requirements, enhance access to finance and ensure the protection of land and property rights and intellectual property rights.

3. The Parties shall promote policies that enhance the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of labour markets and support labour mobility, including the intra-regional dimension thereof. They shall promote quality education and skills development, and shall develop appropriate technical and vocational education and training. They shall ensure that progress in human capital is adapted to the needs and opportunities of labour markets and is enhanced by private sector involvement.

4. The Parties shall support the development of key infrastructures such as energy, transport, water and sanitation and digital connectivity. They shall cooperate to exploit opportunities arising from technological advancement and the digital economy, including in the area of artificial intelligence.

5. The Parties shall cooperate to improve access to finance, especially for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), including through regulated banking and non-banking services. They shall develop and strengthen digital financial services, including through enhanced cooperation on the implementation of agreed international standards and ensuring efficient and reliable markets, consumer protection and increased access to mobile-based financial services.

6. The Parties shall address all forms of pollution resulting from economic activities, including through a clear definition and attribution of responsibilities to industry and business operators throughout the supply chain on the basis of the extended producer responsibility and polluter pays principles. They shall support green growth initiatives, increased resource-use efficiency and the adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes.

7. The Parties shall develop the circular economy by promoting the sustainable consumption and production of resources, including through strengthened scientific and technological capacity, standards, exchange of best practices and the rationalisation of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies.

8. The Parties shall promote the registration and protection of geographical indications and undertake action to support the increased use of technology and innovations to create greater value in regional and global value chains.

ARTICLE 11

Investment

1. The Parties undertake to bolster public and private investment, especially in added-value sectors with a high potential for sustainable job creation and high economic growth.

2. The Parties shall harmonise and streamline rules, procedures and requirements relating to investment. To that end, they shall prioritise the specific needs of MSMEs. They shall support the development of regional investment policies, strategies and tools.

3. The Parties shall encourage and facilitate investment in the Caribbean, including by strengthening business facilitation measures. They shall further support investment by enhancing transparency, information and investors' awareness of business opportunities and investment conditions and procedures. They shall facilitate the strengthening of technical analysis and skills on economic trends and risk management for investment.

4. The Parties shall make strategic use of public finance to strengthen investment mechanisms and instruments and to leverage additional public and private investment, including through blended finances, guarantees and other innovative financial instruments, while taking due account of debt sustainability.

ARTICLE 12

Private sector development and industrialisation

1. The Parties shall support private sector development and sustainable industrialisation, and shall design policies to enhance entrepreneurship, diversification and productivity. They shall further support the competitiveness of enterprises, through, *inter alia,* strengthened compliance capacity to apply relevant international standards, enhanced innovation measures and improved access to innovative financing. They shall promote institutional capacity to contribute to trade and economic policy-making.

2. The Parties shall prioritise the development of women's and youth entrepreneurship, in particular by developing targeted business support and training, and access to affordable and reliable technology and finance.

3. The Parties shall support the growth and competitiveness of MSMEs, promote regional business development and facilitate business-to-business contacts between economic operators in the Caribbean and the EU.

4. The Parties shall pay special attention to the informal sector and to upgrading informal economic activities into formal ones, including through targeted business development support.

5. The Parties shall encourage and facilitate the establishment and strengthening of regional private sector trade and professional bodies through, *inter alia*, enhanced technical, research, policy advocacy and institutional capacity.

6. The Parties shall boost digitalisation and shall promote research, development and innovation initiatives in key economic sectors, including by bolstering linkages between industry, research and academic institutions, in order to improve the volume of high-value products, enhance competitiveness and develop new markets.

7. The Parties shall promote increased public-private partnerships as a means of mobilising domestic and foreign capital.

8. The Parties shall support increased resource-use efficiency and the adoption of cleaner and more environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes.

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9. The Parties shall promote industrial development with a view to achieving sustainable economic growth. They shall adopt targeted policies designed to facilitate industrial growth and opportunities, notably through the creation of linkages and value-adding activities. They shall develop and implement sustainable national and regional industrial policies to enhance private sector competitiveness, particularly in medium- and high-tech manufacturing and exports. They shall encourage and facilitate the development of appropriate technologies to advance the diversification of their economies into the production of high-value industrial products.

10. The Parties shall encourage wider use of their respective currencies in international transactions.

ARTICLE 13

Trade cooperation

1. The Parties shall advance regional integration and cooperation processes in the Caribbean, including through strengthened trade facilitation and regulatory harmonisation to enable countries and economic operators to take advantage of trading with their neighbours and foster their integration into key regional and global value chains. They shall take concrete steps to support the development of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Economic Union.

2. The Parties shall support the implementation of the Economic Partnership Agreement between the CARIFORUM States, of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part (the "CARIFORUM-EU EPA"), to reinforce its effectiveness as a tool for promoting sustainable development and to ensure its commercial relevance. To that end, they shall cooperate to strengthen mechanisms, procedures and institutions to enhance national and regional productive and regulatory capacities. They shall also cooperate to institute appropriate support policies to facilitate greater trade flows, including through strengthened production and entrepreneurship, quality infrastructure, enhanced digital support frameworks, increased investment in value-adding sectors and the development of effective e-commerce.

3. The Parties shall foster trade within the wider Caribbean region, including the OCTs associated with the EU and other territories, as a means of promoting inclusive and sustainable development.

4. The Parties shall support the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and facilitate trade through, *inter alia*, adopting support measures to reduce both trade costs and financial and regulatory burden of MSMEs.

5. The Parties shall pursue innovative special and differential treatment for new multilateral or bilateral trade agreements where applicable, for instance by ensuring that flexibilities in trade commitments reflect demonstrated implementation capacity needs.

CHAPTER 2

PRIORITISED ECONOMIC SECTORS

ARTICLE 14

Services

1. The Parties shall enhance the regulatory and productive capacity of key services subsectors through, *inter alia*, the development of sectoral policies, legislative frameworks and national and regional regulation capacity to enable service suppliers to seize market opportunities under the CARIFORUM-EU EPA, the CSME, the OECS and other intra-Caribbean regional arrangements. They shall pay particular attention to professional, convention, data-processing, recreational, cultural and creative industries, and to sporting, educational, financial, communication, audio-visual, transport, environmental and tourism services.

2. The Parties shall develop strategies and appropriate policies to improve access to trade finance and financial services. They shall also enhance capacity to collect, store, disseminate and analyse services trade data and statistics.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to promote and strengthen the role of services in trade competitiveness and deepen value chains through, *inter alia*, fostering innovation in services-related manufacturing and enhancing the role of services as inputs into the production of goods.

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4. The Parties shall support the enhancement of the capacity of regional professional bodies to contribute to the negotiation and effective promotion of mutual recognition agreements.

ARTICLE 15

Blue economy

1. The Parties shall promote the development of sustainable and innovative blue economies. In doing so, they shall seek to balance economic growth and the creation of decent jobs with enhanced food and nutrition security, improved livelihoods, social equity and strengthened ocean ecosystems, while reducing environmental risks and negative ecological impacts. They shall support the application of precautionary and science-based approaches to the conservation and protection of marine ecosystems and biodiversity, and the sustainable use of natural resources. They shall promote domestic and foreign investment, and develop the necessary regulatory framework and infrastructure to promote blue economy activities. They shall also promote bilateral and multilateral collaboration to support the development of sustainable and innovative blue economies.

2. The Parties shall enhance sustainable fisheries development by promoting sustainable fisheries value chains and building local capacities to process fisheries products and meet the regulatory requirements of international markets, taking into consideration the needs of artisanal fisheries and ensuring safe, healthy and decent working conditions for fishers and workers.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to develop sustainable aquaculture, including mariculture, through effective spatial planning, adherence to an ecosystem-based approach and an enhanced level playing field for investors, while ensuring that the concerns of local communities are addressed.

4. The Parties shall seize opportunities in marine biotechnology through, *inter alia*, supporting research, fostering collaboration among academics, economic operators and policy-makers, promoting technological transfer and reducing technical bottlenecks to facilitate access for investors, while avoiding risks to the marine environment.

ARTICLE 16

Agriculture

1. The Parties shall cooperate to increase and diversify sustainable agricultural production and productivity, with a view to enhancing food security and nutrition, improving livelihoods, creating decent jobs and expanding incomes by accessing regional and international markets. They shall strengthen climate-resilient farming practices, especially in smallholdings, promote the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources and ecosystem services, and eliminate incentives that generate unsustainable production.

2. The Parties shall strengthen national and regional research, training, science and innovation in smart agriculture.

3. The Parties shall bolster investment in and develop the agri-food sector, and shall institute rules and regulations that are supportive of increased investment in the sector. They shall cooperate to improve opportunities for producers, processors and exporters to access markets and capture greater value in local, regional and global value chains, including by promoting greater use of technology and innovation, bolstering their capacity to comply with non-tariff barriers, in particular technical barriers to trade and sanitary and phytosanitary standards, and promoting fair-trade and organic schemes to create added value in agro-processing.

4. The Parties shall ensure equal land and inheritance rights for women, enhance their access to finance and markets, as well as to support services and agricultural advice. They shall also support youth entrepreneurship, including through the provision of targeted extension services, technology and financing.

ARTICLE 17

Extractive industries

1. The Parties shall promote fair and non-discriminatory access to the sustainable extraction of, and trade in, minerals and raw materials, fully respecting the sovereignty of countries over their natural resources and upholding the rights of affected communities. They shall promote the equitable sharing of resources and combat the illegal exploitation of mineral resources through national, regional and international legal means.

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2. The Parties shall promote the transparency, accountability and responsible management of extractive industries, consistent with the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative and other relevant regional and international commitments.

3. The Parties shall strengthen corporate social responsibility and responsible business conduct throughout the entire value chain, including through the development and implementation of relevant legislation, where appropriate, taking into account relevant international standards.

ARTICLE 18

Sustainable energy

1. The Parties shall cooperate to strengthen energy security, to secure access to sustainable energy for all, including for the most vulnerable consumers and key economic sectors, and to build the resilience of energy infrastructure in order to improve the accessibility, durability and affordability of clean energy.

2. The Parties shall facilitate open, transparent and functioning energy markets that drive inclusive and sustainable investment, especially in renewable energy generation and co-generation, transmission and distribution, and energy efficiency. They shall cooperate in enhancing entrepreneurship in the sector.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to increase public and private investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency, paying attention to the development and implementation of relevant national and regional energy initiatives and supportive quality infrastructure systems.

4. The Parties shall promote energy efficiency and energy savings at all stages of the energy chain, from generation to consumption.

5. The Parties shall cooperate to establish and reinforce effective energy interconnections and to promote the energy transition of the Caribbean region through the development and use of clean, diverse, cost-effective and sustainable energy technologies, including renewable and low-emission energy technologies, to promote the transfer of technology and to develop human and technical capacity and research and innovation.

ARTICLE 19

Connectivity

1. The Parties shall strengthen sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based intra-regional connectivity. They shall cooperate to improve transport links, information and communication technologies (ICT) and digital infrastructure in a resilient and sustainable manner. They shall pursue economic opportunities by, *inter alia*, strengthening the technical and human capacity of key actors.

2. The Parties shall cooperate towards the development of quality and sustainable transport and related infrastructure systems, thereby facilitating and improving the movement of people, including those with reduced mobility, and of goods. They shall aim to provide improved access to rural, urban, air, maritime, inland-waterway, rail and road-transport facilities, including through the development and promotion of intra-regional cooperation throughout the Caribbean region.

3. The Parties shall bolster investment in and improve the overall governance of the transport sector, including by eliminating capacity constraints and by developing and implementing efficient regulations enabling fair competition within and between transport modes.

4. The Parties shall increase access to open, affordable and secure ICT for all, including by supporting targeted investment. They shall develop the necessary legislative frameworks and regulatory institutions to license service providers, promote competitive behaviour, ensure the fair treatment of consumers and support data and consumer protection.

5. The Parties shall enhance access to open, affordable, secure and reliable broadband connectivity for all and develop digital infrastructure, including through improved undersea cables and other modern transmission technologies. They shall develop policy and regulatory frameworks to facilitate the effective licensing of service providers, promote competitive behaviour and fair treatment and protection of consumers, and ensure the confidentiality of communications and the rights of persons with regard to the processing of personal data.

6. The Parties shall promote the establishment of a regional digital economy to generate decent jobs and economic development, through the creation of a supportive regulatory framework to promote digital entrepreneurship, mobilise investment, and facilitate private sector boosting of digitalisation. They shall cooperate to eliminate unnecessary barriers, to develop e-trust and e-signature platforms supporting increased trade, to foster the emergence of new products, to promote the development and use of relevant international standards, open data and advance the protection of consumers and personal data.

ARTICLE 20

Tourism

1. The Parties shall cooperate to promote the balanced and sustainable development of tourism in order to foster inclusive economic development. They shall ensure the integration of environmental, cultural and social considerations, and the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity and other natural resources in tourism policy planning and development.

2. The Parties shall bolster investment to promote and develop tourism products and services and thereby generate decent jobs, by forging innovative partnerships with key economic operators, investing in human capital development and marketing, and facilitating business-to-business contacts to boost competitiveness and improve service standards. In that regard, they agree to pay special attention to MSMEs.

3. The Parties shall strengthen linkages between the tourism sector and other relevant economic sectors, in particular agriculture, manufacturing, the blue economy and transport. They shall mobilise investment in sustainable energy, basic infrastructure and services, digital technologies, statistics and human development, in order to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the tourism industry.

4. The Parties shall take steps to generate the strongest socio-economic benefits from tourism. They shall enhance the preservation and promotion of cultural patrimony and of natural resources and promote all innovative forms of tourism, while respecting the integrity and interests of indigenous peoples, as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and of local communities and maximising the involvement of these stakeholders in the process of tourism development.

ARTICLE 21

Research, innovation and technology

1. The Parties shall cooperate on science, research, innovation and technological development, with a view to supporting economic diversification, promoting social and economic development, improving regional competitiveness and facilitating the emergence of an inclusive digital economy. They shall develop the interconnection and interoperability of research networks, computing and scientific data infrastructure and services, and shall promote such development in their regional context.

2. The Parties shall promote the development of research capacity, infrastructure and facilities, publications and scientific data. They shall promote and support innovative training and mobility schemes for academics and researchers. They shall enhance the capacity of higher education institutions to collaborate effectively in research and in scientific and technological innovation, including through access to academic exchange schemes. They shall facilitate collaboration among public administrations, academic institutions and enterprises. They shall promote open data and innovation in order to advance economic progress and to pursue mutually beneficial scientific excellence.

3. The Parties shall support the development of knowledge-based economies and inclusive digital societies. They shall promote the preservation and use of traditional knowledge, biodiversity and the sustainable management of other natural resources, and the transfer of technology and expertise.

4. The Parties shall cooperate on matters of common interest in the area of civil space activities, such as space research, global navigation satellite systems application and services, development of satellite augmentation systems and earth observation and earth science, particularly as regards the use of early warning and surveillance mechanisms.

ARTICLE 22

Culture and creative industries

1. The Parties shall promote culture and the creative industries as drivers of sustainable social and economic development and decent jobs. They shall adopt measures, *inter alia* in support of creative development and the digitalisation of artistic performances and productions. They shall exchange best practices in the promotion of cultural development and entrepreneurship.

2. The Parties shall promote sustainable development through strengthened cultural exchanges, the promotion of co-productions, joint cultural and creative initiatives, and enhanced mobility of cultural and creative professionals and allied educational practitioners. They shall support the circulation of works of art in full observance of established international conventions.

3. The Parties shall support intercultural dialogue between youth, civil society organisations and individuals from the EU and the Caribbean region.

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ARTICLE 23

Manufacturing

1. The Parties shall cooperate to foster sustainable manufacturing with a view to deepening value addition, especially in the export of high-technology products, to facilitate increased diversification and to maximise its potential for backward linkages with key economic sectors such as agriculture, the blue economy and extractive industries and services.

2. The Parties shall develop policies to attract domestic and foreign direct investment in the manufacturing sector. They shall promote business facilitation to advance peer-to-peer collaboration, deepen commercial partnerships and develop industrial hubs, ecosystems and networks.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to develop measures to increase the competitiveness of the manufacturing sector by improving production capacity and addressing constraints such as skilled labour shortages, logistics and infrastructure deficits, and limited access to finance and market analysis. They shall support research and innovation, promote the development and application of key enabling technologies and strengthen linkages between industries and research and academic institutions.

4. The Parties shall support the enhancement of trade in manufactured goods through, *inter alia*, improved linkages to export markets, enhanced trade regulatory capacity, trade facilitation, and strengthened compliance capacity to apply relevant international labour and environmental standards.

ARTICLE 24

International business and financial services

The Parties shall work towards the development of a rules-based international business and financial services sector in the Caribbean through, inter alia, supporting targeted cooperation to strengthen the Caribbean regulatory frameworks to comply with internationally agreed standards, develop appropriate sectoral policies, improve skills development, and enhance the use of technologies and digitalisation. The Parties shall make best endeavours to ensure that internationally agreed standards for regulation and supervision in the international business and financial services sector are implemented and enforced in their territories.

TITLE II

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ARTICLE 25

The Parties recognise the existential threat to affected countries and impact on livelihoods posed by the long-term nature of challenges related to climate and environmental sustainability. They shall take ambitious action to mitigate and adapt to climate change, protect and improve the quality of the environment, and pursue sustainable use and management of natural resources, so as to build resilience to climate change and reverse environmental degradation. They shall adopt concrete measures to address the loss of biodiversity, maintain and restore ecosystems, promote ocean governance, reverse deforestation, and prevent and respond to natural disasters and anthropogenic hazards, including through climate finance, the promotion of technology transfer and capacity building, as appropriate. They shall invest in green growth, promote circular economies and support the transition towards climate-resilient and low-emission development, ensuring that economic growth fully complements environmental sustainability. They shall cooperate at the level of the wider Caribbean region and pursue south-south and triangular cooperation.

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ARTICLE 26

Climate action

1. The Parties shall develop comprehensive and inclusive domestic climate policies and programmes, implement concrete action to accelerate the full implementation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Paris Agreement, and to sustain multilateral action on climate change.

2. The Parties shall promote the integration of climate change policies and measures for mitigation and adaptation into national and regional strategies and plans and policy dialogues. They shall cooperate to promote adaptation action, including averting, minimising and addressing the loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change. They shall develop monitoring, reporting and verification, and evaluation systems to track progress on climate action.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to prepare, communicate and update progressively ambitious nationally determined contributions (NDCs), pursue the national and regional mitigation measures needed to achieve the objectives of such contributions and develop long-term strategies for low-carbon and climate-resilient development.

4. The Parties shall develop and implement national adaptation plans and national and regional strategies. They shall integrate adaptation measures across all key vulnerable sectors, including infrastructures, and shall develop an effective governance system to implement adaptation actions and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and good practices on climate change at national and regional levels.

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5. The Parties shall act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including from aviation and shipping activities, in line with their international commitments and obligations, including under the Paris Agreement.

6. The Parties, considering the threats that climate change poses to peace and security and the well-being of people and communities, shall cooperate to strengthen adaptation and mitigation capacities and promote resilience-building measures to address their vulnerability.

7. The Parties shall promote the phasing-out of the production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, done at Montreal on 16 September 1987, by cooperating to support the ratification of the Kigali Amendment thereto and ensuring its swift implementation.

8. The Parties shall rationalise and phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption, and minimise the possible adverse impacts in a manner that protects poor and vulnerable communities. They shall promote the switch to renewable and cleaner energy sources in line with actions under the NDCs.

9. The Parties shall cooperate to advance low-carbon economies and climate resilience by strengthening green growth in key and emerging economic sectors, including through the adoption of eco-innovation, the promotion of technology transfer, the development of standards and the exchange of best practices.

10. The Parties shall develop innovative financing tools and align financial flows with a pathway to low-carbon and climate-resilient development, with a focus on inclusive climate finance that seeks to protect the poorest and most vulnerable from the adverse effects of climate change. They shall promote economic policy instruments that support climate change action, such as carbon pricing, market-based instruments and carbon taxes, as appropriate.

11. The Parties shall promote strengthened coordination across all levels of government to implement ambitious climate and energy commitments. They shall encourage and empower local authorities and support initiatives such as the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, and the Accelerating Renewable Energy Transition in SIDS.

12. The Parties shall work together to strengthen their scientific and technical human and institutional capacity for climate action and environmental management and monitoring, including through the use of space technologies and information systems and for the provision of comprehensive climate services, in particular to vulnerable stakeholders.

ARTICLE 27

Biodiversity, ecosystems and natural resources

1. The Parties shall support the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of eco-systems, including with a view to improving the livelihoods of indigenous peoples, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and local communities, while enhancing the delivery of ecosystem services and enabling the sustainable development of their countries. They shall protect, restore and enhance biodiversity and shall take measures to accelerate the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity, done at Nagoya on 29 October 2010. They shall collaborate in multilateral negotiations on preserving natural resources, ecosystems and biodiversity. They recognise that the Caribbean Sea includes fragile ecosystems and unique biodiversity and shall therefore cooperate to support their protection. They shall take measures to avoid or reduce the impact of invasive alien species on local species and ecosystems on people's livelihoods.

2. The Parties shall promote sustainable integrated water management systems, preserve and protect water sources and ecosystems, collect and treat wastewater, address land degradation and the pollution of water and groundwater resources, and tackle uncertainty about water availability through collection and storage systems.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to sustainably manage and protect soils with a view to preserving their critical role in, *inter alia*, agriculture, housing and infrastructure, as well as in mitigating climate change and adapting to its impacts and in serving as natural reservoirs of rainwater.

4. The Parties shall protect wildlife and shall combat wildlife trafficking by supporting the adoption and enforcement of policies and laws to make it a serious crime. They shall strengthen anti-poaching measures and law enforcement monitoring, and promote international coordination, including in the context of the International Consortium to Combat Wildlife Crime (ICCWC), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), done at Washington on 3 March 1973, and other relevant international frameworks. They shall take steps to raise public awareness, educate and influence consumers, destroy stockpiles of illegally trafficked wildlife and wildlife products, enhance the role of local communities and promote high-profile diplomacy and advocacy on the need to protect wildlife.

5. The Parties shall work towards establishing and updating the necessary regulatory frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to improve management of all waste and hazardous substances. They shall collaborate to prevent or minimise the generation of waste at source and to improve product reusability, recyclability and resource efficiency, including through efficient collection systems and effective recycling, in order to adapt production and consumption towards the achievement of a circular economy. They shall take measures to prevent or minimise hazardous substances in material cycles and to manage chemicals in products throughout their lifecycle. They shall cooperate to enhance the proper management of hazardous substances and nuclear contaminants, and to end the illicit transboundary movement of such substances and contaminants across the Caribbean Sea.

6. The Parties shall address all forms of pollution and shall raise awareness of the public health and environmental risks of air pollution and the multiple benefits of improved air quality, including through public outreach campaigns.

7. The Parties shall work to develop frameworks to protect fragile ecosystems and biodiversity, including by supporting measures to combat environmental crimes. They shall cooperate to research, conserve and sustainably use biodiversity, including by establishing knowledge hubs and research partnerships. They shall promote the use of internationally recognised environmental management systems as a means to minimise any negative impact on the environment. They shall strengthen the involvement of indigenous peoples as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and local communities in the conservation of ecosystems, prioritising the creation of jobs and other economic opportunities.

ARTICLE 28

Forests

1. The Parties shall promote the sustainable management and use of forestry resources. They shall cooperate to reverse deforestation, support reforestation, halt forest degradation and restore the ability of forests to provide ecosystem services.

2. The Parties shall promote sustainable value chains of forest products, prioritising job creation and the harnessing of economic opportunities in the conservation of ecosystems. They shall combat illegal logging and associated trade, and shall promote responsible mining operations.

3. The Parties shall support the implementation of sustainability mechanisms, such as the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan, including by concluding and/or implementing voluntary partnership agreements. They shall strengthen coherence and positive interactions at country level between sustainability mechanisms and the Warsaw Framework for Reducing Emissions for Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+).

4. The Parties shall strengthen the involvement of local authorities and communities in the sustainable management of forests. They shall raise public awareness on deforestation at all levels and encourage the production and consumption of resource- and energy-efficient products from sustainably managed forests.

ARTICLE 29

Ocean governance

1. The Parties shall strengthen ocean governance, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), to ensure safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed oceans, reduce the pressures on oceans and seas, and promote the sustainable development of the blue economy. They shall cooperate to strengthen national and regional capacities to manage ocean and coastal resources responsibly and accountably, develop measures for the sustainable use, management and conservation of marine biological diversity of areas within and beyond national jurisdiction, promote knowledge and research, and facilitate technology transfer on ocean governance. They shall take action related to oceans that contributes to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

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2. The Parties shall cooperate to ensure the conservation and sustainable management and use of living marine resources at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels, and regional fisheries management organisations.

3. The Parties shall promote the sustainable development and management of fisheries resources through, *inter alia*, the adoption of necessary regulatory frameworks, enhanced management, compliance and enforcement capacities, improved access to finance, the promotion of best practices and the transfer of technology. They shall maintain or adopt initiatives to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including, where appropriate, the implementation of traceability systems and measures to exclude IUU products from trade flows. They shall promote and effectively implement monitoring, control and surveillance, and related enforcement measures to ensure compliance, in order to conserve fish stocks and prevent overfishing, in accordance with UNCLOS.

4. The Parties agree to take necessary steps to prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing and refrain from introducing such new subsidies, recognising that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiations and any subsequent agreement that might arise.

5. The Parties shall cooperate to preserve and restore coastal and marine ecosystems and their biodiversity, and promote the valorisation of marine and coastal natural capital. They shall develop measures to prevent and mitigate the impact of ocean acidification on marine biodiversity ecosystems, including coral reefs, on the sustainability of fisheries and on the livelihood of coastal communities that depend on marine resources.

6. The Parties shall tackle marine pollution, including noise pollution, and reduce marine debris, especially plastics and micro-plastics. They shall target the root causes of marine litter, including through waste prevention and management policies and measures. They shall scale up ocean and coastal clean-up operations, paying particular attention to accumulation zones in ocean gyres.

7. The Parties shall support the regulation of the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions related to the maritime industry, and actively support the urgent implementation of the initial International Maritime Organization strategy on reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships.

8. The Parties shall develop area-based conservation measures and management tools to protect and restore coastal and marine areas and resources, including marine protected areas, in line with national and international law, and based on the best available scientific information and knowledge of local communities.

9. The Parties shall promote dialogue and cooperation on all aspects of ocean governance, including on matters related to sea-level rise and its possible effects and implications.

10. The Parties recognise the general concerns raised about the impact of seabed mining on the marine environment and its biodiversity. They shall use the best available science, apply the precautionary principle and an ecosystem approach, promote research and share best practices in fields of mutual interest relating to seabed mineral resources, in order to ensure sound environmental management of activities for the protection and preservation of the marine environment and its biodiversity.

ARTICLE 30

Resilience to natural disasters and comprehensive disaster management

1. The Parties shall cooperate to build the resilience of people, societies and infrastructure to natural disasters, and to increase monitoring, early warning and risk assessment capacities to improve prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery measures in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (the "Sendai Framework").

2. The Parties shall strengthen resilience by investing in disaster risk prevention and preparedness, integrating risk reduction efforts in recovery actions and promoting financial risk insurance and affordable risk transfer solutions. They shall promote the collection and use of disaster statistics and loss data, the comprehensive assessment of risk and the implementation of risk reduction plans at all levels.

3. The Parties shall adopt measures to strengthen the link between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, and promote the exchange of information and best practices on the implementation and monitoring of the Sendai Framework. They shall prioritise climate and natural hazard resilience at the core of all reconstruction and recovery efforts, including by implementing a "building back better" approach.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to address the impact of natural disasters and anthropogenic hazards through the timely and efficient delivery of humanitarian assistance and relief.

5. The Parties shall strengthen inclusive risk governance at all levels. They shall also increase monitoring, early warning and risk assessment capacities, and improve domestic and regional prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery measures, including civil protection mechanisms to strengthen capacity for national and regional disaster risk reduction and climate innovation centres of excellence. They shall promote the involvement of affected communities, civil society and local authorities in devising and implementing policy responses, focusing on the most vulnerable and marginalised households and groups.

6. The Parties shall enhance environmental resilience through, *inter alia*, supporting the use of ICT and space technologies to accelerate disaster prevention, preparedness, and response and recovery processes. They shall foster opportunities to bolster research and disseminate best practices on disaster risk management.

TITLE III

HUMAN RIGHTS, GOVERNANCE, PEACE AND SECURITY

ARTICLE 31

The Parties shall foster dialogue and cooperation with the aim of strengthening security in all its dimensions and achieving peaceful and resilient societies. They shall promote and fully protect human rights, human dignity, fundamental freedoms and democratic principles, build accountable and transparent institutions, strengthen governance and justice systems and guarantee an adequate and appropriate enabling space to individuals and groups to express their aspirations and contribute to the shaping of policies. For that purpose, the Parties shall pay special attention to promoting the rights of the young, women and girls, indigenous peoples, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), older persons and persons with disabilities. They shall intensify efforts to promote citizen security and prevent and combat organised crime, in particular in relation to illicit drugs, maritime security, cybersecurity, money laundering, border management, corruption, all forms of trafficking, and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition.

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CHAPTER 1

HUMAN RIGHTS, JUSTICE AND GOVERNANCE

ARTICLE 32

Human rights

1. The Parties shall contribute to the protection, promotion and fulfilment of human rights in compliance with international law. They shall promote and contribute to the universal ratification and implementation of international human rights instruments, implement those instruments which they subscribe to, and consider accession to those to which they are not yet party. They shall apply in full the non-discrimination principle as set out in Article 9 of the General Part of this Agreement placing a priority on adopting and implementing comprehensive equality and anti-discrimination laws.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to strengthen legal protection to ensure accountability for human rights violations and abuses and to foster access to justice, and provide appropriate and effective remedies for victims and survivors of such violations and abuses.

3. The Parties shall advance efforts to attain gender equality and the full enjoyment of all human rights by women and girls and their empowerment.

4. The Parties shall promote and protect the rights of the child, fight against child labour and child abuse and combat all forms of child exploitation.

5. The Parties shall promote the rights of persons with disabilities and take stronger measures to ensure their full inclusion in society.

6. The Parties shall continue to develop and support human rights monitoring mechanisms, including their reporting obligations. They shall recognise and observe the independence of national human rights institutions, and foster a safe and enabling environment where human rights defenders can operate freely and have access to regional and international mechanisms, as appropriate. They shall promote the participation of national human rights institutions and human rights defenders in consultative structures and processes. They shall ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in all matters that concern them, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). They shall ensure that consultative processes also take account of the role of traditional knowledge and the concerns of local communities.

7. The Parties shall cooperate to raise awareness of human rights and democracy, including through education systems and the media.

ARTICLE 33

Rule of law and justice

1. The Parties shall cooperate to enhance effective and equitable access to justice by all and shall cooperate in the consolidation of the rule of law and in the strengthening of institutions at all levels in the areas of law enforcement and administration of justice. For that purpose, the Parties shall enhance access to legal services by persons in vulnerable situations.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to ensure the independence, accountability and impartiality of the judiciary. They shall pursue modernised and efficient court systems and procedures, including by sharing best practices, improve the capacity to deliver justice in an expeditious and fair manner, develop the use of legal alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, reduce backlogs and excessive pre-trial detention, provide adequate training, and improve access by legal practitioners and the public to legislation, case-law and other legal information.

3. The Parties shall oppose and condemn all forms of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment. They shall prevent and address violations by security forces and enhance respect for the rule of law along the security and judiciary chains, including through ethics training. They shall strengthen the fight against impunity and the denial of victims' right to justice and redress, with a particular emphasis on bringing perpetrators of human rights violations to justice.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to modernise penitentiary systems and maximise their rehabilitative role, including by improving respect for prisoners' rights, implementing rehabilitation and education programmes, increasing the rate of social reintegration of inmates, supporting the care for prisoners, working towards the eradication of overcrowding, improving prison management, administration and conditions in line with international best practices and standards, and providing alternatives to imprisonment for lesser crimes.

ARTICLE 34

Governance

1. The Parties shall take concrete measures to build inclusive, accountable and transparent public institutions. They shall strengthen the capacity for policy design and implementation, develop an accountable, efficient, transparent and professional civil service, strengthen the delivery of quality public services, improve legislative and governance mechanisms, and promote the impartiality and effectiveness of law enforcement bodies.

2. The Parties shall strengthen the capacities of parliaments and local, municipal, national and regional institutions to ensure and enhance respect for democratic principles and practices.

3. The Parties shall promote respect for freedom of expression and media independence and pluralism, and preserve and broaden an enabling space for civil society, with a view to improving democratic accountability.

4. The Parties shall accelerate wider use of e-governance and digital services infrastructure as a means to enhance access to, and the availability of, public services, thereby supporting the development of accountable and transparent public institutions.

5. The Parties shall develop and strengthen institutions, legislation and mechanisms to prevent and combat corruption, bribery, fraud and corporate crimes, including on the confiscation and return of recovered assets. They shall ensure that anti-corruption legislation is effectively enforced and that impartial investigations and prosecutions are conducted, and that effective, proportionate sanctions and penalties for corruption and corruption-related crimes are applied. They shall promote and implement relevant international standards and instruments, notably the UN Convention against Corruption, done at New York on 31 October 2003, acknowledging that corruption is a transnational issue which is linked to other forms of transnational and economic crime and which requires joint and multi-disciplinary efforts also at international level.

ARTICLE 35

Public finance and financial governance

1. The Parties shall promote sound public financial management, including strengthened and effective use of public revenues, sustainable public debt management, sustainable procurement systems and support for national oversight bodies. They shall promote greater accountability, transparency, fairness, legality and integrity in the management of public resources. They shall support measures to build effective, equitable and transparent public expenditure systems. They shall cooperate to strengthen the mobilisation of domestic resources in Caribbean SIDS, in support of their sustainable development and enhanced economic resilience.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to strengthen public finances, through, *inter alia*, enhancing capacity to comply with international standards, developing policy frameworks and measures to increase the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and fairness of tax systems, and collaborating in the framework of the UN and other relevant global public finance bodies.

3. The Parties shall take measures to combat illicit financial flows, tax fraud and tax evasion, and reduce opportunities for tax avoidance, including through bilateral and multilateral consultations. The Parties shall apply the principles of good governance in the tax area in, *inter alia*, enacting legislation, developing comprehensive policies, adopting concrete measures and strengthening relevant institutions and mechanisms.

CHAPTER 2

CRIME AND SECURITY

ARTICLE 36

Human and citizen security

1. The Parties shall pursue an integrated approach aimed at preventing and reducing risks of crime and promoting reconciliation, rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives.

2. The Parties shall prosecute, combat and seek to prevent all forms of violence, including sexual, gender-based and domestic violence. They shall aim at supporting, assisting and empowering victims and survivors and at adopting measures to counter marginalisation, victimisation and stigmatisation.

3. The Parties shall address gang violence through comprehensive risk-reduction, prevention and education measures, provision of adequate social services, community-based actions for breaking the cycle of violence, and generation of alternative livelihood opportunities for youth and vulnerable people. They shall address access to and the use of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, with a view to preventing and reducing the negative effects of armed violence on society and people.

4. The Parties shall tackle the social and security problems created by the deportation of foreign criminals and individuals who have served their sentences, and shall strive to cooperate to facilitate their rehabilitation and reintegration into society, and to minimise the rate of recidivism. They shall ensure the timely exchange of relevant information on deportation through the appropriate channels, in accordance with applicable administrative or judicial cooperation agreements, and shall promote cooperation among law enforcement agencies, as set out in this Protocol.

ARTICLE 37

Organised crime

1. The Parties shall tackle all forms of organised crime, including through collaboration at national, regional and international levels, and by adopting legislative and other measures in compliance with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementing protocols. They shall cooperate to increase their ability to comply with international reporting requirements. The Parties shall fight migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons, illicit drugs, endangered wild animals and plants, hazardous substances and waste. The Parties shall also address environmental crimes including illegal logging and its associated trade. The Parties shall also cooperate to combat trafficking in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition and other conventional weapons and dual-use items. In doing so, they shall cooperate, *inter alia*, to strengthen the detection of illegal small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, trace their origin, support their destruction, enhance capacity to investigate and prosecute gun-related crimes effectively, and share best practices.

2. The Parties shall enhance the protection of victims of trafficking in persons, advance the investigation and prosecution of perpetrators, collaborate to prevent and identify cases of trafficking in persons and develop effective measures for reintegration of victims into their societies. The Parties shall ensure that all victims have access to their rights, taking into account the particular vulnerability of women and children. The Parties shall promote exchange of information, including criminal intelligence, and shall strengthen capacities to develop policies and implement actions to address trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to prevent and combat the use of their financial institutions and designated non-financial businesses and professions to finance terrorism and launder the proceeds of criminal activities. They shall promote information exchange and cooperation, including on capacity building and other forms of technical assistance. They shall enforce measures to fight money laundering and terrorism financing, to disrupt illicit financial flows, thereby depriving criminals of profits, and to ensure the effective and full implementation of Financial Action Task Force recommendations. They shall support the establishment and strengthening of national asset recovery legislation and bodies, the confiscation of criminal assets, their return and mobilisation for public benefit purposes, and extending the criminal liability of the perpetrators and facilitators of crime.

4. The Parties shall strengthen cooperation to prevent and combat high-technology, cyber- and electronic crimes and the distribution of illegal content online. They shall strengthen capacity to address cybercrime by, *inter alia*, pooling and training human resources and fostering collaboration among policy-makers, economic operators and researchers. They shall exchange information on the education and training of cybercrime investigators, the investigation of cybercrime and digital forensic science. They acknowledge that the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime and other applicable international standards provide a basis for promoting international cooperation and contribute to the development of domestic policies on cybercrime.

5. The Parties shall take measures to enhance individuals' and communities' resilience to terrorism and violent extremism. They shall intensify efforts to exchange information and expertise on terrorist groups and their support networks, fully respecting the rule of law, human rights and the right to privacy. They shall cooperate to bring perpetrators of terrorism to justice and shall adopt measures to facilitate the rehabilitation and reintegration into society of nationals of each Member State of the European Union and of each Caribbean State party, respectively, who have been radicalised.

ARTICLE 38

Illicit drugs

1. The Parties shall cooperate to mitigate the challenges, including as regards security and health, posed by the cultivation, production and consumption of illicit drugs and psychoactive substances, and the trafficking and transit of these substances through their territories. Such cooperation shall be on a bilateral, regional, multilateral or triangular level as appropriate.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to reduce the supply of and demand for drugs, on the basis of the principle of common and shared responsibility and on an integrated, balanced and evidence-based approach.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to improve judicial and law enforcement capacities, including their reporting capabilities. They shall identify, disrupt and dismantle transnational organised criminal groups through strengthened mechanisms for the exchange of information and drug-related criminal intelligence, while promoting joint investigations and operations, including with neighbouring countries.

4. The Parties shall address risk factors related to drug abuse affecting individuals, communities and societies. They shall strengthen the rule of law and build accountable, effective and inclusive institutions and public services to combat drug-related violence.

5. The Parties shall adopt measures to support alternative developmental activities to replace illegal drug cultivation and production in rural and urban areas, and to enhance the economic welfare of affected vulnerable populations, while simultaneously fostering social inclusion at community level and in the wider society.

6. The Parties shall intensify and accelerate efforts to reduce demand and shall take the necessary measures to address the health and social impacts of drugs. They shall take age- and gender-appropriate measures tailored to the specific needs of vulnerable groups through, *inter alia*, prevention, treatment, care, rehabilitation and social reintegration programmes.

7. The Parties shall address new and emerging threats related to the illegal production, use and abuse of synthetic substances including opioids and shall develop and enhance programmes and improve reporting mechanisms to address the illicit use of precursor chemicals.

ARTICLE 39

Law enforcement cooperation and integrated border management

1. The Parties shall foster dialogue and cooperation on law enforcement, and strategic judicial cooperation. They shall promote cooperation between law enforcement agencies to exchange information and criminal intelligence in a timely manner, encourage the sharing of best practices and develop capacities.

2. The Parties shall support regional security cooperation by strengthening integrated border management, information and intelligence sharing, and data gathering and analysis, while respecting relevant legal frameworks on the protection of personal data. They shall promote the peaceful resolution of border disputes and controversies in line with international law. They shall support confidence-building measures and specific development strategies, where appropriate, to increase trust and reduce possible border tensions.

ARTICLE 40

Maritime and aviation safety and security

1. The Parties shall develop cooperation on maritime and aviation matters, with a view to improving safety and security, and shall enhance, *inter alia*, the targeting and management of high-risk cargo, in accordance with international law and relevant UN resolutions.

2. The Parties shall enhance maritime security, in accordance with UNCLOS, by responding to threats to ships and critical maritime installations and assets, improving monitoring and enforcing relevant laws and regulations. They shall take action against piracy, armed robbery and all forms of organised crime at sea, including through the use of space technologies.

TITLE IV

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL COHESION AND MOBILITY

ARTICLE 41

The Parties are determined to eradicate poverty in all its forms by 2030, effectively tackle inequality, achieve gender equality and empower women and youth to ensure that everyone has the necessary means to enjoy a life in dignity. They are also determined to promote social cohesion, and create the conditions for the effective participation of people in democratic life and their active contribution to sustainable economic growth. They shall pay special attention to persons in vulnerable situations, including women, children, elderly, indigenous peoples as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and local communities and persons with disabilities. They shall take concrete measures to promote social protection as a fundamental investment for poverty eradication and fighting inequality, and as an important means to create a self-strengthening cycle towards inclusive and sustainable economic development, by reinvesting economic gains more broadly into society and people and increasing social resilience. The Parties shall adopt a comprehensive and balanced approach to migration. They shall address migration in a spirit of solidarity, partnership and shared responsibility, and in accordance with their respective competences. The Parties shall harness the benefits of migration, promote the integration of migrants, leverage the diaspora's knowledge, entrepreneurial skills and investment and maximise the use of remittances as a source of funding for inclusive and sustainable development. They shall also pursue an open dialogue on mobility between the Europan Union and the Caribbean and they shall cooperate to reduce the negative impact of loss of skills on the development of countries.

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CHAPTER 1

SOCIAL SERVICES

ARTICLE 42

Education

1. The Parties shall consolidate and promote inclusive, affordable and equitable access to, and enhance the quality of, education at all levels, including through strengthened and inclusive national education systems and improved infrastructure and equipment, with particular attention to persons with disabilities. They shall support the advancement of gender equality, to develop an enabling environment in which boys and girls have equal educational opportunities and comparable educational attainment.

2. The Parties shall support the expanded delivery and application of science, technology, engineering and mathematics and arts at all levels of the education system.

3. The Parties shall promote the use of accessible and affordable innovative technologies for educational purposes and the development of digital skills and literacy for all.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to reinforce enrolment and quality in tertiary education, technical and vocational training, and non-formal, work-based and lifelong learning, with a view to increasing the number of highly educated people and skilled workers.

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5. The Parties shall cooperate to strengthen academic development, promote the mutual recognition of qualifications and facilitate the mobility of students, staff and academics between the Caribbean and the European Union.

6. The Parties shall cooperate to promote academic research, development and innovation, through, *inter alia*, enhancing collaboration among key institutions and advancing the use of scientific research and analysis in pursuit of mutually beneficial academic excellence.

ARTICLE 43

Health

1. The Parties shall promote universal and affordable health coverage and equitable access to health services, including through strengthened national health systems, the development of sustainable quality infrastructure and access to safe and affordable essential medicines, vaccines and diagnostics.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to address the growing incidence and burden of non-communicable diseases, taking steps towards prevention and control, including through the promotion of healthy diets and lifestyles, the use of digital tools and health education.

3. The Parties shall strengthen national and regional capacities to detect and respond rapidly and effectively to outbreaks of communicable diseases and other health emergencies of national and international concern, following a "one health" approach that encompasses human health, animal health, plants and ecosystems.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to address public health emergencies through, *inter alia*, the use of early warning systems for the swift exchange of information, the development of coherent and multi-sectoral plans to enhance the capacity of health systems, the provision of essential and affordable medicines, vaccines and health equipment, including diagnostics, and the delivery of humanitarian assistance and relief. They shall strengthen international cooperation to mitigate the impact of global public health emergencies.

5. The Parties shall promote research and the sharing of knowledge, experiences and best practices in the health sector.

ARTICLE 44

Housing, water and sanitation

1. The Parties shall support universal access to decent, safe and affordable housing, with particular emphasis on vulnerable and marginalised people, including indigenous peoples as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and local communities, in order to generate a positive impact on people's health, advance communities' socio-economic development and address the inequalities between urban and rural households. They shall promote climate-smart housing and infrastructure, through, *inter alia*, the design and enforcement of building codes.

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2. The Parties shall enhance access to safe, affordable and sustainable water supply, including through the development of sustainable and integrated water resources management, solid waste management and the promotion of water recycling measures.

3. The Parties shall promote adequate, equitable and affordable access to sanitation and hygiene services for all, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.

4. The Parties shall promote universal and improved access to affordable electricity and increase efficient and sustainable energy usage for all.

ARTICLE 45

Sustainable urbanisation and rural development

1. The Parties shall promote an enabling environment for sustainable rural and urban development. They shall foster sustainable land-use planning, paying particular attention to transparent and regulated land acquisitions and property rights, sustainable urban mobility and smart and safe cities.

2. The Parties shall promote a balanced development of rural economies and communities, with a particular focus on employment and income generation. They shall accelerate rural diversification by adding value to local production and shall harness natural and cultural resources.

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3. The Parties shall promote inclusive, balanced and integrated urban and rural policies, and multi-level governmental coordination, by actively engaging local authorities and communities and by forging stronger links between rural and urban areas.

ARTICLE 46

Food security and improved nutrition

1. The Parties shall cooperate to ensure that all have access to sufficient, affordable, safe and nutritious food, with a view to ending all forms of malnutrition and averting food crises. For that purpose, they shall pay special attention to the most vulnerable countries, including those affected by disasters and persons in vulnerable situations.

2. The Parties, acknowledging the negative impact of reduced agricultural output, high reliance on imported food items and overexploitation of fish stock on food security and nutrition, shall support the sustainable development of local agriculture, fisheries and food production.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to address the impact of food crises and ensure timely action to make food available locally by developing policy interventions and infrastructure, including investing in climate-resilient transport and storage systems. In that context, they shall address the needs of the most vulnerable populations.

CHAPTER 2

SOCIAL COHESION

ARTICLE 47

Equality, social protection and decent work

1. The Parties shall promote equality by adopting policies in support of progressively attaining and sustaining income growth of the poorest members of the population at a rate higher than the national average.

2. The Parties shall promote equitable and sound fiscal, economic and social policies oriented to more inclusive societies, with improved income distribution to reduce inequality and inequity.

3. The Parties shall work towards the extension of social protection coverage, especially for persons in vulnerable situations, with the aim of progressively reaching universality, through social safety nets, basic income security and adequate and shock-responsive social protection systems. They shall promote research and sharing of knowledge, experiences and best practices on social protection.

4. The Parties shall promote the creation of inclusive and well-functioning labour markets and employment policies directed towards achieving international standards for decent work for all, and fair wages that provide for a decent standard of living, including enhancing health and safety conditions for workers. They shall combat all forms of exploitation, including sexual and work exploitation, in both formal and informal sectors.

5. The Parties shall address issues related to the informal economy, including innovative access to financial services, credit and micro-finance, and strengthened social protection measures, with a view to facilitating a smooth transition to the formal economy.

6. The Parties shall take concrete measures to promote the rights of persons with disabilities with a view to advancing the effective implementation of relevant international agreements, promoting their full inclusion in society without discrimination of any kind and their equal access to social services and labour markets.

7. The Parties shall promote social cohesion through, *inter alia,* protecting and enhancing tangible and intangible cultural heritage and the diversity of cultural expressions.

ARTICLE 48

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

1. The Parties shall strengthen policies, programmes and mechanisms aimed at promoting gender equality and ensuring and improving equal opportunities for participation in all sectors of political, economic, social and cultural life. They shall ensure that the gender perspective is systematically mainstreamed across all policies, including through the creation and consolidation of legal frameworks.

2. The Parties shall ensure women's and girls' physical and psychological integrity by adopting legislative and policy measures to end child, early and forced marriages, and by eliminating all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, particularly domestic violence against women and men, trafficking in persons, all forms of sexual and work exploitation, and all forms of harassment in the public and private spheres. They shall facilitate access to justice and shall promote prevention and awareness-raising campaigns to advance behavioural change, in order to secure gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment.

3. The Parties shall support the effective implementation of all relevant international agreements, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, done at New York on 18 December 1979, and encouraging the ratification of its Optional Protocol.

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4. The Parties shall ensure that the rights of women and girls are respected and promoted. They shall strengthen their social rights, in particular in the areas of health and education, including access to family planning services. They shall reinforce women's economic rights, including by facilitating their access to economic opportunities, financial services, enabling technology, employment and the control and use of land and other productive assets. They shall support women entrepreneurs, reduce the gender pay gap, and remove other discriminatory regulations and practices.

5. The Parties shall strengthen the participation and voice of women and girls in political life, including through enhanced access to electoral, policy and governance processes and positions, and in community-building efforts.

6. The Parties shall empower women's and girls' organisations and strengthen national and regional institutions' capacity to address issues relating to violence against women and girls, including prevention and protection from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence. They shall develop harassment investigation and accountability mechanisms, provide victims with care and support, and promote conditions of safety and security for women and girls.

7. The Parties shall 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. They shall further stress the need for universal access to quality and affordable comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and education, taking into consideration the UNESCO international technical guidance on sexuality education, as well as the need for the delivery of sexual and reproductive health-care services. They shall pursue the effective implementation of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, as appropriate.

ARTICLE 49

Youth

1. The Parties shall develop targeted policies to promote youth empowerment and facilitate their engagement in political, social, civic and economic life.

2. The Parties shall support youth entrepreneurship and promote the creation of sustainable jobs in all sectors with decent working conditions for young people, including by supporting them in acquiring labour market-relevant skills through education, technical and vocational training and enhanced access to technologies, and by supporting employment services to connect young people to employment opportunities and access to financial services and partnerships for start-ups.

3. The Parties shall establish governance structures to promote responsible youth citizenship, increase the influence of young people in decision-making processes and foster their active participation in political life and in community-building efforts. They shall promote increased participation of youth in environmental action, in particular climate change monitoring and adaptation programmes.

4. The Parties shall undertake measures to improve access for youth to justice and strengthen child protection systems. They shall take all appropriate measures to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment and exploitation, including sexual abuse.

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5. The Parties shall promote social and justice programmes for the prevention of juvenile delinquency and for the integration of youth into economic and social life. They shall support institutions, such as schools, social and faith-based organisations and youth groups, that contribute to building resilience in at-risk youth and vulnerable communities.

ARTICLE 50

Sports

The Parties shall promote sport and physical education as a driver for sustainable development, health and well-being, social inclusion, non-discrimination and human rights advancement. They shall collaborate to harness the economic, cultural and social power of sports by, *inter alia*, developing adequate facilities, promoting participation in sport and other physical activities, and exchanging best practices. They shall promote the mobility of sports people and associated professionals as a means to strengthen intercultural dialogue and cooperation.

CHAPTER 3

MIGRATION, MOBILITY AND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 51

Migration, mobility and development

1. The Parties acknowledge the contribution of legally residing migrants and their diaspora to the economic, social, political and cultural life of their host countries. They shall support their integration by promoting, *inter alia*, entrepreneurship, business support and skills development in accordance with their respective competences. They reaffirm their commitment to respect the human rights of all migrants and forcibly displaced persons, including refugees and asylum seekers, in full respect of international law, with a special emphasis on people in vulnerable situations, particularly women and children.

2. The Parties shall pursue an open dialogue to promote mobility and short-term stays in order to enhance exchange in areas such as tourism and business, as well as to foster mutual understanding and promote shared values. That exchange shall also take into account the specific situation of the OCTs associated with the EU and the outermost regions of the EU, in recognition of their physical proximity and economic and cultural ties and other areas of cooperation.

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3. The Parties shall consider the development of 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. They shall consider aspects of reintegration 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, in the countries of origin to ensure that their gained experience or qualifications can benefit the local labour market and community.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to reduce the negative impact of loss of skills on the development of countries. They shall further adopt a coherent approach to advance the training of select professionals in the Caribbean, which includes expanding training schemes and promoting the enrolment of EU citizens.

5. The Parties, recognising the importance of remittances as a source for inclusive and sustainable development if properly managed, shall aim to reduce the transaction costs of remittances to less than 3 % and eliminate remittances corridors with costs higher than 5 % by 2030, promote financial inclusion via innovative financial instruments and new technologies, and improve regulatory frameworks for enhanced involvement of non-traditional economic actors. The Parties shall enhance the contribution of diaspora to the sustainable development of their countries of origin, by promoting and facilitating diaspora investment, and business creation as a means to boost local development and entrepreneurship in countries of origin as well as to transfer knowledge, experience and technology.

6. The Parties shall develop measures to harness the benefits of south-south migration and mitigate any negative impact on the basis of the principles of solidarity, shared prosperity and responsibility.

7. The Parties shall promote the exchange of best practices of Caribbean-EU and intra-regional mobility schemes, including free movement of persons in regional integration processes.

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PACIFIC REGIONAL PROTOCOL

PART I

FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION

CHAPTER 1

NATURE AND SCOPE

ARTICLE 1

Genuine partnership

1. For the purposes of this Protocol, "Parties" means the relevant parties bound by this Protocol pursuant to Article 6 of the General Part of this Agreement.

2. Relations between the Parties shall be governed by the provisions of the General Part of this Agreement and the specific aims set out in this Protocol, which are complementary and mutually reinforcing, in accordance with Article 6 of the General Part of this Agreement.

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3. The Parties agree to strengthen their relations and intensify cooperation with a view to promoting shared values, common interests, responsibilities and obligations. This genuine partnership shall be implemented in the spirit of mutual respect and accountability, equality and shared ownership.

ARTICLE 2

Multilateralism

1. The Parties shall strengthen dialogue and cooperation and intensify efforts in support of multilateralism and the rules-based global order.

2. The Parties shall endeavour, through appropriate partnership dialogue as referred to in Article 3 of the General Part, to build strategic coalitions on a number of global issues, in particular as regards climate change, ocean governance, biodiversity, inclusive and sustainable economic development, human rights and issues related to peace and security. Where appropriate, they shall coordinate their positions in the frameworks of the United Nations (UN) and other international and regional organisations and forums. They shall take concrete measures to sign, ratify or accede to, as appropriate, and implement key international treaties and conventions.

ARTICLE 3

Aims

The Parties reaffirm the broad and comprehensive nature of this Protocol and agree that its aims are, *inter alia*, to:

(a) strengthen their political partnership, underpinned by regular dialogue and the promotion of common interests;

(b) improve environmental and climate resilience, and pursue the sustainable management of natural resources;

(c) build democratic, peaceful and rights-based societies, based on the rule of law and good governance, and make progress on gender equality and financial governance;

(d) support inclusive and sustainable economic growth through bolstered investment and private sector development, with special attention to the blue economy and enhanced connectivity;

(e) support concrete measures aimed at strengthening ocean governance and the conservation and sustainable management of living marine resources including fisheries; and

(f) invest in human and social development, addressing inequalities and ensuring that nobody is left behind, with special attention to the promotion of youth and to the economic, social and political empowerment of women and girls.

ARTICLE 4

Regional integration and cooperation

1. The Parties shall support the process of regional integration and cooperation in the Pacific as a way of managing cross-country challenges and facilitating the implementation of this Protocol in order to reap full benefits from it, taking into consideration their relevant policy frameworks, including the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

2. The Parties agree to step up cooperation with regional organisations, countries and territories that share the same values and are willing and able to promote and address common goals, contributing to the political, economic and social development of the Pacific region as a whole.

3. The Parties shall promote and support south-south and triangular cooperation as a means of strengthening regional cooperation.

CHAPTER 2

ACTORS AND PROCESSES

ARTICLE 5

Institutional provisions

1. The joint institutions established by this Protocol, as defined in the General Part of this Agreement, including their composition and functions, are the following:

(a) the Pacific-EU Council of Ministers;

(b) the Pacific-EU Joint Committee;

(c) the Pacific-EU Parliamentary Assembly.

2. The Parties may decide to meet at the level of Heads of State or Government, as deemed necessary, on the basis of a mutually agreed timetable and agenda.

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ARTICLE 6

Overseas Countries and Territories in the Pacific region

1. The Parties agree to strengthen the links between the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) associated with the EU in the Pacific region and the Pacific OACPS Members.

2. The Parties shall endeavour to involve the OCTs in regional integration, cooperation and organisations, as appropriate, especially in the areas of climate change, environmental sustainability, sustainable management of natural resources, connectivity, and trade and investment.

3. The Parties agree that the OCTs in the Pacific region shall be granted the role of observers in the joint institutions established by this Protocol.

ARTICLE 7

Mechanisms for consultation and engagement with stakeholders

The Parties shall establish consultation and dialogue mechanisms with all relevant stakeholders, including local authorities, representatives of civil society, and the private sector, in order to keep them informed of, and gather inputs for, the effective implementation of this Protocol, including in view of the Pacific-EU Council of Ministers.

ARTICLE 8

Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

1. The Parties, when implementing actions for each area of cooperation, shall, in accordance with the legal framework set up by this Agreement, take into consideration their respective strategic and policy frameworks, including regional strategies adopted by Pacific OACPS Members, as appropriate.

2. The Parties shall take action and implement measures at the most appropriate domestic, regional and multi-country level. They shall seek to maximise the impact on, and reinforce the involvement of, interested stakeholders, including through capacity building.

3. The Parties shall monitor this Protocol to ensure that actions and measures are implemented effectively and efficiently, including through a multi-stakeholder approach. They may adapt it to evolving circumstances and expand its scope to enhance cooperation in existing and new areas, in accordance with the procedure set out in Article 99(5) of the General Part of this Agreement.

4. The Parties shall conduct regular independent monitoring and evaluation assessments of the activities envisaged in the key areas of cooperation under this Protocol.

PART II

KEY AREAS OF COOPERATION

TITLE I

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

ARTICLE 9

The Parties, acknowledging the serious threat posed by climate change, sea-level rise and environmental degradation to the achievement of sustainable development and to the lives of people, and recognising the significant risks for small island developing states, shall build resilience to climate change and shall reverse environmental degradation. They shall take ambitious action to mitigate and adapt to climate change, to avert, minimise and address the risks of loss and damage, to protect and improve the quality of the environment, and to support the sustainable management of natural resources. They shall adopt measures to tackle biodiversity loss, maintain and restore ecosystems, promote ocean governance, and prevent and respond to disasters. They shall invest in green growth, circular economies and renewable energy, ensuring that economic growth goes hand in hand with environmental sustainability.

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ARTICLE 10

Climate action

1. The Parties, recalling the objectives, principles and provisions of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement and stressing the need to step up the global efforts to tackle climate change in light of the findings of the Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, agree to contribute to global emission reduction, in line with keeping the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit global warming to a 1.5 °C pathway. They recognise the importance of reaching net zero global anthropogenic emissions as soon as possible. They commit, to that end, to successive nationally determined contributions (NDCs) that will represent a progression beyond their current NDCs and reflect their highest possible ambition, in light of different national circumstances, and reaffirm their objective of each achieving climate neutrality by 2050.

2. The Parties shall develop comprehensive and inclusive domestic climate policies and programmes, including through legislative and governance frameworks, and shall carry out concrete actions to scale up the implementation of the Paris Agreement. They shall develop monitoring, reporting and verification, and evaluation systems to track progress on climate action.

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3. The Parties shall accelerate and intensify efforts to adapt to the impacts of climate change, including by developing and implementing ambitious national adaptation plans. They shall develop and implement policies, strategies and legislative frameworks with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant socioeconomic and environmental sectors.

4. The Parties, recognising that fossil fuel energy and the transport sector contribute significantly to carbon emissions, undertake to develop energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions and to further reduce carbon emissions from the land-, aviation- and maritime-transport sectors. They shall strengthen cooperative action on technology development and transfer. They shall aim to rationalise and phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption and to minimise the possible adverse impacts, in a manner that protects the poor and affected communities.

5. The Parties shall apply integrated, holistic and balanced non-market approaches to addressing climate change and its impacts, taking into account the vulnerability of small island developing states and taking into consideration their relevant policy frameworks, including the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) and the Pacific Resilience Partnership.

6. The Parties shall support action to align finance flows with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development. They shall cooperate to mobilise climate finance from a wide variety of sources, instruments and channels to support the development and implementation of national adaptation plans and NDCs beyond current levels, in line with the Paris Agreement.

7. The Parties shall promote an ambitious phase-down of hydrofluorocarbons under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, done at Montreal on 16 September 1987, and the Kigali Amendment thereto. They shall encourage all the Parties to the Protocol to ratify and ensure the swift implementation of that Amendment.

8. The Parties shall strengthen coordination across all levels of governance and shall take action based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, indigenous and local knowledge systems. They shall encourage and enable local authorities to make and implement ambitious climate and energy commitments. They shall promote existing initiatives, such as the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, and the implementation of their action plans.

9. The Parties shall work together towards developing knowledge networks for climate adaptation and response and strengthening scientific, technical, human and institutional capacity for climate action and environmental management and monitoring, including through space technologies and information systems.

ARTICLE 11

Environment and sustainable management of natural resources

1. The Parties shall support the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of ecosystems and the services they provide, linking biodiversity to livelihoods. They shall protect, restore and enhance biodiversity, in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. They shall support the development of long-term strategies focused on mainstreaming biodiversity in national and regional frameworks in the Pacific region, ensuring coordination and coherence across institutions, and generating evidence to inform decision-making.

2. The Parties shall promote an integrated approach to, and strengthen enforcement mechanisms for, the sustainable management and use of natural resources and the environment at all levels, including the development of a circular and green economy, taking into account the needs of current and future generations and, where appropriate, indigenous, traditional and customary practices.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to ensure the sustainable management of their forest resources and other tree resources, reduce and reverse deforestation, combat illegal logging and trade in illegal wood and wood-based products, restore the functions of natural forests, including the provision of ecosystem services, and promote responsible mining, taking into account demands for sustainable development, including the economic, social and environmental needs of their growing populations.

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4. The Parties shall promote sustainable integrated water management systems, preserving and protecting water sources and ecosystems, collecting and treating wastewater, addressing land degradation, the pollution of water and groundwater resources, and the uncertainties of water availability through water collection and storage systems.

5. The Parties shall cooperate to combat the threat of invasive alien species in terms of local species' extinction, biodiversity, ecosystem functions and services, people's livelihoods and resilience, and trade and economic development.

6. The Parties shall effectively address all forms of pollution. They shall work towards establishing the necessary regulatory frameworks and enforcement mechanisms for the sound management of chemicals and waste. They shall aim to prevent or minimise the generation of waste at source, and to improve product reusability, recyclability and resource efficiency in order to adapt production and consumption to the achievement of a circular economy. They shall take measures to prevent or minimise hazardous substances in material cycles and to manage chemicals in products throughout their lifecycle.

ARTICLE 12

Disaster resilience

1. The Parties shall cooperate to build the resilience of people, societies, institutions and infrastructure to disaster events. They shall take into account the strong links between disasters and climate change and the impacts of disasters on human and social development, the livelihoods of people, especially of vulnerable groups and individuals, cultural heritage, environmental integrity, economic development and human security. They shall endeavour to implement and monitor the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, including through the exchange of information and best practices, taking into consideration their relevant policy frameworks, including the FRDP.

2. The Parties shall promote a holistic approach to disaster risk reduction, including taking into consideration the FRDP, by investing in risk prevention and preparedness, integration of risk reduction efforts in recovery actions and the promotion of financial risk insurance. They shall support the resilience of public services, infrastructure, food security and water security, ensuring that investments consider and respond to a realistic understanding of future risks. They shall put climate resilience at the core of all reconstruction and recovery efforts, including by implementing a "building back better" approach.

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3. The Parties shall cooperate to strengthen access to, and the transfer and systematic use of, relevant technologies for resilience building. They shall invest in the collection and use of disaster statistics and loss data, comprehensive risk assessment, the implementation of risk reduction plans at all levels, and stronger links between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. They shall support the use of space technologies and information to improve prevention, preparedness, response and recovery measures.

4. The Parties shall work towards strengthening inclusive risk governance at all levels, including capacity development for national and regional disaster risk reduction and climate innovation centres of excellence. They shall work towards increasing monitoring, early warning and risk assessment capacities, improving domestic and regional capacity and capability for prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery measures, including civil protection mechanisms, as well as capacity of local communities and institutions, focusing on the most vulnerable and marginalised households and groups.

5. The Parties shall monitor disaster risk- and climate risk-management priorities and objectives and evaluate them against international best practices.

TITLE II

INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 13

1. The Parties shall pursue integrated strategies and implement reforms to build resilient and diversified economies, promote economic growth and transformation, strengthen business and trade relations, and support the transition towards full, quality employment. They undertake to create a business environment that is conducive to greater flows of investment and to private sector development. They shall strengthen and deepen intra-regional economic cooperation, including the mobility of goods and services. They shall encourage and facilitate wider use of their respective currencies in international transactions.

2. The Parties shall promote measures in support of the transformative nature of science, technology, innovation and research. They shall work towards achieving circular, low-emission and climate-resilient economies and ensuring that all people benefit from unlocked business opportunities, that core labour standards are respected and upheld, including through social dialogue, and that the socio-economic empowerment and inclusion of vulnerable people, women and youth is promoted, including through appropriate social protection measures. They agree to concentrate efforts on key sectors with a multiplier effect on sustainable growth, job creation and poverty eradication, including the possibility of cooperating on new economic areas.

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CHAPTER 1

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION

ARTICLE 14

Enablers of economic development

1. The Parties shall pursue measures that support the attainment of higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, as a priority, and that improve macro-economic and financial sector stability, simplify and harmonise business regulations and processes, strengthen effective and predictable tax systems, and improve the efficiency of public administration and judicial systems. They shall adopt sound competition policies and ensure the protection of land rights, property rights and intellectual property rights.

2. The Parties agree to promote sound business facilitation legislation, regulations and policies aimed at reducing regulatory and administrative barriers and enhancing transparency while developing entrepreneurial skills and a business culture aimed at increasing investment and private sector development. They shall also promote corporate social responsibility and responsible business conduct, including as regards environmental considerations.

3. The Parties agree to address and enhance human capital development, in particular through investment in, and support for, the creation of a highly educated, trained, skilled, qualified and efficient workforce sufficiently trained to access decent employment, including in new dynamic growth sectors, matching the demands of labour markets and enhancing private sector involvement. They shall place particular emphasis on enhancing digital literacy, technical and vocational education and training and tertiary education programmes.

4. The Parties shall promote policies that enhance the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of labour-market institutions. They shall promote intra-regional labour mobility in support of the development needs of the Pacific OACPS Members and to respond positively to the needs of the private sector and to contribute to improved economic integration, greater investment and enhanced business productivity.

5. The Parties shall support the development of key infrastructures such as energy, transport and water, as well as of information and communication technologies (ICT) services and digital connectivity.

6. The Parties shall promote the development of rural areas and the diversification of the rural economy, including by strengthening linkages between resilient infrastructures, tourism, agriculture and industry.

7. The Parties shall support measures to improve the quality, availability and accessibility of insurance, financial and non-financial services for private enterprises, in both the formal and informal sectors. They shall improve access to affordable finance, including by developing viable banking and non-banking systems and strengthening digital financial services that facilitate value addition through the integration of firms, particularly micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, into regional and global value chains, and through enhanced production, trade regulatory capacity, entrepreneurship, improved business facilitation, the diversification of products and export destinations, and technological enhancement and innovation, including of e-commerce platforms.

ARTICLE 15

Investment

1. The Parties commit to encouraging, creating and maintaining a conducive environment for responsible investment for their mutual benefit. They shall streamline and accelerate administrative procedures and requirements, and shall support measures that create a predictable and secure investment climate, facilitate partnerships and promote public-private sector dialogue.

2. The Parties agree to attract and retain sustainable and responsible public and private investment, including foreign direct investment, through blending, guarantees and other innovative financial instruments to boost investor confidence. They shall endeavour to provide investors with adequate and easily accessible information on business opportunities in both the EU and the Pacific OACPS Members.

3. The Parties undertake to cooperate in facilitating investments through an appropriate intervention mix, with particular attention to youth and women.

ARTICLE 16

Private sector development

1. The Parties shall support the development of a dynamic, competitive and responsible private sector, including through the adoption of the necessary policies and economic, institutional and legislative reforms at national or regional level, or both. They shall take measures to strengthen and improve private sector productivity and efficiency. They shall pay special attention to the growth and improved competitiveness of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, to business incubators and to the development of cottage industries.

2. The Parties shall seize the opportunities of technological progress and the digital economy. They shall endeavour to mobilise investment in support of research and innovation, and the digital economy, and to encourage the private sector to boost digitalisation, in particular in terms of investments, innovation, market knowledge, access and expertise.

3. The Parties shall promote industrial development with a view to the achievement of sustainable economic growth. They shall adopt targeted policies aimed at facilitating industrial growth and opportunities, notably through the creation of linkages and value-adding activities, including small-scale industries. They shall encourage the development of appropriate technologies and processes and the diversification of niche products. They shall develop and implement strategies that build regional and national capacity for competitiveness in medium- and high-tech manufacturing and exports.

4. The Parties shall support increased resource-use efficiency and the adoption of cleaner and more environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes. They shall effectively address all forms of pollution resulting from economic activities, including through a clear definition of responsibilities and their attribution to the industry and business operators throughout the supply chain, on the basis of the extended producer responsibility and the polluter pays principles.

ARTICLE 17

Science, technology, innovation and research

1. The Parties shall cooperate in scientific research, technological development and innovation, with the aim of promoting social and economic development, tackling societal challenges and improving regional competitiveness. They shall develop the interconnection and interoperability of research networks and of computing and scientific data infrastructures and services, promoting such development within their regional context.

2. The Parties shall facilitate, as appropriate, access to each other's science, technology and innovation programmes, research infrastructures and facilities, publications and scientific data in areas of relevance, including climate change and oceans.

3. The Parties shall cooperate on matters of common interest in the area of civil space activities, such as space research, Global Navigation Satellite System applications and services, development of satellite augmentation systems, Earth Observation and Earth Science, particularly on the use of early warning and surveillance.

ARTICLE 18

Remittances

The Parties, recognising the importance of remittances as a major source for inclusive and sustainable development, shall endeavour to reduce the transaction costs of remittances to less than 3 % and eliminate remittances corridors with costs higher than 5 % by 2030, to promote financial literacy awareness and financial inclusion via innovative financial instruments, and to improve regulatory frameworks for enhanced involvement of non-traditional players, including through the use of new technologies.

CHAPTER 2

TRADE COOPERATION

ARTICLE 19

Trade integration

1. The Parties undertake to boost trade opportunities to their mutual advantage as well as with the wider region including the OCTs. They shall aim to foster the smooth and gradual integration of the OACPS Pacific Members into the world economy, especially by making full use of the potential of regional integration and trade with other regions.

2. The Parties shall support the implementation and functioning of the existing Interim Partnership Agreement between the European Community, of the one part, and the Pacific States, of the other part, encouraging the accession of interested countries and where appropriate broadening the scope of that agreement.

3. The Parties shall support regional economic integration processes in the Pacific region, including trade facilitation and regulatory harmonisation, to enable countries to take advantage of trading with their neighbours and to foster their integration into regional and global value chains.

ARTICLE 20

Trade capacity

1. The Parties shall cooperate in building trade capacity, including through strengthened production and entrepreneurship, and increased investment in value-adding sectors. They shall ensure that the framework conditions and the right domestic policies are in place to facilitate greater trade flows.

2. The Parties shall cooperate in the area of trade facilitation, building on their respective commitments under the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. Such cooperation shall take into account the specific needs of Pacific OACPS Members, including those related to geographic constraints, technology, trade finance and connectivity. They shall endeavour to reduce trade costs related to imports, exports, transit and other customs procedures on the movement of goods and services, including the automation of customs procedures.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to prevent, identify and eliminate unnecessary technical barriers to trade as well as unnecessary non-tariff barriers restricting their exports. In particular, they shall cooperate to ensure compliance with international standards through appropriate capacity-building support, and improved quality control mechanisms and certification laboratories.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to strengthen sanitary and phytosanitary regulations and practices, including through institutional and regulatory mechanisms and adequate information systems and infrastructures.

5. The Parties shall cooperate to implement administrative cooperation and verification arrangements in their trade relations.

6. The Parties, recognising the contribution of digital technology to trade facilitation, agree to cooperate towards appropriate Pacific regional digital platforms for national and cross-border trade.

ARTICLE 21

Services

1. The Parties shall support the development of a robust and vibrant services sector, acknowledging its importance in terms of its contribution to economic growth and job creation, in providing inputs to all economic activities and in facilitating transformative production and export processes.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to strengthen capacity in the supply of services. They shall pay particular attention to services related to the movement of natural persons for business purposes, financial and other business services, tourism, cultural and creative industries, and construction and related engineering services.

3. The Parties agree to encourage the establishment of mutual recognition agreements where appropriate, including with a view to facilitating the recognition of professional qualifications. They shall cooperate to address barriers to trade in services, with a view to fostering competition, creating employment, spurring growth and development, and improving the quality of their services sector.

CHAPTER 3

KEY SECTORS

ARTICLE 22

Blue economy

1. The Parties shall promote a blue economy that is well managed and sustainable, and that aims to reconcile sustainable economic growth with employment creation, improved livelihoods and social equity, fair economic benefits, and strengthened food security, based on the conservation of marine ecosystems and biodiversity, and the sustainable use of resources.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to develop sustainable aquaculture through effective spatial planning, an ecosystem-based approach and an enhanced level playing field for investors, ensuring that it meets the concerns of local communities.

3. The Parties shall enhance sustainable fisheries development, including at the level of artisanal fisheries, by promoting sustainable value chains through enhanced investment in productivity and local processing capacities, while ensuring the sustainability of fisheries resources and improved food security and safety.

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4. The Parties shall seize opportunities in the area of marine biotechnology, supporting research and reducing technical bottlenecks to facilitate access for investors, while avoiding risks to the marine environment.

5. The Parties shall promote research, innovation and the sharing of knowledge, best practices and lessons learned on the blue economy, including strengthening spatial planning and sound investment decision-making.

6. The Parties shall promote marine renewable energy with a view to accelerating the clean energy transition on all islands.

ARTICLE 23

Agriculture

1. The Parties shall promote sustainable agriculture and support agro-ecological practices and actions to build climate-resilient agriculture and ensure value addition and diversification, so as to improve livelihoods, expand incomes and create decent employment.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to increase opportunities for producers, processors and exporters, particularly smallholders, to access markets at national, regional and international levels, including through improved agricultural extension support, rural infrastructures and access to finance. They shall cooperate to ensure compliance with internationally accepted practices and standards, taking into consideration their relevant policy frameworks.

3. The Parties shall promote food security by developing inclusive and biodiverse nutrition-sensitive value chains, including through local value-addition and processing and enhanced capacities of value chain agents. They shall engage in the registration and protection of geographical indications for agricultural and food products from the Pacific region and the European Union.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to combat pests, diseases and invasive species affecting their agriculture.

ARTICLE 24

Tourism

1. The Parties undertake to ensure a balanced and sustainable development of tourism, maximising its potential for economic growth, the creation of decent jobs and increased government revenues while ensuring the integration of environmental, cultural and social dimensions.

2. The Parties shall enhance the protection and promotion of cultural heritage and natural resources, and shall strengthen linkages between tourism and other relevant economic sectors, in particular transport, agriculture and the blue economy.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to promote sustainable development practices and shall aim to optimise the socio-economic benefits of tourism, protecting land, oceans, people and cultures, respecting the integrity and interests of local communities, and supporting their involvement in the process of tourism development, in particular rural and community tourism and eco-tourism. They shall encourage investment in new technology for research and statistical development, climate and disaster resilience, biodiversity, waste management, renewable energy and energy efficiency, water and food security, and community livelihoods and participation.

4. The Parties shall bolster investment in the promotion and development of tourism products and services. They shall promote the development of innovative partnerships with relevant airlines and cruise operators and invest in human capital development, tourism training and capacity building, marketing, including digital marketing, and encourage business contacts and exchanges of skilled personnel, with a view to boosting competitiveness, improving service standards and for the further development of the tourism sector.

ARTICLE 25

Sustainable energy

1. The Parties recognise the importance of the energy sector for economic prosperity and for human and social development and human security, as well as the need for a smooth transition to a low-carbon economy. They shall endeavour to strengthen energy security and the resilience of energy infrastructures to improve accessibility and affordability of clean energy.

2. The Parties agree to support energy reforms in the Pacific region that contribute to reducing the carbon intensity of its development processes, increasing the efficiency of supply and end-use energy consumption, enhancing the resilience of energy infrastructure and decreasing net greenhouse gas emissions, taking into consideration their relevant policy frameworks, including the Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific and the FRDP.

3. The Parties shall facilitate open, transparent and functioning energy markets that drive inclusive and sustainable investment in responsible generation, transmission and distribution, and in energy efficiency.

4. The Parties shall promote energy efficiency and energy savings at all stages of the energy chain, from generation to consumption, and shall strengthen, improve and transform power production, generation and distribution facilities, including by strengthening and expanding urban and rural power distribution grids.

5. The Parties shall promote the energy transition of the Pacific region through the development and uptake of clean, diverse, cost-effective and sustainable energy technologies, including renewable and low-emission energy technologies.

ARTICLE 26

Connectivity

1. The Parties, recognising the geographical constraints faced by Pacific island states, shall strengthen connectivity across the Pacific region, ensuring that it is sustainable, comprehensive, rules-based, and that it fosters investment and a level playing field for businesses. They shall endeavour to build safe, secure, resilient and sustainable transport links, by air, land and sea, and digital networks, from mobile to fixed, from the internet backbone to the last mile, from cable to satellites. They undertake to work towards energy connectivity, with the aim of fostering modern, efficient and clean solutions and to promote people-to-people contacts.

2. The Parties undertake to restructure, strengthen and improve transport and related infrastructure systems, facilitating and improving the movement of passengers, including those with reduced mobility, and of goods, and providing cost-effective, safe, secure and sustainable access to reliable and effective urban, air, maritime, inland-waterway, rail and road-transport services. They shall improve the overall governance of the transport sector, by developing and implementing efficient regulations to facilitate harmonisation across the Pacific region, to allow fair competition and interoperability within and between transport modes, as well as to activate and promote the participation of the private sector in transport projects, including on maintenance and on the elimination of capacity constraints and of missing-link infrastructures.

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3. The Parties acknowledge the importance of cost-effective and efficient maritime transport services as the main mode of transport facilitating trade. They shall cooperate in the maritime transport sector to promote the efforts of Pacific OACPS Members in developing competitive ports and port services, including navigation infrastructure, with a view to improving the movement of goods and people.

4. The Parties shall cooperate in the aviation sector, including considering an increase in routes and frequency of air services into the Pacific region. They shall also cooperate to strengthen and improve aviation safety and security, and airspace surveillance, including capability to respond to related threats and risks. They agree to strengthen and improve air and sea travel navigational aid facilities, including air traffic control and cartography.

5. The Parties shall aim at boosting access to open, affordable and secure broadband connectivity and digital infrastructures, including through improved undersea cables. They shall take measures to facilitate easy access to ICT and support the appropriate utilisation of artificial intelligence and Internet of Things and the deployment of extensive low-cost wireless networks, adapted to local circumstances. They shall endeavour to establish the necessary regulatory institutions to license service providers, promote competitive behaviour and ensure consumer welfare and protection, strengthening regional cooperation, taking into consideration the relevant policy frameworks of the Parties, including the Pacific Regional ICT Strategic Action Plan.

ARTICLE 27

Extractive industries

1. The Parties, acknowledging the contribution of extractive industries to economic development, shall facilitate sustainable and responsible investment through appropriate legislation, policies and regulatory frameworks consistent with international best practices. They shall aim to ensure fair and undistorted access to extractive resources, while fully respecting national laws and the sovereignty of countries over their natural resources, and upholding the rights of affected local communities.

2. The Parties agree to promote the responsible management of extractive resources, including the development of legislative frameworks, taking into account environmental impacts. They shall promote transparency and accountability, in line with the principles set out in the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative.

3. The Parties shall promote the use of relevant technologies to facilitate the sustainable and responsible exploration and exploitation of extractive resources.

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ARTICLE 28

Forestry

1. The Parties shall promote the sustainable management of forests and the sustainable use of forest resources, reduce and halt deforestation and forest degradation, conserve forest biodiversity and ecosystems, combat illegal logging and associated trade, and promote resource- and energy-efficient products from sustainably managed forests.

2. The Parties shall promote sustainable value chains of agro-industries and forest commodities and products, prioritising the creation of jobs and other economic opportunities in the conservation of ecosystems. They shall cooperate in the sustainable management of forests, including the legal and sustainable provision of products for commercial gain and the sustainable commercialisation of forest flora and fauna, in full respect of international best practices and standards and relevant international agreements. They shall collaborate and promote the use of appropriate technology and methods to identify and develop herbs and other forest-based materials that would contribute to medicinal products, while ensuring that no loss of biodiversity is incurred, that no ecosystem imbalance is created, and that access to medicinal products is not hindered.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to improve the governance and sustainability of forests, including by taking into consideration the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan and by encouraging the development of voluntary partnerships agreements. They shall strive to strengthen coherence and positive interactions at country level between the FLEGT Action Plan and climate action in the forest- and land-use sector, including in the context of other international initiatives, particularly the Warsaw Framework on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+). They shall engage in the development and review of policies, legislation, regulations, strategies and plans for climate action in the forest- and land-use sector, in line with countries' NDCs. They shall take steps to improve the quality of inventories for emissions and removals from the forest sector.

4. The Parties shall support the development of forest adaptation and conservation strategies, and initiatives to enhance forest health, reverse deforestation, restore degraded forest landscapes, enhance resilience to climate change and re-establish forest cover. Recognising the importance of natural and virgin forests in providing ecosystems, climate and cultural services that our societies depend upon, they shall cooperate to develop and implement suitable approaches and positive incentives for their adaptation and conservation.

5. The Parties shall support the strengthening and capacity building of regional, sub-regional and national institutions and agencies responsible for the sustainable management of forests. They shall raise public awareness of deforestation at all levels and encourage the consumption of resource- and energy-efficient products from sustainably managed forests. They shall promote and support the use of alternative, sustainable and clean cooking fuel for local communities. They shall strengthen the involvement of local authorities and communities in forest protection.

TITLE III

OCEANS, SEAS AND FISHERIES

ARTICLE 29

The Parties acknowledge the essential role of oceans for life on earth, sustainable development and people's livelihoods. They agree to step up efforts to protect the oceans and seas from the adverse consequences and impact of different pressures such as climate change, ocean acidification and coral bleaching, overexploitation, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and other destructive and unsustainable activities. They shall promote the sustainable development of the blue economy, protect marine ecosystems and biodiversity, reduce pollution of all kinds and deploy climate change mitigation and adaptation policies.

CHAPTER 1

OCEAN GOVERNANCE

ARTICLE 30

Sustainable oceans

1. The Parties acknowledge each other's efforts to ensure improved and integrated ocean governance, strengthened regional and sub-regional fisheries conservation and management measures, the monitoring, control and surveillance of fisheries, other region-specific strategies, and instruments for the effective management of the oceans.

2. The Parties shall take the necessary steps to implement relevant international and regional treaties, conventions and agreements on ocean governance to which they are party, and the conservation and management of resources provided for therein.

3. The Parties shall strengthen governance of the oceans for their sustainable use and conservation, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and taking into consideration relevant regional frameworks, including by promoting an integrated management approach, taking into account social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

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4. The Parties shall cooperate to mitigate and alleviate pressure on the oceans and their resources, for safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed oceans, as well as to strengthen knowledge regarding oceans. They shall cooperate on the protection, preservation and restoration of coastal and marine ecosystems.

5. The Parties shall cooperate to prevent and reduce marine pollution and fight noise pollution and marine litter, including plastics and micro-plastics, oil spills and nuclear contaminants. They shall support and strive for the regulation of the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships, actively supporting the urgent implementation of the initial International Maritime Organization strategy on reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships. They shall enact legislation and regulations governing the discharge of harmful waste and litter, including imposing penalties for violation.

6. The Parties agree to base their decisions on the best available science, with due regard to the principles of the ecosystem-based approach, the precautionary principle and the importance of traditional and indigenous knowledge.

7. The Parties shall strengthen cooperation on research, design and implementation of conservation and management measures, marine spatial planning and the establishment of marine protected areas and marine sanctuaries, in line with international law, based on the best available science, and taking into account indigenous and local communities' knowledge.

8. The Parties shall cooperate to build capacity and expertise in ocean governance, including through marine scientific research and the transfer of marine technology, in accordance with UNCLOS.

9. 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.

10. The Parties recognise the general concerns raised about the impact of seabed mining on the marine environment and its biodiversity. They shall use the best available science, apply the precautionary principle and ecosystem approach, promote research and share best practices in fields of mutual interest related to seabed mineral resources, in order to ensure the sound environmental management of activities for the protection and preservation of the marine environment and its biodiversity.

ARTICLE 31

Biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction

1. The Parties shall cooperate, including through competent international and regional organisations and arrangements, on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, based on the best available science.

2. The Parties shall promote capacity building and the transfer of marine technology for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, including through international cooperation.

CHAPTER 2

FISHERIES

ARTICLE 32

Sustainable conservation and management of fisheries resources

1. The Parties shall cooperate to ensure the conservation and sustainable management and use of fisheries resources at bilateral, sub-regional, regional and multilateral levels, as appropriate.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to ensure that fisheries resources are conserved and managed effectively and harvested sustainably, and that social and economic returns are optimised.

3. The Parties agree to promote transparent and science-based conservation and management measures in line with international law, in particular the rules and principles set out in UNCLOS and the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, and respecting conservation and management measures adopted by regional fisheries management organisations, where applicable.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to ensure the sustainable economic development of coastal fisheries through effective policies, laws and regulations. They shall promote access to fisheries resources by local communities and small-scale and artisanal fishers, and shall promote food security and inter-generational and intra-generational equity.

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ARTICLE 33

Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

1. The Parties in accordance with international obligations shall maintain or adopt initiatives to combat IUU fishing in their respective jurisdictions, in other jurisdictions and on the high seas, recognising that such activities constitute a serious threat to the effective conservation, management and sustainable exploitation of fisheries.

2. The Parties shall implement policies and measures to exclude IUU fishing products from trade flows. They shall implement and enforce monitoring, control and surveillance measures, such as observer schemes, vessel-monitoring systems, fishing licences and authorisations, catch recording and reporting, transhipment control, inspections and port state control and associated measures, to ensure compliance, including enforcement action and sanctions in accordance with domestic regulations, with the aim of conserving fish stocks, preventing overfishing and promoting sustainable fisheries.

3. The Parties, in accordance with their obligations under existing national laws and sub-regional, regional and international instruments, agree not to grant entry to, deny service to, or to expel from their ports, vessels of Parties found to have engaged in IUU fishing in other jurisdictions and on the high seas, or that have a history of IUU fishing.

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4. The Parties shall endeavour to ratify relevant international agreements in relation to IUU fishing, notably the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, done at Rome, 22 November 2009, and shall promote complementarity and consistency between international and regional measures and strategies to combat IUU fishing.

ARTICLE 34

Harmful fisheries subsidies

The Parties agree to take necessary steps to prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, and to eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing and refrain from introducing such new subsidies, recognising that appropriate, effective, special and differential treatment for developing and least developed Pacific States should be an integral part of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiation.

TITLE IV

SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

ARTICLE 35

The Parties shall cooperate towards achieving peaceful and resilient societies, protect, promote and fulfil human rights, and shall strengthen democratic principles and good governance. They shall support accountable and transparent institutions at all levels and shall take concrete steps on tax good governance and on the fight against corruption, fraud and money laundering. They shall address new or expanding threats to security, including terrorism, threats to cybersecurity and all forms of transnational organised crime, particularly in relation to maritime security, cybercrime, human security and environmental security, while safeguarding human rights, including through regional cooperation, taking into consideration their relevant policy frameworks, including the principles set out in the Boe Declaration on Regional Security and relevant EU common foreign and security policy strategies. They shall endeavour to facilitate, whenever appropriate in line with existing international obligations, the work of human rights mechanisms, including that of the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, on relevant matters.

CHAPTER 1

SECURITY

ARTICLE 36

Peace and security

1. The Parties shall cooperate to ensure peace, security and justice through the protection, promotion and fulfilment of human rights, good governance, strengthened human security, environmental security, and conflict prevention and peace building.

2. The Parties shall address all forms of identity-based violence, including sexual, gender-based, inter-communal, ethnic and religious violence. They shall support reconciliation processes through transitional justice mechanisms, including traditional or customary practices, where and when they are not incompatible with internationally recognised human rights. They shall provide support to all victims of violence.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to enhance maritime security, in accordance with UNCLOS and taking into consideration relevant regional frameworks, by sharing information, responding to threats to ships and maritime installations and assets, and enforcing relevant laws and regulations. They shall cooperate, including through the use of space technologies, to address security issues that arise from transnational crime such as drug trafficking, piracy and armed robbery at sea, forced labour, trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants.

4. The Parties shall endeavour to develop new initiatives to prevent and combat terrorism in all its forms, in full respect of the rule of law and international law, addressing factors that may create an environment conducive to violent extremism and radicalisation. They shall develop new or strengthen existing legislation and strategies, and cooperate to combat and counter terrorism, terrorist financing and associated threats as appropriate, in full conformity with international law, where applicable. They shall cooperate towards the implementation of all relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council (UNSCRs), including UNSCRs 2396 (2017) and 2462 (2019), and of the General Assembly. They shall refrain from providing any form of support to state and non-state actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical, biological or any other weapons and their means of delivery for terrorist purposes. They shall enhance cooperation to enable individuals and communities to prevent, and increase resilience to, acts of terrorism, violent extremism and radicalisation.

5. The Parties reaffirm that climate change is an existential threat to the livelihoods, security and well-being of peoples and communities, and commit to making progress on the implementation of the Paris Agreement. They shall promote the global recognition of climate change as a security risk and shall work together to prevent climate change impacts from continuing to act as a threat multiplier, such as threats from rising sea levels and extreme weather events, with serious implications for peace and security. They shall recognise and act on the threat of climate change to peace and security by strengthening adaptation and resilience measures as well as early warning systems.

6. The Parties shall strengthen cooperation to promote cybersecurity and to prevent and combat cybercrime and cyber-enabled crime, including the cyber-enabled theft of intellectual property. They shall cooperate to share best practices for protecting more effectively national and regional critical infrastructures from cyber-attacks. They shall promote multi-stakeholder internet governance and address issues relating to the online distribution of illicit or harmful materials. They shall exchange information on the education and training of cybersecurity technical experts and cybercrime investigators, the investigation of cybercrime and digital forensic science. They shall strengthen international cooperation to promote security and stability in cyberspace. They shall recognise that cybercrime is a global problem and acknowledge the need to build on existing international norms and standards, including those of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime.

ARTICLE 37

Organised crime

1. The Parties shall strengthen and implement legislation and strategies to combat transnational organised crime, including, but not limited to, trafficking in persons, illicit drugs, small arms and light weapons, illegal logging and associated trade, illegal trade of endangered species including endangered marine species, wild animals and plants, as well as derived products, and other illegal economic and financial activities.

2. The Parties shall cooperate with a view to maintaining coordinated efforts to prevent and combat the use of their financial systems to finance criminal activities. They shall exchange information and enforce appropriate measures to fight against money laundering, terrorism financing and illicit financial flows, in line with relevant international standards and frameworks, notably the Financial Action Task Force recommendations.

3. The Parties shall strengthen dialogue and cooperation in the area of law enforcement, with the aim of combating the activities of transnational organised criminal and terrorist networks. They shall improve coordination between national and regional security mechanisms through open dialogue and the exchange of strategic information in support of early warning and cooperation with relevant international organisations, partners and stakeholders.

CHAPTER 2

HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

ARTICLE 38

Human rights

1. The Parties recognise that human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated and agree to respect, protect, fulfil and promote all human rights, be they civil, political, economic, social or cultural. They shall take necessary steps in accordance with relevant international treaties to ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of assembly and association, and freedom of thought, religion and belief. They shall address and fight all forms of racism, discrimination, gender-based discrimination, including their manifestation through gender-based violence, trafficking in persons, with women and girls being especially targeted for sexual exploitation, hate speech and hate crimes, xenophobia and related intolerance.

2. The Parties shall intensify efforts to achieve gender equality and the full enjoyment of all human rights by women and girls and their empowerment. They shall promote, protect and fulfil the rights of the child.

3. The Parties shall promote the rights of persons belonging to minorities and advance the rights of indigenous peoples, as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

4. The Parties shall support measures to enhance a rights-based approach to development, encompassing all human rights, and take the necessary steps to ensure, *inter alia*, equality and non-discrimination for all in the enjoyment of human rights, including access to and control over the resources and services essential for the right to an adequate standard of living. These include, but are not limited to, the rights to education, health, including sexual and reproductive health, food, drinking water and sanitation, adequate housing, work and justice. The steps to be taken for the realisation of these rights shall include accessible services addressing the causes and adverse impacts of climate change and the promotion of fair and equitable distribution of resources.

5. The Parties shall cooperate towards the realisation of human rights in the Pacific region, including through the establishment and strengthening of independent national and regional human rights mechanisms and institutions, and through the strengthening of an enabling and safe environment for the active engagement of civil society, human rights defenders, and other relevant stakeholders, including through their capacity building and access to regional and international human rights mechanisms.

ARTICLE 39

Democracy and governance

1. The Parties shall uphold democratic processes and institutions in accordance with internationally recognised principles and national legal frameworks, including accountable governments elected through peaceful, inclusive, transparent and credible elections, the acceptance of election results and the ensuing government transition and individuals' right to participate in the public affairs of the society they live in.

2. The Parties shall enhance the role of parliaments, promote media independence and pluralism, and preserve and broaden an enabling space for civil society, with a view to improving democratic accountability. They shall strengthen national, regional and decentralised capacities to ensure respect for democratic principles and practices.

3. The Parties shall promote the principles of good governance. They shall take concrete measures to build inclusive, accountable and transparent public institutions. They shall support capacities for policy design and implementation, develop an accountable, efficient, transparent and professional civil service, and strengthen the delivery of quality public services.

4. The Parties shall accelerate the deployment of e-governance services and digital services infrastructure as a means of enhancing access to and the availability of public services, improving democratic practices and governance, and promoting, protecting and fulfilling human rights and fundamental freedoms.

5. The Parties shall establish or strengthen mechanisms and institutions to combat corruption, bribery, fraud and corporate financial crimes, including by implementing and promoting relevant international standards and instruments, notably the UN Convention against Corruption, done at New York on 31 October 2003. They shall promote transparent management of public resources and accountability, encourage actions that support the values of a culture of transparency, legality and behaviour change in order to ensure the eradication of corruption, and further develop legislation to facilitate the recovery and return of assets.

6. The Parties shall strengthen governance systems to stem irregular migration and to combat smuggling of migrants and related criminal networks, as well as trafficking in persons, with a specific focus on victim protection.

ARTICLE 40

Rule of law and justice

1. The Parties shall promote respect for the law and cooperate to consolidate the rule of law. They shall aim to ensure an independent, impartial and effective judiciary and to strengthen institutions in the administration of justice. They shall take the necessary steps to provide access for all to justice under due process.

2. The Parties shall oppose and condemn all forms of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment by state and non-state actors in all contexts, including by supporting the ratification and effective implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, done at New York on 10 December 1984, and its Optional Protocol.

3. The Parties shall promote justice reforms to ensure efficient court systems and procedures, and modern penitentiary systems. They shall cooperate to enhance the capacities of key actors in the judiciary and legislative bodies.

ARTICLE 41

Financial governance

1. The Parties shall promote sound public financial management, including effective mobilisation and use of public revenues, sustainable public debt management, sustainable, transparent, competitive and predictable public procurement systems, and support for national oversight bodies.

2. The Parties shall enact legislation, take concrete measures and strengthen relevant institutions and mechanisms to implement the principles of good governance in the tax area.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to combat tax evasion, tax avoidance and illicit financial flows, and ensure the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and fairness of tax systems.

TITLE V

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE 42

The Parties are determined to eradicate poverty in all its forms by 2030, foster human and social development through inclusive and equitable access to social services and enhanced food security, effectively tackle inequality, promote gender equality and women and youth empowerment, ensure that everyone has the necessary means to enjoy life in dignity, and create the conditions for people to participate effectively in democratic life and contribute actively to sustainable economic growth. They shall take concrete measures to promote social cohesion and social protection as a fundamental investment for poverty eradication and fighting inequality, and as an important means of reinvesting economic gains more broadly in society and people. They shall promote culture and sport as drivers for sustainable human and social development and inclusive economic growth, as well as for social inclusion and peaceful societies.

CHAPTER 1

SOCIAL SERVICES

ARTICLE 43

Education

1. The Parties shall support inclusive and equitable access to quality education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, early childhood care and technical and vocational education and training, taking into consideration their relevant policy frameworks, including the Pacific Regional Education Framework. They shall promote the development of digital literacy and skills. They shall pay special attention to women and girls, and marginalised and vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities.

2. The Parties shall take measures to improve the quality of formal and non-formal learning and to support the development of skills through technical and vocational education and training, with a view to increasing the number of highly educated and skilled workers matching labour market needs and opportunities.

3. The Parties shall promote initiatives that encourage and enable the development and wider use of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

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4. The Parties shall endeavour to improve infrastructure and equipment of education centres. They shall improve the quality of education through evidence-based policies, curriculum development and enhanced quality of teacher training and professional development.

ARTICLE 44

Health

1. The Parties shall aim to achieve universal health coverage and equitable access to healthcare services, including through strengthened national health systems, modernised facilities and equipment, and quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines.

2. The Parties shall take measures towards strengthening the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, with a view to reducing their incidence, including by increasing investment for health promotion, and primary and secondary prevention strategies. They shall take into consideration their relevant policy frameworks that promote the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. They shall address the challenges associated with mental health through the development of healthcare and community-based services, including those addressing psychosocial disorders.

3. The Parties shall strengthen national and regional surveillance and monitoring systems to detect and respond rapidly and effectively to communicable diseases and other health emergencies of national, regional and international concern, including infections with pandemic potential such as influenza. They shall cooperate to implement a "one health" approach to address antimicrobial resistance and its consequences for both human and animal health.

ARTICLE 45

Water and sanitation

1. The Parties shall strengthen efforts to foster access to sufficient, safe and affordable water for personal and domestic use, paying special attention to people in vulnerable situations. They shall promote action to strengthen water security against the impacts of population growth, climate variability and climate change, including through improved water-use efficiency, drinking-water safety, sustainable use of water resources, and the development of national water catchment and storage systems.

2. The Parties shall boost physical and affordable access to sanitation for all, in all spheres of life, that is safe, hygienic, secure, socially and culturally acceptable and that provides privacy and ensures dignity. They shall support and strengthen local communities' participation in establishing, managing and maintaining facilities and hygiene practices in households, schools and healthcare facilities, particularly in areas facing difficult challenges, such as rural and remote areas, small islands and informal urban settlements.

3. The Parties acknowledge the importance of shared knowledge and technology, including the capacity building required to plan, deliver and maintain quality water and sanitation systems and infrastructure.

ARTICLE 46

Housing

1. The Parties shall strengthen efforts to secure equitable access to adequate, safe and affordable housing for all, including those in vulnerable situations. They shall address the issue of inequalities between urban households and rural areas, and between remote and main islands. They shall promote the sharing of best practices, including on building codes, with a view to enhancing environmental resilience and achieving climate-smart housing.

2. The Parties shall work towards achieving universal access to sustainable energy services for all, improving access to electricity and supporting efficiency in households' energy usage.

ARTICLE 47

Food security and improved nutrition

1. The Parties shall aim to ensure that all have access to sufficient, affordable, safe and nutritious food, including by promoting local nutritious food and investing in sustainable food systems, including climate-resilient transportation and storage. They shall pay particular attention to ensuring the availability of adequate sources of emergency food during disaster recovery.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to end all forms of malnutrition and address the underlying causes of food and nutrition insecurity.

3. The Parties shall support agricultural diversification and local food production for both subsistence and commercial purposes. They shall aim to strengthen resilient and diversified farming systems and resource-efficient agriculture by using resilient and high-yield nutritional crop varieties. They shall address overexploitation of fisheries resources, considering that fish is a critical source for food and nutrition security.

4. The Parties shall promote healthy diets, reducing reliance on imported food with low nutritional value, strengthening nutrition-labelling regulation, fostering education and public awareness programmes on nutrition and healthy diet practices, and promoting the production and consumption of local healthy food.

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CHAPTER 2

INEQUALITY, SOCIAL COHESION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

ARTICLE 48

Social protection

1. The Parties shall promote the creation of inclusive and well-functioning labour markets and employment policies geared to ensuring decent work for all, including enhancing health and safety conditions for workers. They shall address issues related to the informal economy, including access to credit and micro-finance, and strengthened social protection measures, with a view to facilitating a smoother transition to the formal economy. They shall combat all forms of exploitation for profit, including sexual and work exploitation, in both formal and informal economies.

2. The Parties shall work towards extending social protection coverage, especially for people in a situation of vulnerability and marginalised groups as well as those who are formally and informally employed, with the aim of progressively reaching universality, through basic income security and adequate and shock-responsive social protection systems.

ARTICLE 49

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

1. The Parties shall strengthen policies, programmes and mechanisms aimed at ensuring, improving and expanding equal participation and opportunities for men and women in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life. They shall encourage the ratification and support the effective implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, done at New York on 18 December 1979, and its Optional Protocol. They shall ensure that the gender perspective is systematically mainstreamed across all policies. They shall take into consideration their relevant policy frameworks, including the Pacific regional architecture for gender equality.

2. The Parties shall support women's economic empowerment, identify economic opportunities for women and ensure that their economic and social rights are respected and promoted. They shall facilitate women's access to financial services and employment, and control over and use of land and other productive assets. They shall take measures to support women entrepreneurs, cut the gender pay gap and remove other discriminatory regulations and practices. They shall work towards building women's resilience to climate change impacts and shall sustain their livelihoods in agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, and cultural industries. They shall strengthen the collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of accessible statistical data on women's economic empowerment.

3. The Parties undertake to adopt the necessary legislation and policy measures to end child, early and forced marriage, and to eliminate all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, particularly domestic violence, all forms of sexual and work exploitation and all forms of harassment in the public and private spheres, including through awareness-raising initiatives for behavioural change.

4. The Parties shall take measures to enhance women's and girls' participation and voice in public and political life, including in electoral, policy, governance and development processes, local government, traditional and customary mechanisms, leadership, constitutional bodies, state-owned enterprises, peace building and reconciliation.

5. The Parties shall strengthen national and regional institutions to address and handle issues related to all forms of violence against women and girls, including prevention of and protection against all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, harassment investigation and accountability mechanisms, and care and support for victims. They shall endeavour to align national legislation and regulations, and regional frameworks with the relevant international conventions and regional frameworks.

6. The Parties shall commit to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and the outcomes of their review conferences. They shall enact policies and design programmes that aim at achieving universal access to affordable, comprehensive and integrated quality sexual and reproductive health services with adequate counselling, information and sexual education programmes, taking into consideration the UNESCO international technical guidance on sexuality education, as appropriate, as well as the delivery of sexual and reproductive health-care services. The Parties shall support the effective implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, as appropriate.

ARTICLE 50

Youth

1. The Parties shall establish governance structures to benefit from the youth dividend and to empower young people and increase their influence in decision-making processes and their active participation in political life and in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts. They shall promote increased participation of young people in environmental action, particularly climate change monitoring and adaptation programmes.

2. The Parties shall support youth entrepreneurship and decent employment for young people, paying particular attention to those in education, employment or training, to help them acquire labour market-relevant skills for employment.

3. The Parties shall foster social and justice programmes for the prevention of juvenile delinquency and integration into economic and social life. They shall support institutions, such as schools, faith-based organisations and youth groups, which may contribute to building resilience in vulnerable communities and with youth at risk.

4. The Parties shall take measures to improve and strengthen child protection systems and safeguards. They shall support measures to end child labour and abuse, early and forced marriage, and corporal punishment.

ARTICLE 51

Persons with disabilities

1. The Parties shall promote, protect and fulfil the rights of persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind. They shall take concrete measures to ensure their full inclusion in society through equal access to social services, including education and health and effective participation in labour markets and other economic opportunities.

2. The Parties shall encourage the ratification, and support the effective implementation of, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, taking into consideration their relevant policy frameworks.

ARTICLE 52

Culture, sport, and people-to-people contacts

1. The Parties shall promote the protection and enhancement of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and the diversity of cultural expression, with a view to enhancing mutual understanding and fostering balanced cultural exchanges. They shall cooperate and promote investment to support the preservation and promotion of traditional arts and culture, indigenous knowledge and cultural diversity.

2. The Parties shall promote creative and cultural industries and cultural tourism as drivers for jobs and sustainable growth. They shall endeavour to promote the mobility of culture and creative professionals and the circulation of works of art, and carry out joint initiatives in various cultural and creative spheres. They shall encourage the economic empowerment of women and youth through culture value chains, by strengthening public-private partnerships for cultural production and mainstreaming culture, taking into consideration their relevant policy frameworks, including the Pacific Regional Cultural Strategy.

3. The Parties shall promote creativity and innovation, knowledge-sharing, international and regional co-creation, and market access opportunities for cultural goods and services. They shall develop sector-specific regulatory frameworks and institutional support that, *inter alia*, protect intellectual property rights for creative works.

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4. The Parties shall promote exchanges in the cultural sector, including among institutions such as museums and conservatories, and shall encourage intercultural dialogue between people as well as relevant stakeholders. They shall support the mobility of young people and youth workers as a means of promoting intercultural dialogue and the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences outside formal educational systems. They shall endeavour to implement relevant initiatives in the field of higher education mobility, with a view to promoting cooperation and modernisation in higher education and encouraging learner and academic mobility.

5. The Parties shall promote sport as a driver for sustainable development, inclusive economic growth, social inclusion, non-discrimination and the advancement of human rights. They shall endeavour to build capacities, develop adequate facilities and encourage people's increased participation in sporting and other physical education activities, with particular emphasis on youth and women. They shall support sport as a means for intercultural dialogue and cooperation between nations, the prevention of conflict and violence, and post-conflict reconciliation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned Plenipotentiaries, duly authorised to this effect, have signed this Agreement.

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ANNEX I

RETURN AND READMISSION PROCESSES

1. Definitions

For the purposes of this Annex, the following definitions apply:

(1) "requesting State" means the State (one of the OACPS Members or one of the Member States of the European Union) submitting a readmission request pursuant to Article 74(3) of the General Part of this Agreement;

(2) "requested State" means the State (one of the OACPS Members or one of the Member States of the European Union) to which a readmission request pursuant to Article 74(3) of the General Part of this Agreement is submitted.

2. Return and readmission of persons without a valid travel document

Return and readmission processes shall be carried out as follows:

If the person subject to the readmission request is in possession of an expired passport, a valid or an expired identity card or another official identity document with a photograph, or if the person's identity has been confirmed by all appropriate means, including as a result of a search carried out in the visa application records or any other official records of the requesting State, the requested State shall, on receipt of the relevant information, provide valid travel documents as soon as possible after the request of the requesting State, unless justifiable reason is provided for additional time, in which case the requested State shall provide the travel documents in the shortest possible time; or

In other cases, if the nationality of the person subject to the readmission request needs to be verified, the requested State shall proceed with the necessary verification immediately following the receipt of the request from the requesting State by using the most appropriate and most efficient identification procedures, including an identification interview upon request of the requesting State. The requesting and the requested States shall consult biometric registries, where available.

In any event, when it receives a readmission request for one of its nationals, the requested State shall respond at the latest within 30 days of that request, in line with the time limits provided for in Standard 5.26 of Chapter 5 of Annex 9 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, done at Chicago on 7 December 1944, by providing its nationals with appropriate travel documents for return purposes or by satisfying the requesting State that the person concerned is not one of its nationals.

3. Means of transport for return

Return shall take place, with prior notification to the requested State, by any means of transport in line with the obligations set out in Article 74 of the General Part of this Agreement. Return by air shall not be restricted to the use of scheduled flights.

4. Return of unaccompanied minors

In order to ensure the best interest of the child, an unaccompanied minor can only be returned to a member of his or her family, a nominated guardian, other authorities provided for in the national laws, or adequate reception facilities of the requested State.

5. Bilateral agreements and arrangements

At the request of a Party, the Parties shall, without prejudice to the direct applicability of Chapter 4 of Title VI of the General Part of this Agreement and this Annex, conclude bilateral agreements or arrangements governing specific obligations for the return and readmission of nationals of the Member State of the European Union and of the OACPS Member concerned. Those agreements or arrangements shall include shorter time frames for the identification and issuance of travel documents to further facilitate the implementation of this Annex. Such bilateral agreements or arrangements shall cover, if deemed necessary by any of the parties to that agreement or arrangement, arrangements for the return and readmission of persons other than nationals of the parties, including stateless persons, who have their habitual residence in the territory of the requested State.

The obligations set out in those bilateral agreements or arrangements shall be compatible with the provisions set out in this Annex.

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ANNEX II

OPERATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK

ARTICLE 1

Legal personality and status

1. The European Investment Bank (the "EIB") and any subsidiary of the EIB shall have legal personality in the territory of the OACPS Members, including in particular the capacity to contract, to acquire and dispose of movable and immovable property and to be party to legal proceedings.

2. The EIB and any subsidiary of the EIB shall enjoy in the territory of each OACPS Member the same treatment in respect of tax and customs arrangements and status accorded to the international institution operating in that OACPS Member that is most favoured in respect of such arrangements and status.

ARTICLE 2

Banking and finance regulation

The EIB and any subsidiary of the EIB may pursue as an international organisation within the territory of the OACPS Members for the purposes contemplated by this Agreement the activities envisaged by the statute of the EIB or of such subsidiary, as it may be amended, including, but not limited to, financing by means of loans, bonds, guarantees, equity, quasi-equity or any other financing instruments, providing or financing technical assistance, investing on money markets, buying and selling securities and carrying out any other financial operation linked to any such activity, and the operation of bank accounts in any currency.

ARTICLE 3

Foreign exchange

1. For all operations carried out by the EIB, or any of its subsidiaries, financed by the EU to support the achievement of the objectives of this Agreement, the OACPS Members shall ensure that:

   (a) beneficiaries and counterparties may convert into any fully convertible currency, at the then current exchange rate, the amounts in the national currency of the OACPS Member concerned that are necessary for the timely payment of all sums due to the EIB or to any subsidiary of the EIB in respect of such operations; and

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(b) the amounts referred to in point (a) are freely, immediately and effectively transferable inside or outside the territory of the OACPS Member concerned so as to enable the beneficiary or counterparty referred to in point (a) to meet its obligations to the EIB or to such subsidiary.

2. For all operations carried out by the EIB, or any of its subsidiaries, financed by the EU to support the achievement of the objectives of this Agreement, the OACPS Members shall ensure that the EIB or such subsidiary may:

(a) convert into any fully convertible currency, at the then current exchange rate, the amounts in the national currency of the OACPS Member concerned that are received by the EIB or by such subsidiary;

(b) freely, immediately and effectively transfer the amounts converted as referred to in point (a) outside the territory of the OACPS Member concerned to such bank accounts as the EIB or such subsidiary may freely determine, or dispose of such amounts within the territory of the OACPS Member concerned; and

(c) convert into the national currency of the OACPS Member concerned, at the then current exchange rate, any amounts in any fully convertible currency.

ARTICLE 4

Recognition of court decisions

Each OACPS Member undertakes, in respect of any dispute arising between the EIB or any subsidiary of the EIB and a beneficiary or any third party regarding the activities of the EIB or any subsidiary of the EIB to achieve the objectives of this Agreement to:

(a) ensure that the courts of the OACPS Member have the authority to recognise a final decision delivered by due process by a court or tribunal of a competent jurisdiction, including the Court of Justice of the European Union or any national court of a Member State of the European Union, or any arbitration tribunal to the extent permissible by the constitution of that OACPS Member; and

(b) ensure the execution of any such decision in accordance with its applicable national rules and procedures.

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