

## **ACP-EU COTONOU AGREEMENT**

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

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**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**Brussels, 13 April 2016**

**ACP/21/003/16**

**ACP-UE 2112/16**

### **ACP-EU JOINT DOCUMENT**

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Subject: Report from the ACP-EU Council of Ministers to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on the implementation of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement in 2015

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In accordance with Article 15(3) of the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000, as first amended in Luxembourg on 25 June 2005, and amended for the second time in Ouagadougou on 23 June 2010, hereinafter referred to as "the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement", the ACP-EU Council of Ministers hereby submits to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly its report on the implementation of the Agreement in 2015.

REPORT FROM THE ACP-EU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS  
TO THE ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY  
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACP-EU  
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

(2015)

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The year 2015 was marked with intense discussions on private sector development in ACP countries as well as by reinforced cooperation between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States in international fora with a view to discussions on the post-2015 framework. The parties also had a first discussion on the post-2020 framework. In addition, the tragic events of April 2015 in the Mediterranean prompted a substantial debate in the ACP-EU Council of Ministers on migration.

In parallel, the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, assisted by its preparatory bodies, continued to develop ACP-EU cooperation in other areas related to its three pillars: political cooperation, economic and trade cooperation and development finance cooperation.

## **II. ACTIVITIES OF THE ACP-EU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND ITS PREPARATORY BODIES IN SPECIFIC AREAS OF COOPERATION**

### **1. Political cooperation**

In 2015, the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors focused on political cooperation in three areas: the post-2015 Development Agenda, migration and the ACP-EU relations post-2020.

The post-2015 overarching framework was discussed as a run-up to the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa in July 2015 and the United Nations (UN) summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda in New York in September 2015, taking into consideration that the agreement on the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda would also have important implications for negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Migration was the second dominant theme in ACP-EU cooperation in the political sphere. The tragic events in April 2015 in the Mediterranean gave an impetus to the ACP-EU dialogue on this important issue. Following an exchange of views, the Council endorsed the recommendations from the ACP-EU experts' meeting on trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants (ACP/28/006/15 - ACP-UE 2111/15).

Initial discussions started on the ACP-EU relations post-2020, as both sides gave an overview of the state of play and the next steps in their own internal reflection process.

At its May meeting, the ACP-EU Council of Ministers examined the results of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly sessions which took place in 2014 in Strasbourg and adopted the report to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on the implementation of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement in 2014.

## **2. Economic development**

Economic development strategies figured highly on the agenda of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and its preparatory bodies with two important topics: the future of EU support to ACP private sector development and the Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE).

## **3. Trade cooperation**

Trade cooperation had a prominent place on the agenda of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and its preparatory bodies: it was debated at both Ministerial (by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and the ACP-EU Joint Ministerial Trade Committee) and at senior officials' level (ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors, Subcommittee on Trade Cooperation). Trade debates focused on (1) Economic Partnership Agreements, (2) impact of a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) agreement on developing countries, (3) managing of mining and natural resources and (4) commodities.

With regard to EPAs, the year 2015 has brought about important progress in the negotiation process. The signature process for the West Africa EPA, that had started in December 2014, was underway. Also, both the SADC EPA and the EAC EPA were initialled and their legal finalisation was being carried out.

The ACP-EU Joint Ministerial Trade Committee and the Subcommittee on Trade Cooperation also debated other trade-related topics: EU's negotiations with third countries, non-tariff measures, the EU's reformed GSP scheme, rules of origin, the Post-2015 Agenda, WTO issues and trade-capacity building.

## **4. Development finance cooperation**

In the area of development finance cooperation, the Financing of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and the 11th EDF (Intra-ACP programming, national and regional programming and the Bridging Facility) were in the main focus of the discussions at the joint institutions.

### **III. OVERVIEW OF WORK OF THE ACP-EU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND ITS PREPARATORY BODIES AND DOCUMENTS ADOPTED**

#### **1. Meetings**

With a view to pursuing the objectives set out in the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, the following meetings of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and its preparatory bodies were held in 2015:

- ACP-EU Council of Ministers (Brussels, 28-29 May 2015)<sup>1</sup>;
- ACP-EU Development Finance Cooperation Committee (Ministers) (Brussels, 28 May 2015)<sup>2</sup>;
- ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors (Brussels, 17 April 2015)<sup>3</sup>;
- ACP-EU Subcommittee on Trade Cooperation (Brussels, 27 March 2015)<sup>4</sup>;
- ACP-EU Development Finance Cooperation Committee (authorised representatives) (Brussels, 14 April 2015).

Details of the meetings of the abovementioned institutions are set out in the outcomes of proceedings from their meetings.

The ACP-EU Council of Ministers also held debates with the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly at the 29th session of the latter, held in Suva, Fiji from 15 to 17 June 2015 and at the 30th session, held in Brussels from 7 to 9 December 2015.

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<sup>1</sup> Outcome of proceedings: ACP/21/001/16 - ACP-UE 2103/16

<sup>2</sup> Oral report from the meeting is annexed to the Outcome of proceedings of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers (ACP/21/001/16 - ACP-UE 2103/16)

<sup>3</sup> Outcome of proceedings: ACP/22/001/16 - ACP-UE 2102/16

<sup>4</sup> Outcome of proceedings: ACP/61/001/16 - ACP-UE 2101/16

## **2. Decisions**

In 2015, the following Decision was adopted in pursuit of the objectives set out in the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement:

- Decision No 1/2015 of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors of 12 October 2015 appointing a member to the Executive Board of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA)<sup>5</sup>.

## **3. Political documents**

The ACP-EU Council of Ministers adopted the following documents of a political nature:

- Report from the ACP-EU Council of Ministers to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on the implementation of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement in 2014<sup>6</sup>, adopted by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers on 29 May 2015;
- ACP-EU Dialogue on migration and development - Recommendations from the ACP-EU experts' meeting on trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants<sup>7</sup>, adopted by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers on 29 May 2015.

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<sup>5</sup> ACP/84/065/15 - ACP-UE 2118/15

<sup>6</sup> ACP/21/001/15 - ACP-UE 2110/15

<sup>7</sup> ACP/28/006/15 - ACP-UE 2111/15