

ACP-EU COTONOU AGREEMENT

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

**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 15 October 2024
(OR. en)**

ACP-UE 2102/24

COVER NOTE

From:	Mr Georges Rebelo Pinto CHIKOTI, Secretary-General of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)
date of receipt:	15 October 2024
To:	Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union
Subject:	Decisions of the 117th session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July 2024 and 31 July 2024

Delegations will find attached, for information, the Decisions of the 117th session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July 2024 and 31 July 2024.

ACP-UE 2102/24

Organisation of African,
Caribbean and Pacific States
(OACPS)



Organisation des États
d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et du
Pacifique (OEACP)

REFERENCE: ACP/27/003/24
[Final version]
OSG/LDS [EOA/mjb]

Kingston, 31 July 2024

DECISIONS
OF THE 117TH SESSION OF THE OACPS COUNCIL
OF MINISTERS
HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT
FROM 23 TO 26 JULY 2024
AND
31 JULY 2024

EN

Covent Garden Building, Place Charles Rogier 16 • 1210 Saint-Josse-ten-Noode
• Téléphone : +32-2 743 06 00 • E-Mail: info@acp.int • Website : <http://www.acp.int>

SUMMARY

DECISIONS

- N° 1 Decision on the Implementation of Samoa Agreement**
- N° 2 Decision on the OACPS Position on Critical Raw Materials**
- N° 3 Decision on Trade - OACPS Access Market**
- N° 4 Decision on Budget of the OACPS Secretariat for the 2024 Financial Year and the application of conditionalities due to the financial situation of the Secretariat**
- N° 5 Decision on the Implementation of ACP House Project**
- N° 6 Decision on External Auditor's report on the Financial Statements of the OACPS Secretariat for the Financial Year ended 31 December 2021**
- N° 7 Decision on 2023 Financial Controller's Report**
- N° 8 Decision on New OACPS Secretariat Functional Structure - Executive Management Posts**
- N° 9 Decision on Recruitment of the OACPS Secretary-General and Assistant Secretaries-General: 2025-2030**
- N° 10 Decision on Nomination of Champion (s) to mobilise financial support for the organisation**
- N° 11 Decision on OACPS Small Island Developing States (SIDS) -LED International Resource Mobilisation Conference for Financing Nationally Determined Contributions**

EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

1

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024.

DECISIONS

EN

2

**DECISION N°1/CXVII/24
OF THE 117TH SESSION OF THE OACPS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT FROM 23 TO 26 JULY AND 31 JULY 2024**

IMPLEMENTATION OF SAMOA AGREEMENT

The OACPS Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in a hybrid format from 23 to 26 July; and continuing in a virtual format on 31 July 2024

HAVING REGARD to the revised Georgetown Agreement (2019);

HAVING REGARD to the Samoa Agreement signed on 15 November 2023 and provisionally applied since 1 January 2024;

CONSIDERING the report of the Committee of Ambassadors in Document **ACP/26/064/24 Rev. 1;**

CONSIDERING the report on Implementation of Samoa Agreement **Doc ACP/00/012/24 Rev.1** and its five annexes respectively presented in Documents **ACP/25/033/23;** **ACP/00/019/23;** **ACP/00/013/24;** **ACP/21/001/24 Rev. 2;** and **ACP/00/009/24 Rev.2;**

WHEREAS some States issued Declarations and Reservations upon signature of the Samoa Agreement, and **CONCERNED** the EU has not yet accepted these instruments;

DESIROUS of strengthening OACPS-EU relations by fostering greater cooperation and enhancing the partnership;

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

1. **Take Note** of the outcome of the Special meeting of the OACPS Council of Ministers, the 46th Session of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and the signing ceremony event held in Apia, Samoa on 14 -15 November 2023 - **ACP/25/033/23.**
2. **Take Note** of the implications of not signing (and ratifying) the Samoa Agreement **ACP/25/019/23.**

EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

3

3. **Commend** OACPS signatories to the Samoa Agreement and **note** with concern that two OACPS members have not signed.
4. **Further Note** that the Samoa Agreement provides for members to become a party to the Agreement by way of accession.
5. **Further Commend** the members of the OACPS that have ratified the Agreement and **urge** those that have not yet ratified to do so in accordance with their domestic legal processes.
6. **Urge** the EU to accept the instruments which sovereign OACPS Members submitted upon signature of the agreement, and to publish them on the website of the Treaties and Agreements database of the General Secretariat.
7. **Welcome** the conclusions of the OACPS Ambassadorial Retreat on implementation of Samoa Agreement as reflected in paragraphs (i) – (xiv) of Doc **ACP/00/012/24 Rev.1**, and the OACPS Secretariat's Paper on its role in the implementation of the Samoa Agreement, **Stress** that these submissions should inform: (i) ongoing, inclusive discussions on preparations by the OACPS and its regions, for the effective implementation of the Regional Protocols of the Samoa Agreement; and (ii) ongoing discussions relating to the reform and restructure of the OACPS.
8. **Mandate** the Committee of Ambassadors to finalize and approve:
 - a. the draft Rules of Procedures for the joint institutions of the Samoa Agreement; and
 - b. the draft Guidelines for Partnership Dialogue.

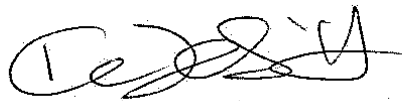
EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

4

9. **Affirm** that the first OACPS-EU Council of Ministers meeting and the launch of the regional protocols should take place after comprehensive preparations by the OACPS and EU partners at Ambassadorial and Senior Officials Level. **Further affirm** that, where possible, these meetings should be stand-alone events for greater impact to ensure full attention and to give adequate visibility to the partnership.
10. **Instruct** the Secretary-General to forward this Decision to the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the African Union Commission and OACPS regional economic integration organisations.

Done at Kingston, 31 July 2024



Senator The Hon. Kamina JOHNSON SMITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Trade of Jamaica
President of the 117th Session of the
OACPS Council of Ministers

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

EN

5

**DECISION N°2/CXVII/24
OF THE 117TH SESSION OF THE OACPS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT FROM 23 TO 26 JULY AND 31 JULY 2024**

OACPS POSITION ON CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS

The OACPS Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in a hybrid format from 23 to 26 July; and continuing in a virtual format on 31 July 2024

HAVING REGARD to the revised Georgetown Agreement (2019);

HAVING REGARD to the Samoa Agreement that emphasises on the importance of beneficiation, value addition and industrialisation in the mining sector;

RECALLING Decision No.8 on critical raw materials (CRMs) of the 116th OACPS Session of Council of Ministers, held in Brussels from 19-20 July 2023;

NOTING with satisfaction the outcome of the OACPS Experts meeting on critical raw materials held in Lusaka, Zambia from 20-22 November 2023;

RECOGNISING OACPS regional initiatives aimed at leveraging mineral resources for industrialisation, thus preparing for the emerging digital and green transition, including the African Green Minerals Strategy;

RECALLING the enactment of the EU Critical Raw Materials Act in March 2024, which aims to secure access to critical raw materials in response to the anticipated exponential increase in demand for these resources;

ACKNOWLEDGING the launch of the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP) Forum on 5 April 2024, by the United States of America, the European Union, and other countries, which will serve as a new platform for cooperation in the area of critical raw materials vital for the global green and digital transitions;

EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

6

RECOGNISING that the Critical Raw Materials Club announced by the European Commission now becomes a full part of the MSP Forum;

CONSIDERING the EU's strategic partnerships with resource-rich countries through Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), to reduce dependency on single third-country suppliers, while ensuring secure access to critical raw materials;

ACKNOWLEDGING the United Nations Secretary-General's Panel on critical energy transition minerals platform and the Africa Union Africa Green Minerals Strategy;

NOTING the UNIDO Global Alliance for responsible and green minerals;

HAVING reviewed the Outcome document of the OACPS Ministers of Mining meeting held in Yaoundé, Cameroon from 23 - 24 May 2024;

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

1. **Endorse** the Yaoundé Ministerial Declaration on Critical Raw Materials adopted by OACPS Ministers of Mining.
2. **Adopt** the OACPS Position on Critical Raw Materials **ACP/89/008/24 Rev.2.**
3. **Approve** the OACPS Action Plan on Critical Raw Materials **ACP/89/009/24 Rev.1.**
4. **Instruct** the Secretariat to forward this Decision to the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, EU Member States, the European Commission, the Commission of the African Union and OACPS regional economic integration organisations.

Done at Kingston, 31 July 2024.



Senator The Hon. Kamina JOHNSON SMITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Trade of Jamaica
President of the 117th Session of the
OACPS Council of Ministers

EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

7

**DECISION N°3/CXVII/24
OF THE 117TH SESSION OF THE OACPS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT FROM 23 TO 26 JULY AND 31 JULY 2024**

TRADE – OACPS MARKET ACCESS

The OACPS Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in a hybrid format from 23 to 26 July; and continuing in a virtual format on 31 July 2024,

HAVING REGARD to the revised Georgetown Agreement (2019);

HAVING REGARD to the Samoa Agreement signed on 15 November 2023, and provisionally applied since 1 January 2024;

REAFFIRMING our commitment to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

RECALLING the Resolution adopted by the 42nd Session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) on, "Ensuring market access for OACPS commodity-producing countries";

RECALLING ALSO Decision No.7/CXVI/23 adopted by the 116th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers in July 2023, on guaranteeing OACPS market access under the new EU regulations and directives on sustainability;

HAVING REGARD to the recommendations from the study on the impact of the EU Legislation on OACPS exports, notably the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), the Deforestation Regulation and Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive;

RECALLING that currently, most OACPS Member States export to the EU under (a) the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) that includes the Everything But Arms (EBA) initiative; and (b) Economic Partnership Agreement (EPAs);

EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024.

8

SERIOUSLY CONCERNED that OACPS market access to the EU under EPAs and EBA trade regimes is becoming increasingly more restrictive and stringent in light of the new EU directives and regulations on sustainability;

NOTING that most OACPS Member States affected by the EU Regulation on Deforestation-free Products are not ready and require additional time and resources to be compliant;

DEEPLY CONCERNED that the transition period ends soon on 31 December 2024;

RECOGNISING that 70% of OACPS member states are commodity-dependent and mainly export agriculture or mineral commodities, thereby compelling them to prioritise value addition, beneficiation, and industrialisation as critical aspects for sustainable economic growth and development;

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

1. Mandate the Committee of Ambassadors to:

- i) **Engage** with the EU to establish a dedicated EPA-related fund to cover the cost of trade compliance arising from the implementation of EPA provisions, including those on trade and sustainable development;
- ii) **Follow-up** with the European Commission on accompanying measures required to enable OACPS Member States to comply with the new EU rules on sustainability, such as deforestation regulations, the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, and the Forced Labour Regulation; and
- iii) **Initiate** the process of promoting deeper trade integration among OACPS Member States, including potentially allowing OACPS EPA signatory states to mutually grant one another market access equivalent to that offered to the EU, and to begin reviewing specific policies aimed at increasing intra-OACPS trade cooperation;

EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

9

2. **Renew** its mandate to the Committee of Ambassadors to complete the Terms of Reference and adopt the necessary procedures for the conclusion of Comprehensive Partnership Agreements as provided for under Article 34 of the Revised Georgetown Agreement.
3. **Urge** the European Union to postpone the effective implementation of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and **call** for sufficient time and accompanying measures to enable OACPS Member States to comply.
4. **Invite** the Committee of Ambassadors to send a letter to the Council of the European Union, the European Commission, and the European Parliament, outlining the reasons why OACPS countries are not ready for the immediate implementation of this Regulation.
5. **Instruct** the Secretary-General to convey this decision to the Council of the European Union, the European Commission, the European External Action Service, the European Parliament, the African Union Commission, and other OACPS regional organisations.

Done at Kingston, 31 July 2024



Senator The Hon. Kamina JOHNSON SMITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Trade of Jamaica
President of the 117th Session of the
OACPS Council of Ministers

EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

10

DRAFT
DECISION N°4/CXVII/24
OF THE 117TH SESSION OF THE OACPS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT FROM 23 TO 26 JULY AND 31 JULY 2024

**BUDGET OF THE OACPS SECRETARIAT FOR THE 2024 FINANCIAL YEAR
AND THE APPLICATION OF THE CONDITIONALITIES DUE TO
THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE SECRETARIAT**

The OACPS Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in a hybrid format from 23 to 26 July; and continuing in a virtual format on 31 July 2024,

HAVING REGARD to the revised Georgetown Agreement (2019);

HAVING REGARD to the OACPS Financial Regulations;

HAVING CONSIDERED the report of the Committee of Ambassadors on the draft budget of the OACPS Secretariat for the financial year 2024 **ACP/41/075/24 Rev. 1;**

HAVING CONSIDERED the interim report of the Ambassadorial Crisis Management Group in Doc **ACP/26/080/24 Rev.1 + Addendum**, and its recommendations pertaining to the dire financial situation of the Secretariat; and reforms and restructure of the OACPS and its Secretariat;

NOTING that the Budget for the 2024 Financial Year will only be sustainable if the requisite income is forthcoming and expenditure remains aligned;

ALSO NOTING that the European Commission no longer prefinances but instead reimburses the Secretariat based on the submission of audited reports; and **further noting** that the requisite audited reports remain outstanding ;

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

1. **Approve** the budget of the OACPS Secretariat for the financial year 2024 (financial, operational and human resources) with income and expenditure amounting to EUR **14,997,761.19**, and with the following conditions:
2. The Budget comprises the following:
 - I. Member States' contribution: 7,725,171.19**
 - i) Contributions from OACPS Member States: **5,427,380.69**
 - ii) Collection of arrears of contributions: **1,048,151.86**
 - iii) Interest on arrears of contributions: **67,218.64**
 - iv) Internal tax: **1,182,420.00**
 - II. Contribution from the European Union: 7,272,590.00**
3. **Urge** the Secretariat to provide outstanding reports to the EC, without delay, in order to facilitate the EU's payments, which should assist in easing the Organization's cash flow challenges.
4. **Impose** a moratorium on the Secretariat's activities abroad including Secretariat staff travel, for the next six months, except for those activities that are fully funded by external parties, an OACPS member, the host country or unless prior approval is granted by the Committee of Ambassadors.
5. **Endorse** the meeting of the Ministers responsible for Oceans, Inland Waters and Fisheries scheduled to take place in Tanzania from 9 - 13 September 2024, contingent on availability of funds and no debt being incurred by the Secretariat.
6. **Also impose** a moratorium on the recruitment of staff at the OACPS Secretariat, except for the position of Internal Auditor, which is necessary to strengthen the Organization's financial governance framework.
7. **Impose** a moratorium on payment of salary-in-lieu-of-leave for the remainder of 2024, and **request** that, in this regard, the Committee of Ambassadors in consultation with the Secretariat, implement this decision in line with the relevant Staff Regulations.

8. **Urge** all Member States in arrears, including those under sanctions, to urgently honour their financial obligations and pay their contributions in full, as this will also ease the Secretary's cash flow challenges.
9. **Urge** the Secretariat to implement the Organization's Budget for each financial year in keeping with the Financial Regulations, particularly provisions on budgetary and accounting principles, and Article 5j on authorization of appropriations, review and modification of the budget.
10. **Mandate** the Secretariat and the Committee of Ambassadors, including the Ambassadorial Crisis Management Group to identify staff costs that can be reduced, including during Financial Year 2024, as these costs account for the largest share of the Budget; and to adopt other cost saving measures, such as the holding of meetings online until the dire financial situation is resolved.
11. **Instruct** the Secretariat and the Committee of Ambassadors, including the Ambassadorial Crisis Management Group to:
- i) **Submit** a plan for reform to be shared with the EU, outlining specific actions to be undertaken by the OACPS by the next session of the Council, paying particular attention to the changes that will be necessary to address the Secretariat's financial architecture;
 - ii) **Propose** additional changes to be made to the Financial Regulations in keeping with international standards, to ensure that strong guardrails and accountability frameworks are in place, and report to Council at its next Session outlining recommendations for amendment to the Financial Regulations, including clear provisions on the consequences of financial breach; and
 - iii) **Review** the OACPS scale of contributions to the Secretariat's budget, in accordance with Decision No 4 /XCV/12 of the 95th Session of the Council of Ministers.
12. **Mandate** the Secretariat to strictly apply the sanctions policy and **propose** for consideration at the next Session of Council, the procedures for suspending the membership of countries under sanctions and arrears;

EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

13

13. **Further mandate** the Committee of Ambassadors, including the Ambassadorial Crisis Management Group to propose measures to:
- a. address the Secretariat financial governance challenges; and
 - b. determine the right skill set at expert level for improving and strengthening the capacity of the Administration and Finance Department.
14. **Instruct** the Committee of Ambassadors to provide a report to the next Session of Council of Ministers on steps taken to improve the Secretariat's financial situation.

Done at Kingston, 31 July 2024



Senator The Hon. Kamina JOHNSON SMITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Trade of Jamaica
President of the 117th Session of the
OACPS Council of Ministers

**DECISION N°5/CXVII/24
OF THE 117TH SESSION OF THE OACPS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT FROM 23 TO 26 JULY AND 31 JULY 2024**

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACP HOUSE PROJECT

The OACPS Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in a hybrid format from 23 to 26 July; and continuing in a virtual format on 31 July 2024,

HAVING REGARD to the revised Georgetown Agreement (2019);

HAVING REGARD to the Headquarters Agreement between ACP Group of States and the Kingdom of Belgium.

HAVING REGARD to the Decision No. 4/CI/15 of the 101st Session of the ACP Council of Ministers on funding for a new building for the Headquarters of the OACPS;

HAVING REGARD to the Decision No. 11/CII/15 of the 102nd Session of the ACP Council of Ministers on the OACPS Headquarters building;

HAVING CONSIDERED the report on ACP House Project to the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers **ACP/41/076/24**;

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of
Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

EN

15

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

1. **Mandate** the Committee of Ambassadors to finalize the sale of the ACP House and the acquisition of the new headquarters.
2. **Grant** Full powers to the Chair of the Committee of Ambassadors and the Secretary General to jointly i) sign the deed of sale and any documents required for the transfer of ownership of the office building – ACP House – located at Avenue Georges Henri, 451 -1200 Woluwe-Saint-Lambert – Belgium; in keeping with the recommendation of Council that the best possible price be obtained, ii) sign the relevant documentation as required for the purchase of the new premises of the OACPS Headquarters in accordance with the applicable EU procurement guidelines.
3. **Agree** to ring-fence the proceeds from the sale of ACP House for the express purpose of purchasing and retrofitting of the new OACPS premises, and for reimbursement to the Endowment and Trust Fund.
4. **Confirm** that the use of any remaining funds from the sale of the House requires the prior approval of the Committee of Ambassadors.
5. **Instruct** the Committee of Ambassadors to provide an update to the next Session of the Council of Ministers.

Done at Kingston 31 July 2024



Senator The Hon. Kamina JOHNSON SMITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Trade of Jamaica
President of the 117th Session of the
OACPS Council of Ministers

EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

16

**DECISION N°6/CXVII/24
OF THE 117TH SESSION OF THE OACPS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT FROM 23 TO 26 JULY AND 31 JULY 2024**

**EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE
OACPS SECRETARIAT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED
31 DECEMBER 2021**

The OACPS Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in a hybrid format from 23 to 26 July; and continuing in a virtual format on 31 July 2024,

HAVING REGARD to the revised Georgetown Agreement (2019);

HAVING REGARD to the Financial Regulations of the OACPS Secretariat, particularly Article 18 (c) and (h) and Article 19 (b) of **ACP/45/018/03/ Rev.6**;

CONSIDERING that the External Auditor has issued an unqualified opinion on the Secretariat's accounts for the financial year 2021, as giving a "true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the OACPS Secretariat, and compliance with the financial rules";

HAVING CONSIDERED the report of the OACPS Committee of Ambassadors to the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers on the External Auditor's report for the year ended 31 December 2020 **ACP/45/019/24**.

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

1. **Approve** the External Auditor's report for the financial year ending 31 December 2021.
2. **Grant** a discharge to the Authorizing Officer for the year 2021.

EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

17

3. **Task** the Committee of Ambassadors and Secretariat to address issues raised in the report.
4. **Instruct** the Secretariat to submit outstanding audit reports of 2022 and 2023.
5. **Instruct** the Committee of Ambassadors to report to the next Session of the Council of Ministers.

Done at Kingston, 31 July 2024



Senator The Hon. Kamina JOHNSON SMITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Trade of Jamaica
President of the 117th Session of the
OACPS Council of Ministers

**DECISION N°7/CXVII/24
OF THE 117TH SESSION OF THE OACPS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT FROM 23 TO 26 JULY AND 31 JULY 2024**

2023 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER'S REPORT

The OACPS Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in a hybrid format from 23 to 26 July; and continuing in a virtual format on 31 July 2024,

HAVING REGARD to the revised Georgetown Agreement (2019);

HAVING REGARD to the Financial regulations of the OACPS Secretariat, and in particular Article 16j;

HAVING CONSIDERED the report of the OACPS Committee of Ambassadors on the 2023 Financial controller's report to the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers.

HEREBY DECIDES:

1. **Take note** of the 2023 Financial Controller's report document **ACP/45/018/24/Rev.1** whilst noting with serious concern some of the issues raised.
2. **Take note of** the Secretariat's response to the issues raised in the Financial Controller's Report and **instruct** the :
 - i. Secretariat to implement the Organization's budget in accordance with the Financial Regulations, particularly provisions on budgetary and accounting principles.;
 - ii. Secretariat to take corrective measures without delay, to address the irregularities identified in the Financial Controller's report, including the disciplinary actions to be taken against officers responsible for financial irregularities attributable to them, and to submit monthly reports to the Committee of Ambassadors;
 - iii. Secretariat to submit a report to the Subcommittee on Establishment and Finance;

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

EN

19

- iv. Financial Controller to submit his reports in accordance with Article 1 (b) and 16 (i) of the financial regulations, particularly as it relates to quarterly reports;
- v. Committee of Ambassadors to establish whether i) due process was observed in the transfer of funds from the Endowment and Trust Fund (ETF) Account, and if the rules have been breached, whether any action was taken to address the breach, ii) If no rules are in place, to develop the same to prevent the unauthorised use of the funds from the ETF;
- vi. Secretariat to ensure that the Funds from the ETF Account that have been spent to cover other expenses are fully and urgently reimbursed to the Account;
- vii. Committee of Ambassadors to seek an independent legal interpretation of Article 12(a) of the Financial Regulations and make recommendations for amendment, as appropriate;
- viii. Committee of Ambassadors to examine all issues in the Financial Controller's Report and report to the next Session of the Council of Ministers.

Done at Kingston, 31 July 2024



Senator The Hon. Kamina JOHNSON SMITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Trade of Jamaica
President of the 117th Session of the
OACPS Council of Ministers

**DECISION N°8/CXVII/24
OF THE 117TH SESSION OF THE OACPS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT FROM 23 TO 26 JULY AND 31 JULY 2024**

**NEW OACPS SECRETARIAT FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE - EXECUTIVE
MANAGEMENT POSTS**

The OACPS Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in a hybrid format from 23 to 26 July; and continuing in a virtual format on 31 July 2024,

HAVING REGARD to the revised Georgetown Agreement (2019);

HAVING REGARD to Declarations of previous Summits of OACPS Heads of State and Government, and especially the 9th and 10th Summits held in Nairobi and Luanda, in 2019 and 2022, respectively;

HAVING REGARD to Decision No.3/24 of the Special Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in virtual format on 24 and 25 April 2024 on holding of the Ambassadorial Retreat and OACPS at 50: Future Perspectives;

HAVING REGARD to the Key Conclusions of the OACPS Ambassadorial Retreat held on 6 - 8 May 2024;

HAVING EXAMINED the interim report of the Ambassadorial Crisis Management Group in document **ACP/26/080/24 +Addendum**

COGNIZANT of the need to restructure the Secretariat including its executive management according to the new dispensation and financial ability of Member States

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

1. **Take note** of and **welcome** the interim report of the Ambassadorial Crisis Management Group **ACP/26/080/24 and its Addendum.**

EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

21

2. **Uphold** Council Decision 3/CII/15 of the 102nd Session of ACP Council of Ministers held on 24- 25 November 2015 on the rotation of the Post of the Secretary-General and the sequential order of rotation for the period 2020 to 2035 as follows:
 - **2020 - 2025 - Southern Africa**
 - **2025 – 2030 - Central Africa**
 - **2030 – 2035 - Pacific**
3. **Further Upholds** the geographic rotation principle of AACAAP to the post of the Secretary-General.
4. **Reduce** the number of Assistant Secretaries-Generals from 5 to 2, and **underline** that they should be recruited on a transparent and competitive basis.
5. **Adopt** the functional organisational chart to reflect the focus and orientation of the Organisation; **Mandate** the Ambassadorial Crisis Management Group to further refine the proposed structure on the basis of the Council's deliberations.
6. **Affirm** that the proposal to reduce the Secretariat staff should also be informed by a clearly defined role and function of the Secretariat, the priorities of the OACPS, the levels at which posts are designated, and the talent pool that will be necessary to support the Organization's work.
7. **Note with concern** that an inordinate number of posts are at the P4 and P5 levels and that efforts should be made to reduce the levels at which professionals are recruited.
8. **Extend** the mandate of the Ambassadorial Crisis Management Group until its report to the next Council, at which point the matter of its tenure will be considered.
9. **Agree** to meet in a Special Session, if necessary, to consider the final Report of the Ambassadorial Crisis Management Group.

Done at Kingston, 31 July 2024



Senator The Hon. Kamina JOHNSON SMITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Trade of Jamaica
President of the 117th Session of the
OACPS Council of Ministers

**DECISION N°9/CXVII/24
OF THE 117TH SESSION OF THE OACPS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT FROM 23 TO 26 JULY AND 31 JULY 2024**

**RECRUITMENT OF THE OACPS SECRETARY-GENERAL AND
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES-GENERAL**

2025-2030

The OACPS Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in a hybrid format from 23 to 26 July; and continuing in a virtual format on 31 July 2024

HAVING REGARD to the revised Georgetown Agreement (2019);

HAVING REGARD to Decision 3/CII/15 of the 102nd Session of ACP Council of Ministers held on 24th to 25th of November 2015 on the rotation of the Post of the Secretary-General;

HAVING REGARD to Declarations of Summits of OACPS Heads of State and Government, and especially the 9th and 10th Summits held in Nairobi and Luanda, in 2019 and 2022, respectively;

HAVING EXAMINED the interim report of the Ambassadorial Crisis Management Group in document **ACP/26/080/24 and its Addendum**

WHEREAS the tenure of the current executive management (Secretary General and Assistant Secretaries-General) ends on 28 February 2025,

COGNIZANT of the need to restructure the Secretariat including its executive management according to the new dispensation and financial ability of Member States

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

1. **Uphold** Decision 3/CII/15 of the 102nd Session of ACP Council of Ministers held on 24th to 25th of November 2015 on the rotation of the Post of the Secretary-General and the sequential order of rotation for the period 2020 to 2035, as follows:
 - **2020 - 2025 - Southern Africa**
 - **2025 – 2030 - Central Africa**
 - **2030 – 2035 - Pacific**

EN

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

23

2. **Reduce** the number of the OACPS Assistant Secretaries-Generals from 5 to 2, and **underline** that they be recruited on a transparent and competitive basis.
3. **Launch** the recruitment process of the Secretary-General in line with the recommendations in **Document ACP/26/080/24 Rev. 1**, in a transparent and competitive basis, and in accordance with the timelines annexed to this Decision.
4. **Emphasize** that candidates from countries under sanction shall not be considered for the posts of Secretary-General and Assistant Secretaries-General.

Done at Kingston, 31 July 2024



Senator The Hon. Kamina JOHNSON SMITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Trade of Jamaica
President of the 117th Session of the
OACPS Council of Ministers

**DECISION N°10/CXVII/24
OF THE 117TH SESSION OF THE OACPS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT FROM 23 TO 26 JULY AND 31 JULY 2024**

**NOMINATION OF CHAMPION(S) TO MOBILISE FINANCIAL SUPPORT
FOR THE ORGANISATION**

The OACPS Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in a hybrid format from 23 to 26 July; and continuing in a virtual format on 31 July 2024,

HAVING REGARD to the revised Georgetown Agreement (2019);

RECALLING the principles and objectives enshrined in the revised Georgetown Agreement (2019), which emphasize the importance of solidarity, cooperation, and mutual support among OACPS Member States;

HAVING CONSIDERED the Report of the OACPS Secretary-General to the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers in Document **ACP/11/003/24 Rev. 1**;

NOTING the efforts undertaken by the OACPS Secretary-General in engaging with non-traditional partners and potential donors, with a view to securing additional funding for the Organisation;

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

CALL on the upcoming Bureau of the Special Council of Ministers, at its meeting on 9 August 2024, to consider proposing a Head of State as an OACPS Champion to raise additional funding for the Organisation, to complement the Secretary General's efforts.

Done at Kingston, 31 July 2024



**Senator The Hon. Kamina JOHNSON SMITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Trade of Jamaica
President of the 117th Session of the
OACPS Council of Ministers**

**DECISION N°11/CXVII/24
OF THE 117TH SESSION OF THE OACPS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN HYBRID FORMAT FROM 23 TO 26 JULY AND 31 JULY 2024**

**OACPS SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS) -LED
INTERNATIONAL RESOURCE MOBILISATION CONFERENCE FOR
FINANCING NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS**

The OACPS Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in a hybrid format from 23 to 26 July; and in continuing in a virtual format on 31 July 2024,

HAVING REGARD to the revised Georgetown Agreement (2019);

RECALLING Decisions No.12/CXIII/21 adopted by the 113th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers on 2 December 2021, Decision No. 6/CXIV adopted by the 114th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers on 9 June 2022, and Decision No. 8/CXV/22 of the 115th session of the OACPS Council of Ministers, held on 27 and 28 November 2022 regarding the mobilization of financial resources, including climate finance to address increasing vulnerabilities of OACPS SIDS;

RECALLING ALSO the Luanda Declaration of the OACPS Heads of State and Government at their 10th Summit, held on 9 December 2022 in the Republic of Angola and Decision No 13/CXVI/23 of the 116th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held on 19 and 20 July 2023, to ensure that requisite resources are allocated in the 2024 OACPS Budget for the OACPS SIDS-led International Resource Mobilization Conference to finance Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs);

HAVING REGARD to Articles 1(5) and 79(3) of the OACPS-EU Samoa Partnership Agreement on cooperation at the international level with a view to promoting and defending their common interest as well as closely cooperating and establishing strategic partnerships with third countries and groupings;

WELCOME the outcome Declaration of the Fourth UN International Conference on Small Island Developing States held in Antigua and Barbuda on 27-31 May 2024, and the joint OACPS-EU press release of 26 July 2024 which commit the two sides to join forces to implement the outcomes of the 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States, at multilateral level including through the forthcoming UN Summit of the Future, the COP 29, the 3rd UN Ocean Conference and the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development among others;

AFFIRM our collective commitment to the principles of the Bridgetown Initiative 2.0 which advocates for the reform of the international financial architecture with a view to unlocking and scaling-up grant and concessional resources to address the inherent vulnerabilities of developing countries to exogenous shocks such as the ongoing climate emergency, unsustainable debt, green transition and digital transformation, as well as the attainment of the SDGs.

NOTES the initiatives by the OACPS Ambassadorial Working Group established to organize the OACPS SIDS-led International Resource Mobilization Conference for Financing Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), to seek the support and collaboration of partners, including the European Commission and EU Member States;

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

1. **ENCOURAGE** the Ambassadorial Working Group on the SIDS-Led International Resource Mobilization Conference for Financing Nationally Determine Contributions, to continue its engagement with potential partners to provide all necessary support, for the organization of the Conference in 2025 in the margins of the 3rd UN Ocean Conference to be held in Nice, France, in June 2025.
2. **INSTRUCT** the Committee of Ambassadors and the Secretariat to include the OACPS SIDS-Led International Resource Mobilization Conference for Financing Nationally Determined Contributions as a priority activity in the Secretariat's prioritized work programme and budget, for the 2025 financial year.

3. **MANDATE** the OACPS SIDS Forum to engage with the European Commission, particularly the European External Action Service (EEAS), to establish under the OACPS-EU Rules of Procedure, a Joint OACPS-EU Working Party for the implementation of the SIDS-related initiatives and actions under the Samoa Agreement and the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS.
4. **INSTRUCT** the Secretary-General to convey this Decision to all stakeholders, including the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European External Action Service and the European Member States.

Done at Kingston, 31 July 2024



Senator The Hon. Kamina JOHNSON SMITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Trade of Jamaica
President of the 117th Session of the
OACPS Council of Ministers

ACP/27/003/24 (Final version) – Decisions of the 117th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers held in hybrid format from 23 to 26 July, and 31 July 2024

EN

28