

ACP-EU COTONOU AGREEMENT

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

**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 19 March 2015

ACP/22/001/15

ACP-UE 2104/15

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

of: 64th meeting of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors
on: 16 May 2014
at: Justus Lipsius Building, Rue de la Loi 175, 1048 Brussels

Subject: Outcome of proceedings of the 64th meeting of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors on 16 May 2014

The 64th meeting of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors took place on 16 May 2014 under the chairmanship of H.E. Dr Diodorus Buberwa KAMALA, Ambassador of Tanzania and Chairman of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors.

The meeting was co-chaired for the European Union by H.E. Mr Theodoros SOTIROPOULOS, Ambassador of Greece and Chairman of the Permanent Representatives Committee.

The Commission was represented by Mr Pierre AMILHAT, Director for West and Central Africa in DG EuropeAid - Development and Cooperation, and Ms Sandra GALLINA, acting Director for Sustainable Development; Economic Partnership Agreements - African, Caribbean and Pacific; Agri-food and Fisheries in DG Trade.

1. Adoption of the provisional agenda

The Committee adopted the agenda as set out in ACP/22/001/14 - ACP-UE 2108/14.

2. Adoption of the outcome of proceedings of the 63rd meeting of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors on 3 May 2013

The Committee approved the summary record of the previous meeting [ACP/22/003/13 - ACP-UE 2124/13].

3. Preparation of the 39th session of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers

A. Migration and development

The EU side expressed satisfaction with the ongoing process and underlined the importance of the cooperation in the area of migration in all aspects, including on visas, remittances, readmission and trafficking in human beings. The EU encouraged launching discussions on the new topic to be explored under the dialogue - "Trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants".

The Commission outlined the state of play of the dialogue, in particular the work done on the implementation of the recommendations on visas, remittances and readmission. In this context, the Commission praised the reaffirmed willingness of the two parties to re-boost the process, reflected in the adoption of the Terms of Reference for the Visa Subgroup and the concept note for the seminar on return and readmission, which took place in April 2014. The Commission also outlined the proposed schedule of meetings on the dialogue for 2014.

The representative of Fiji, Chair of the ACP Subcommittee on Political Affairs, presented the report of the ACP side on the outcomes of the dialogue as of April 2014. He underlined the progress made towards the implementation of the recommendations endorsed in 2012, and indicated that the focus should now be put on concrete proposals and tangible results, with the increased involvement of national authorities and delegations. He also praised the work carried out on other topics, in particular the organisation of the seminars on return and readmission and on remittances, as well as the progress made in preparing the experts' meeting on trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants.

The Committee took note of the state of play of the dialogue and agreed on the need to take stock of the progress achieved in the implementation of the dialogue at future meetings.

B. Post-2015 framework

In the run-up to the discussions on Sustainable Development Goals in September 2014 during the 69th UN General Assembly, both Parties underlined the importance of drawing up an ambitious text for an ACP-EU Joint Declaration on Post-2015. They argued that the envisaged text should set out joint priorities clearly and in a concise manner.

Good progress was noted on the work carried out on the draft Joint Declaration, while the need for further discussion at expert level on remaining outstanding issues was emphasised.

The Committee of Ambassadors consequently recommended that experts should continue their work with a view to preparing the ACP-EU Joint Declaration for adoption at the meeting of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers scheduled to take place on 19-20 June 2014 in Nairobi.

C. Future of EU support to ACP Private Sector Development

The ACP side informed the EU side about the adoption of the ACP Strategic Framework for Private Sector Development by the ACP Committee of Ambassadors and congratulated the European Commission on the adoption of its new Communication on this subject. The main lines of the ACP Strategy were presented and the ACP commitment to the development of a joint strategy was underlined. Regarding the implementing modalities at the intra ACP level, ownership and accountability were pointed out as the main objectives.

The EU side confirmed the key importance of private sector development in the ACP countries for the EU and invited the ACP side to engage in a dialogue with a view to finding the best and most efficient way to support the ACP private sector. The adoption and implementation of the intra-ACP programme for the 11th EDF was emphasised as a key element of an efficient support system.

The Commission welcomed the development of the ACP strategy and the possibility of reaching a consensus on a joint ACP-EU strategy in the close future. It recalled that considerable funds were to be dedicated to private sector development under the 11th EDF and that there were direct links between the intra-ACP and the private sector development support. It underlined the importance of finding common solutions. The Commission stressed its intention to build direct relations with ACP regions in this respect. It stressed that a document in this respect could be finalised quickly and be presented to the Ministers in June.

The representative of Germany supported the Presidency and the Commission.

D. CDE

The representative of Samoa reiterated the position of the ACP that the issues of private sector development and the CDE should be treated separately, arguing that the ACP and the EU side needed to look at the overall strategy and decide on the issue of the CDE only once the strategy had been defined.

The EU side reiterated its position on the closing down of the CDE. It stressed the political risks of delaying the closure for implementing a strong and effective private sector development strategy in the ACP and for the adoption and implementation of the intra-ACP programme for the 11th EDF. It invited the Commission and the ACP side to work together to prepare a formal decision for the ACP-EU Council of Ministers on the future of EU support to the ACP private sector and on the closure of the CDE, giving a mandate to the Committee of Ambassadors to amend Annex III to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement.

The Commission expressed the opinion that the two issues of private sector development and of the CDE should be treated separately, although they are intrinsically related. It underlined the important developments which had taken place since the establishment of the CDE, and stressed the need to adopt new solutions. It concluded that the closure required a joint political decision and hence a dialogue on this issue should take place and, in any case, the closing down would be conducted in an orderly manner, taking into account the rights of staff and the current commitments of the Centre.

The representatives of Latvia, Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Germany intervened in support of the EU Presidency and the Commission.

The ACP side took note of the EU comments concerning the closing down of the CDE. Furthermore, the ACP side stated that while in the long run, the Parties needed to consider the issue of the future of the CDE, in the short run, the Centre should be reinforced with an additional budget of EUR 1.5 million.

E. Development Finance Cooperation

- Information on the Activities of the ACP-EU Committee on Development Finance Cooperation

The Committee of Ambassadors took note of the results of the 30th meeting of the ACP-EU Committee on Development Finance Cooperation (authorised representatives) held on 19 December 2013, as well as of the agenda of its 31st meeting, scheduled for 23 May 2014.

F. Revision of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement

The Committee took stock of the state of play of preparations of a decision on the revision of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement.

Furthermore, the Committee noted that, in accordance with Article 100 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, this decision would be submitted to the ACP-EU Council for adoption on the basis of a recommendation from the ACP-EU Ministerial Development Finance Cooperation Committee.

G. Trade cooperation

- Follow-up to the 71st meeting of the ACP-EU Subcommittee on Trade Cooperation

The Commission gave an oral presentation of the main outcomes of the 71st meeting of the ACP-EU Subcommittee on Trade Cooperation held in Brussels on 7 May 2014.

The ACP side confirmed that the report was a true reflection of the deliberations.

The Committee took note of the results of the 71st meeting of the Subcommittee.

- **Economic Partnership Agreements: state of play and perspectives**

The Commission provided a brief overview of the EPAs being implemented and negotiated. The Commission stressed that the implementation of EPAs which had been signed was proceeding well. As regards negotiations, there had been a lot of progress over the previous year and in several regions negotiations were being finalised.

The ACP side emphasised that the ACP countries and regions had made a considerable effort to conclude EPA negotiations. In this context it called on the EU to pay greater attention to the concerns of ACP countries which prevented them from concluding negotiations. The ACP side also called for the facilitation of the implementation of the EPAs which had been signed and ratified.

Following this statement, the representative of Chad emphasised the political commitment of the Central Africa Region to proceed with EPA negotiations.

The Committee took note of the state of play of EPA negotiations and noted that the issue would be further discussed at the June meeting of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers.

H. Provisional agenda of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers

The Committee agreed the provisional agenda of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers (as set out in ACP/21/002/14 - ACP-UE 2114/14).

4. Any other business

There is nothing to report under this item.
