



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 11 March 2014
(OR. en)**

7028/14

**ACP 34
WTO 80
DEVGEN 44
RELEX 170
COAFR 58**

"I/A" ITEM NOTE

From: ACP Working Party
To: Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 2)/Council
Subject: Draft Council conclusions on West Africa's EPA Development Programme (PAPED)

1. West African countries developed the EPA Development Programme (PAPED) in the context of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations, as an attempt by the region to assess in detail the challenges and opportunities of an EPA, and to propose a donor support agenda for dealing with the challenges and maximising the opportunities of the EPA and the regional integration process.
2. The Presidency prepared draft Council Conclusions in order to provide an EU reaction to the EPA Development Programme.
3. On 11 March 2014 the ACP Working Party agreed on the attached text of draft Council Conclusions.

4. COREPER is invited to recommend that the Council approve the draft Council Conclusions as an "A" item on its agenda at its session on 17 March 2014.
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Draft Council conclusions on

West Africa's EPA Development Programme (PAPED)

1. The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) is an important step for the partnership between West Africa and the European Union, in coherence with the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, for sustainable economic development that can benefit the West African population including its poorest segments.
2. In this context, the EU reaffirms the principles of the Council conclusions of 10 May 2010 concerning the EPA Development Programme (PAPED) and the importance of national and regional ownership. In addition, the EU welcomes the efforts and progress which West African countries and regional institutions have made to foster regional integration. The Council recalls the fundamental role of regional integration as being instrumental in securing peace, stability and sustainable economic development, as well as its political commitment in support of aid for trade and to mobilise financial flows.
3. Support to the PAPED from the EU, its Member States and the European Investment Bank (EIB) during the period 2010-2014 has already exceeded the Council's commitment of 6.5 billion euros and reached more than 8.2 billion euros in funding. In the next years, the EU stands committed to again provide at least 6.5 billion euros for activities linked to the PAPED in West Africa for the 2015-2020 period from all its financing instruments, those of its Member States and the EIB.

4. Support to the PAPED will be in line with the principles and objectives of EU development cooperation as well as the Agenda for Change, the objectives of the Doha Development Agenda and with the decisions taken at the WTO's 9th Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia, on 3-6 December 2013. It will be delivered and implemented in the framework of the Cotonou Agreement, notably the 11th EDF National and Regional Indicative Programmes, as well as the relevant instruments of the EU general budget, aid mechanisms of Member States willing to support the PAPED and the EIB, while also assisting West Africa in increasing its absorption capacities.
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