

# ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

ACP-EU/102.988/20/fin.

## RESOLUTION<sup>1</sup>

### on the consequences of COVID-19 on ACP and EU countries

*The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly,*

- meeting remotely in Brussels on 29 October and 3 December 2020,
- having regard to 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 (the Cotonou Agreement), and to the subsequent revisions to the agreement adopted in 2005 and 2010<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to Articles 25(1), 29(3) and 48 of the Cotonou Agreement,
- having regard to the joint statement by the Chairs of the European Parliament's Committee on Development and of the Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) calling for solidarity to tackle the health and socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis in ACP countries<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to the joint declaration of 24 September 2019 by the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the European Union on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation<sup>4</sup>,
- having regard to the first extraordinary Inter-Sessional Summit of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) held under the theme 'Transcending the COVID-19 Pandemic: Building Resilience through Global Solidarity' on 3 June 2020,
- having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 8 April 2020 on the Global EU Response to COVID-19<sup>5</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on 11 March 2021 by written procedure.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 287, 4.11.2010, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dacp/product/20200403DPU25061>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/fr/press/press-releases/2019/09/24/joint-declaration-by-the-african-caribbean-and-pacific-group-of-states-and-the-european-union-on-the-2030-agenda-and-the-sustainable-development-goals-implementation/>

<sup>5</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/joint\\_communication\\_global\\_eu\\_covid-19\\_response\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/joint_communication_global_eu_covid-19_response_en.pdf)  
(JOIN(2020)0011)

- having regard to the resolution of the European Parliament of 17 April 2020 on EU coordinated action to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences<sup>6</sup>,
- having regard to the study commissioned by the European Parliament Committee on Development entitled ‘The use of development funds for de-risking private investment: how effective is it in delivering development results?’, published in May 2020,
- having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 9 March 2020 entitled ‘Towards a comprehensive Strategy for Africa’<sup>7</sup>,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 10 December 2019 on ‘Building a sustainable Europe by 2030 – Progress thus far and next steps’<sup>8</sup>,
- having regard to the report of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) of 8 April 2020 entitled ‘Coronavirus Pandemic in the EU – Fundamental Rights Implications’<sup>9</sup>,
- having regard to the Council of Europe’s toolkit for member states of 7 April 2020 entitled ‘Respecting democracy, rule of law and human rights in the framework of the COVID-19 sanitary crisis’<sup>10</sup>,
- having regard to Opinion No 7/2020 of the European Court of Auditors accompanying the Commission’s report on the implementation of the European Fund for Sustainable Development<sup>11</sup>,
- having regard to the Guidance note of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) on ‘Human Rights and COVID-19’, issued in April 2020<sup>12</sup>,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)<sup>13</sup> and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)<sup>14</sup>, both adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966,
- having regard to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030,
- having regard to the UN General Assembly resolution of 10 October 2019 on universal health coverage<sup>15</sup>,
- having regard to the UN General Assembly resolution of 2 April 2020 on global

<sup>6</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2020)0054, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0054\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0054_EN.html)

<sup>7</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/communication-eu-africa-strategy-join-2020-4-final\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/communication-eu-africa-strategy-join-2020-4-final_en.pdf) (JOIN(2020)0004)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41693/se-st14835-en19.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2020/covid19-rights-impact-april-1>

<sup>10</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/sg-inf-2020-11-respecting-democracy-rule-of-law-and-human-rights-in-th/16809e1f40>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/DocItem.aspx?did=54822>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.ipu.org/file/9015/download>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>

<sup>14</sup> [https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg\\_no=IV-3&chapter=4&clang=en](https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-3&chapter=4&clang=en)

<sup>15</sup> <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/2>

- solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)<sup>16</sup>,
- having regard to the UN General Assembly resolution of 20 April 2020 on international cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19<sup>17</sup>,
  - having regard to Resolution 2532 of the UN Security Council, adopted on 1 July 2020, calling for a general and immediate cessation of hostilities and urging all parties to armed conflicts to engage immediately in a durable humanitarian pause for at least 90 consecutive days, in order to enable the safe, unhindered and sustained delivery of humanitarian assistance,<sup>18</sup>
  - having regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015<sup>19</sup> and, in particular, to SDG 3 ‘ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages’,
  - having regard to the report of the UN Secretary-General entitled ‘Shared Responsibility, Global Solidarity: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19’ issued in March 2020<sup>20</sup>,
  - having regard to the UN Secretary-General’s ‘Policy Brief: Impact of COVID-19 in Africa’<sup>21</sup>,
  - having regard to the statement from the UN Secretary-General on debt relief, liquidity, safety and stability at the OACPS summit in June 2020<sup>22</sup>,
  - having regard to the UN Global Humanitarian Response Plan on COVID-19 for the period from April to December 2020<sup>23</sup>,
  - having regard to the UNICEF Coronavirus (COVID-19) Global Response<sup>24</sup>,
  - having regard to the call from the UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies for a human rights approach in fighting COVID-19 of March 2020<sup>25</sup>,
  - having regard to the guidance by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on Emergency Measures and COVID-19 published on 27 April 2020<sup>26</sup>,
  - having regard to the United Nations report entitled ‘Changing Sails: Accelerating Regional Actions for Sustainable Oceans in Asia and the Pacific’ published in May

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<sup>16</sup> <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/270>

<sup>17</sup> <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/274>

<sup>18</sup> [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2532\(2020\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2532(2020))

<sup>19</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=111&nr=8496&menu=35>

<sup>20</sup> <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/SG-Report-Socio-Economic-Impact-of-Covid19.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/global-solidarity-africa-imperative>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sgsm20105.doc.htm>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Global-Humanitarian-Response-Plan-COVID-19.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/appeals/covid-2019.html>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25742&LangID=E>

<sup>26</sup> [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures\\_COVID19.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures_COVID19.pdf)

2020<sup>27</sup>,

- having regard to the joint statement of 22 May 2020 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) on improving the flow of remittances and countering the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19<sup>28</sup>,
- having regard to the World Health Organization (WHO) Western Pacific regional action plan for the response to large-scale community outbreaks of COVID-19, published in April 2020<sup>29</sup>,
- having regard to the Joint Guidance Note Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Human Rights of Migrants, published on 26 May 2020<sup>30</sup>,
- having regard to the World Bank report entitled ‘Simulating the potential impacts of the COVID-19 school closures on schooling and learning outcomes: A set of global estimates’, published on 18 June 2020<sup>31</sup>,
- having regard to the statement of the UN Special Rapporteur 14 April 2020 on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association of on how states’ responses to the COVID-19 threat should not halt the freedoms of assembly and association<sup>32</sup>,
- having regard to the statement of the Special Adviser on Africa to the UN Secretary-General on how strong international partnerships are key to bolstering Africa’s response to COVID-19<sup>33</sup>,
- having regard to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) note entitled ‘Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Family Planning and Ending Gender-based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage’, published on 27 April 2020<sup>34</sup>,
- having regard to the statement by the UNFPA entitled ‘Millions more cases of violence, child marriage, female genital mutilation, unintended pregnancy expected due to the COVID-19 pandemic’, published on 28 April 2020,
- having regard to the African Union’s Agenda 2063 for an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena<sup>35</sup>, adopted in May 2013 by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, and, in particular, to Goal 3 thereof: healthy and well-nourished

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<sup>27</sup> <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/publications/CS76%20Theme%20Study.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> [https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2020/UNCDF\\_UNDP\\_to\\_improve\\_remittances\\_and\\_counter\\_impacts\\_COVID19.html](https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2020/UNCDF_UNDP_to_improve_remittances_and_counter_impacts_COVID19.html)

<sup>29</sup> <https://iris.wpro.who.int/handle/10665.1/14506>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/CMWSPMJointGuidanceNoteCOVID-19Migrants.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/publication/simulating-potential-impacts-of-covid-19-school-closures-learning-outcomes-a-set-of-global-estimates>;

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25788&LangID=E>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/statements/statement1.shtml>

<sup>34</sup> [https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/COVID-19\\_impact\\_brief\\_for\\_UNFPA\\_24\\_April\\_2020\\_1.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/COVID-19_impact_brief_for_UNFPA_24_April_2020_1.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> [https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/33126-doc-11\\_an\\_overview\\_of\\_agenda.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/33126-doc-11_an_overview_of_agenda.pdf)

citizens,

- having regard to the flagship ‘Silencing the Guns by 2020’ programme of the African Union<sup>36</sup>,
- having regard to the statement of the Chairperson of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights of May 2020 on COVID-19 and silencing the guns in Africa<sup>37</sup>,
- having regard to the Africa Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19 Outbreak presented on 20 March 2020 by the African Union<sup>38</sup>,
- having regard to the Declaration on Food Security and Nutrition during the COVID-19 Pandemic, adopted at the meeting of African Ministers for Agriculture on 16 April 2020<sup>39</sup>,
- having regard to the African Union Guidelines on Gender-Responsive Responses to COVID-19 of 3 June 2020<sup>40</sup>,
- having regard to the Statement of the African Union Labour Migration Advisory Committee (LMAC) on the novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) and the condition of African Migrant Workers of 14 April 2020<sup>41</sup>,
- having regard to the joint statement of 17 April 2020 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the UN World Food Programme (WFP), the WHO and UNICEF on nutrition in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in Asia and the Pacific<sup>42</sup>,
- having regard to the report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) entitled ‘Women at the core of the fight against COVID-19 crisis’, published in April 2020<sup>43</sup>,
- having regard to the joint statement of 21 April 2020 by the FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the WFP and the World Bank on COVID-19 Impacts on Food Security and Nutrition<sup>44</sup>,
- having regard to the report by the World Bank entitled ‘Africa’s Pulse: An Analysis of Issues Shaping Africa’s Economic Future’, published in April 2020<sup>45</sup>,

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<sup>36</sup> [https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38304-doc-1\\_au\\_roadmap\\_silencing\\_guns\\_2020\\_pdf\\_en.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38304-doc-1_au_roadmap_silencing_guns_2020_pdf_en.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.achpr.org/pressrelease/detail?id=508>

<sup>38</sup> [https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38264-doc-africa\\_joint\\_continental\\_strategy\\_for\\_covid-19\\_outbreak.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38264-doc-africa_joint_continental_strategy_for_covid-19_outbreak.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> [https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38439-doc-ministerial\\_declaration\\_en.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38439-doc-ministerial_declaration_en.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> [https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38617-doc-gewe\\_and\\_covid\\_19\\_eng.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38617-doc-gewe_and_covid_19_eng.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> [https://au.int/sites/default/files/pressreleases/38359-pr-lmac\\_statement.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/pressreleases/38359-pr-lmac_statement.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/eap/media/5211/file>

<sup>43</sup> [https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=127\\_127000-awfnqj80me&title=Women-at-the-core-of-the-fight-against-COVID-19-crisis](https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=127_127000-awfnqj80me&title=Women-at-the-core-of-the-fight-against-COVID-19-crisis)

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1272058/icode/>

<sup>45</sup> <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/33541>

- having regard to the World Bank announcement on ‘Community Responses to COVID-19: From the Horn of Africa to the Solomon Islands’, published on 19 May 2020<sup>46</sup>,
  - having regard to the World Bank announcement on ‘An inclusive response to COVID-19 for Africa’s informal workers’, published on 29 May 2020<sup>47</sup>,
  - having regard to the World Bank Global Economic Prospects report, especially the chapter entitled ‘Lasting Scars of the COVID-19 Pandemic’, published in June 2020<sup>48</sup>,
  - having regard to the WFP analysis on COVID-19 – Potential Impact on the World’s Poorest People, published on 8 April 2020<sup>49</sup>,
  - having regard to the written presentation by Human Rights Watch on the impact of COVID-19 on children’s education in Africa, submitted for the 35th Ordinary Session of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, held between 31 August and 4 September 2020<sup>50</sup>,
  - having regard to the article by the President of IFAD entitled ‘What’s needed to protect food security in Africa during COVID-19’, published on 29 May 2020<sup>51</sup>,
  - having regard to the Special Briefing by the International Crisis Group entitled ‘COVID-19 and Conflict: Seven Trends to Watch’, published on 24 March 2020<sup>52</sup>,
  - having regard to the joint letter of Reporters Without Borders with 80 civil society organisations of 6 April 2020 calling on African leaders to release all jailed journalists amid the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>53</sup>,
  - having regard to the article by the NGO CONCORD entitled ‘EU’s path to a strategy with Africa in uncertain times’ published on 11 May 2020<sup>54</sup>,
  - having regard to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance publication of 19 May 2020 entitled ‘The COVID-19 Electoral Landscape in Africa’<sup>55</sup>,
  - having regard to Article 18(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the COVID-19 pandemic has so far resulted in at least 2.5 million deaths worldwide and has plunged the global economy into its worst crisis since World War II;

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/05/19/community-responses-to-covid-19-from-the-horn-of-africa-to-the-solomon-islands>

<sup>47</sup> <https://blogs.worldbank.org/african/inclusive-response-covid-19-africas-informal-workers>

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/global-economic-prospects>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.wfp.org/publications/covid-19-potential-impact-worlds-poorest-people>

<sup>50</sup> [https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media\\_2020/08/Discussion%20Paper%20-%20Covid%20for%20ACERWC.pdf](https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media_2020/08/Discussion%20Paper%20-%20Covid%20for%20ACERWC.pdf)

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/blog/asset/41945191>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/sb4-covid-19-and-conflict-seven-trends-watch>

<sup>53</sup> <https://rsf.org/en/news/covid-19-africa-rsf-joins-coalition-civil-society-organizations-demand-release-imprisoned>

<sup>54</sup> <https://concordeurope.org/blog/2020/05/11/eu-path-to-strategy-with-africa-in-times-of-covid-19/>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.idea.int/news-media/news/covid-19-electoral-landscape-africa>

- B. whereas the global economic decline has had a particularly severe impact on the most vulnerable economies, which rely heavily on commodity exports, external support and tourism; whereas, due to the rise in extreme poverty, millions of children may be forced into work and will be unable to continue their education, undermining the efforts and progress made in the fight against child labour over the past two decades;
- C. whereas for many developing countries, the economic effects of the pandemic include huge capital outflows, a fall in commodity prices and escalating debt service costs;
- D. whereas the World Bank anticipates an unprecedented decline in global remittances, worth USD 110 billion in 2020, with ACP countries being among the most affected;
- E. whereas the global economic decline opens countries up to the predatory tactics of investments that have the potential to make those countries dependent on the sole owner of their critical infrastructure, most notably energy, transport and health systems;
- F. whereas according to the UN WFP's projection, up to 265 million people, may face acute food insecurity by the end of 2020, which represents an increase of 95% compared to last year;
- G. whereas on 20 December 2017, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring 2019-2028 the United Nations Decade of Family Farming<sup>56</sup>;
- H. whereas the EU Global Response Plan and the 'Team Europe' package – combining financial support from the EU, its Member States, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development for supporting partner countries in tackling COVID-19 – is a commendable response, but further efforts are needed in the face of the enormous challenges we still face;
- I. whereas the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have highlighted that the African continent will need an estimated USD 114 billion in 2020 to fight COVID-19, while the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) puts the financing gap as a result of COVID-19 at a staggering USD 2-3 trillion over the next two years; whereas in this context, more and better Official Development Assistance (ODA) will play a key role;
- J. whereas some governments are currently using the pandemic as a pretext for backtracking on their environmental commitments, as well as on the fundamental rights of workers and women; whereas more is needed from the EU to demonstrate solidarity with European countries and the world's poorest countries in terms of development aid and humanitarian support;
- K. whereas most African countries lack the fiscal space to respond adequately to the crisis owing to low domestic saving rates, low mobilisation of domestic resources, high illicit financial outflows, volatile commodity prices, large fiscal deficits and stagnating ODA;
- L. whereas development finance is characterised by a declining level of concessionality;

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<sup>56</sup> <https://undocs.org/A/RES/72/239>

- M. whereas in 2019, 34 countries were at high risk of debt distress or were already in default;
- N. whereas the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the G20 and the G7 have provided debt relief measures and assistance to the world's poorest countries – the majority of these being ACP countries – in order to support the livelihoods of millions of the most vulnerable; whereas the magnitude of the crisis nevertheless necessitates a further stepping up of these efforts;
- O. whereas the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability of global supply chains (through the disruptions to international supply chains, notably in health) and the need to build regional value chains and boost regional integration as key instruments for wealth creation and poverty reduction in developing countries; whereas high vulnerability linked to poor economic diversification and high dependency on exports of raw materials makes it all the more important to shorten existing supply chains as much as possible;
- P. whereas there is an opportunity to be seized within the COVID-19 crisis to further encourage sustainable economic models in EU and ACP countries, including economic diversification and the sustainable use of natural resources, to increase resilience and to support future generations;
- Q. whereas the crisis has shown the importance of boosting investment in public services and particularly in health care and social protection, especially the need for a higher degree of self-sufficiency in crucial healthcare and protective equipment, and in active substances for both EU and ACP countries, inter alia by developing and strengthening local supply chains and supporting local production; whereas the COVID-19 outbreak has exacerbated the persistent problem of medicine shortages globally, with acute consequences in developing countries, including ACP countries;
- R. whereas it is vital to make huge investments in public services, particularly in health, education, care of dependent persons and the care sector, transport and research, in order to meet the needs of the population; whereas, in the same way, it is important to develop a solidarity-based universal public healthcare system; whereas exclusive patents, licences and intellectual property rights held by pharmaceutical companies may hinder innovation and restrict access to and the availability of vaccines and medicines, thus constituting an obstacle to delivering health for all;
- S. whereas all investments, including foreign investments should respect the human and social rights of workers while providing a response to development issues, thus making it possible to increase the level of prosperity of the ACP countries and improve the quality of life and standard of living of the population, which necessitates, inter alia, that investment agreements include binding and enforceable obligations for foreign investors, notably in terms of human rights and economic development in the host country;
- T. whereas the consequences of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affect the poorest and persons in the most disadvantaged, marginalised and unprotected social categories, including persons with physical and intellectual disabilities, persons with chronic medical conditions, persons with mental

health problems and elderly persons, who already have limited or no access to basic hygiene and treatment for their healthcare needs, and have become even more vulnerable due to the pandemic; whereas the lockdown has had a particularly severe impact on persons with physical and intellectual disabilities;

- U. whereas the COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating the situation in regions where migration and forced displacement, lack of security, violent religious extremism and the lack of basic social services such as health care and education have already caused protracted crises;
- V. whereas the measures taken by EU and ACP governments in exceptional circumstances such as a major health crisis, humanitarian emergency or natural disaster should always respect the fundamental rights of each and every individual and must not discriminate against the most vulnerable groups in society, such as persons with physical and intellectual disabilities, persons with chronic medical conditions, persons with mental health problems and elderly persons;
- W. whereas the pandemic is revealing antagonisms between classes and genders in our society; whereas workers have been on the front line fighting against the pandemic, risking their lives, particularly in employment sectors dominated by women, such as home helps, healthcare auxiliaries, cashiers, nurses, social workers, etc.; whereas these occupations are often undervalued and underpaid; whereas workers occupying the most precarious jobs in society, many of them women, have been hardest hit by partial unemployment, the risk of losing their jobs and mandatory remote working despite the absence of childcare provision;
- X. whereas COVID-19 is a physical disorder that has a major impact on mental health; whereas all citizens worldwide are affected by the pandemic and the restrictive measures that have been taken to limit its spread; whereas as a result of the pandemic, people face a huge number of personal, societal and economic consequences that have a direct or indirect impact on their mental health;
- Y. whereas the working classes, and women in particular, were already the prime victims of poverty in Europe and worldwide; whereas, of these, single-parent families, more than 80% of which are headed by women, run a higher risk of insecurity and poverty; whereas Oxfam estimates that 500 million people globally could fall into poverty, i.e. 10% of the world's population, the majority of them women; whereas Oxfam indicates that the fight against poverty could regress by 10 years, or even 30 years in some regions, such as sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, the Middle East and Latin America;
- Z. whereas uncontrolled and unplanned urbanisation that is not accompanied by the substantial creation of jobs and reduction of poverty and inequalities can be considered an important vector of disease outbreaks; whereas in many developing countries, including many ACP countries, having decent housing is still financially unattainable for many households; whereas the risk of the spread of COVID-19 is greater where there is high population density and a high level of poverty, especially where large numbers of people inhabit a limited space without adequate housing and without minimum hygiene and sanitary requirements such as access to running water and the possibility to self-isolate at home, which is still a problem in many ACP countries;

whereas crowded and informal urban settlements, especially in the poorest and in overpopulated areas, have made social distancing even more difficult, making ACP countries susceptible to COVID-19;

- AA. whereas a sustainable and just recovery can only be realised with the full involvement of people from all quarters of society in both crisis management and post-crisis recovery planning and implementation; whereas all groups of society need to be involved throughout every crisis management stage, with no group being left behind;
- AB. whereas the stress caused by the economic consequences of the measures taken to tackle COVID-19 in ACP regions will exacerbate existing inequalities and vulnerabilities, including a further weakened health infrastructure, food insecurity and education gaps, poverty and social exclusion;
- AC. whereas school closures in developing countries could increase the number of children who are out of school;
- AD. whereas the World Bank estimates that between 40 and 60 million people may be pushed into extreme poverty in 2020 as a result of COVID-19; whereas the pandemic threatens to reverse decades of economic progress towards more sustainable development and poverty alleviation, and therefore to delay progress towards achieving the SDGs; whereas additional debt relief efforts are urgently needed in order to prevent widespread defaults in developing countries and to facilitate investments in the recovery and the SDGs;
- AE. whereas in ACP countries, a large majority of people work in the informal economy, often relying on the sale of simple goods and services, and therefore cannot afford to stay indoors;
- AF. whereas the lockdown measures have undoubtedly helped to contain the pandemic, but have also entailed a high economic cost, especially for vulnerable social groups – in particular women, who are often overrepresented among healthcare workers and in domestic services, and have been heavily impacted by lockdown – and those who depend on tourism, agriculture and trade; whereas lockdowns resulted in the closure of many places, such as informal local marketplaces, leading to an increase in extreme poverty, especially in rural areas;
- AG. whereas the lockdown measures have disrupted the supply chains for treatments for neglected tropical diseases, as well as for tuberculosis and HIV medications, as developing countries, including ACP countries, are heavily reliant on international supply chains, which can lead to challenges when worldwide demand rises and supply is limited; whereas the development of local supply chains for medicines, medical products and personal protective equipment may help to reduce these shortages in future;
- AH. whereas the COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to spread, and whereas preventive measures seem unable to contain its spread in the absence of a cure; whereas research into and the distribution of a safe vaccine that is accessible to all is the only long-term way to curb the epidemic; whereas the European Commission has negotiated advance purchases of vaccines against COVID-19 with the large pharmaceutical multinationals;

whereas public money is financing this research on a large scale in the form of direct subsidies or research tax credits, and whereas private laboratories have embarked on fierce competition in order to be the first to obtain patents;

- AI. whereas the WHO called, on 19 May 2020, for the vaccine to be a ‘global public good’; whereas, like all medicines, the vaccine must meet everyone’s health needs, irrespective of their origins or resources; whereas these vital products should not be seen as just another commodity to be bought and sold, and thus subject to the rationale of profit at any price; stresses that making safe vaccines available globally in a fast and affordable manner must be one of the first steps;
- AJ. whereas the suspension of mass immunisation programmes for diseases such as measles, cholera and yellow fever is leaving as many as 117 million children without vaccines; whereas even before the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccines for many diseases were not available for around 20 million children under the age of one<sup>57</sup>, and whereas more efforts are needed to improve access to vaccination;
- AK. whereas the prolonged lockdown disproportionately affected and reduced women’s access to health services, including sexual and reproductive services and maternal health services in particular;
- AL. whereas children are at risk of being among the biggest victims of the pandemic, as their lives are being changed in profound ways; whereas this is a universal crisis whose impact, for some children, will be lifelong; whereas all children of all ages and in all countries are being affected by the pandemic, in particular by its socio-economic impacts;
- AM. whereas according to projections by UNICEF and Save the Children, the ongoing crisis could increase the number of children living in monetarily poor households by up to 117 million by the end of 2020;
- AN. whereas a prolonged lockdown is especially harmful for women and children, due to the already observable increase in domestic gender-based violence, including physical violence, psychological violence, coercive control and cyber violence, as well as in child abuse, including sexual abuse, early pregnancy and early, forced marriage; whereas, according to forecasts, there are 15 million new victims of gender-based violence globally for every 3 months the lockdowns continue<sup>58</sup>; whereas children, particularly girls, are at greater risk of sexual abuse and exploitation, child labour and neglect; whereas lockdowns and quarantine measures also risk restricting even further access to sexual and reproductive health services;
- AO. whereas women often suffer from secondary victimisation, which in many cases prevents them from reporting sexual abuse, especially when speaking about abuse by

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<sup>57</sup><https://www.unicef.org/appeals/covid-2019.html>

<sup>58</sup> United Nations Population Fund. ‘New UNFPA Projections Predict Calamitous Impact on Women’s Health as COVID-19 Pandemic Continues’, UNFPA, 28 April 2020 [https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/COVID-19\\_impact\\_brief\\_for\\_UNFPA\\_24\\_April\\_2020\\_1.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/COVID-19_impact_brief_for_UNFPA_24_April_2020_1.pdf)

their partner or husband;

- AP. whereas digital skills are essential in this day and age, not only in education, but also to facilitate testing and tracing and to access information about the pandemic;
- AQ. whereas in the sub-Saharan region, more than 72% of the overall population of 1.1 billion have no access to a safely managed drinking water service<sup>59</sup>, less than 19% are using safely managed sanitation services and more than half lack electricity;
- AR. whereas 1.54 billion children and young people, including 743 million girls, have been out of school because of COVID-19-related closures, and whereas over 111 million of them live in least developed countries (LDCs), where access to education is already a struggle;
- AS. whereas according to the latest data from the UNFPA, it is estimated that delays and interruptions to community outreach programmes and education on harmful practices will lead to over 2 million more cases of female genital mutilation and 13 million more child marriages worldwide over the next decade compared to pre-pandemic estimates;
- AT. whereas the pandemic is further reducing women's and young girls' access to sexual and reproductive health services and to maternal, new-born and child health services, which was already limited in some EU and ACP countries;
- AU. whereas the pressure suffered by women has worsened during recent times; whereas new forms of working that are imposed may be extended and are detrimental to work-life separation in the countries where lockdowns and remote working have been or are being applied, which have led to an explosion in new forms of psychological and sexual harassment both online and offline during this period; whereas lockdowns have also led to an increase of around 30% in gender-based violence and violence within the family in several European countries; whereas, in total, more than 243 million women aged between 15 and 49 have been victims of sexual and/or physical violence worldwide in the last 12 months;
- AV. whereas the prolonged school closures caused by the pandemic have exacerbated existing inequalities;
- AW. whereas access to basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity and proper housing, together with decent work and regular income, are essential preconditions for digitalisation (notably e-education), which is a key way of tackling education-related challenges but cannot replace schooling in situ; whereas developing countries are not prepared for, and do not have adequate tools to conduct, e-education on a large scale; whereas children's education has been interrupted, especially in countries where digital infrastructure is unavailable or less available; whereas access to education for young girls is one of the key factors in preventing child marriage; whereas, in particular, the schooling of people with certain types of disability cannot be replaced, since the tools for supporting their learning are often available only in school;

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<sup>59</sup> ['Progress on household drinking water, sanitation and hygiene 2000-2017', UNICEF and the WHO, 2019](https://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/jmp-report-2019/en/)

- AX. whereas the COVID-19 crisis has shown that the concept of inclusive education is not yet a reality; whereas students with physical and intellectual disabilities in the EU and ACP countries were unable to continue their learning during the lockdown; whereas families lack support in educating children with physical and intellectual disabilities, including accessible digital and innovative technologies and e-tools for distance learning;
- AY. whereas digital infrastructure and services can foster improvements in the majority of economic and social areas, notably those of financial inclusion, government, health, agriculture, education and energy;
- AZ. whereas school closures due to the pandemic have aggravated the living conditions of children living in countries affected by armed conflict and insecurity;
- BA. whereas the pandemic is aggravating the already difficult living conditions of women and girls in conflict-affected regions, people displaced by armed conflicts, elderly and disabled persons, and other marginalised social groups;
- BB. whereas, both because of the decrease in the number of tourists and the redeployment of ranger forces to implement containment measures in urban areas, wildlife is less protected and more exposed to poaching;
- BC. whereas the pandemic is increasing hunger and malnutrition in many areas, which are already at critical levels in many ACP countries, adding to the consequences of droughts, extreme climate events and locust infestation on agriculture and the increase in invasive species, causing harm to marine and coastal ecosystems; whereas the unique capacity of agro-ecology to reconcile the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainability has been recognised in landmark reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and by the World Bank- and FAO-led global agricultural assessment (IAASTD); whereas agro-ecology must therefore be placed at the heart of the climate mitigation strategy in both EU and ACP countries;
- BD. whereas poaching and human encroachment into forests intensifies interactions between humans and wild animals carrying new pathogens, and whereas this increased contact can lead to pathogen adaptation to humans; whereas COVID-19 is a zoonotic disease that probably proliferated due to limited close contact between humans and wild animals; whereas, in the communication on the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030, the EU undertakes to step up 'its support to global efforts to apply the One Health approach, which recognises the intrinsic connection between human health, animal health and healthy resilient nature'; whereas time and resources are needed to develop a safe and effective anti-COVID-19 vaccine that can be mass produced;
- BE. whereas the 'One Health' approach that was introduced in the health sector to address animal diseases, food safety and antibiotic resistance is particularly relevant to tackling threats like COVID-19;
- BF. whereas the ICCPR limits the measures that can be taken in times of public emergencies to the extent strictly required by the situation, and provided that such measures are not

inconsistent with international law, do not involve discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion or social origin, and that they respect the right to life and the prohibition of slavery and torture; whereas, even in times of public emergencies, all actions and decisions taken by the authorities must be lawful and constitutional; whereas measures taken in times of public emergencies should be temporary in nature; whereas the fight against the pandemic must not be used as a pretext for the authorities to increase their powers in the long term or to try to eliminate the opposition;

- BG. whereas the pandemic has demonstrated the need for greater international cooperation and coordination in the field of disease prevention and control, public health, humanitarian assistance and disaster prevention and preparedness; whereas the pandemic has shown the importance of more efficient EU crisis management, swift actions and the provision of technical assistance to ACP countries and their healthcare systems in crisis as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- BH. whereas the pandemic has demonstrated the need for stronger regional cooperation in the ACP regions;
- BI. whereas some ACP and EU countries have postponed elections in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic due to the increased health risks;
- BJ. whereas the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have significant negative effects on human rights, in particular on the social and economic rights of women and children and vulnerable and marginalised groups, and on political and civil rights and freedoms more generally;
- BK. whereas the COVID-19 crisis affects the rights of LGBTI people, who are victims of targeted violence, discrimination and hate speech in all regions of the world; whereas such violent attacks against LGBTI people have increased, with hate crimes motivated by homophobia and transphobia on the rise across the EU and in ACP countries;
- BL. whereas the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the already deteriorating situation of media freedom in both EU and ACP countries; whereas the pandemic has also brought to the fore the importance of the media and the right to access reliable information;
- BM. whereas the majority of the world's poor and food-insecure people live in rural areas;
- BN. whereas the pandemic and its effects risk exacerbating the root causes of conflicts, such as inequalities and competition for scarce resources; whereas the response to and mitigation of the pandemic should be deployed in a conflict-sensitive manner;
- BO. whereas rural areas, especially in developing countries, are less well-prepared to deal with the direct and indirect impacts of crises;
- BP. whereas, despite the population density being lower in rural areas, those areas are more likely to be severely impacted by the pandemic, due to rural inhabitants, primarily in some ACP countries, having less access to adequate sanitation, health services, education, internet and communication technology, social protection and public infrastructure;

- BQ. whereas local and international civil society organisations and local authorities should be seen as partners in the fight against the pandemic even when they express critical views towards the government; whereas any measures curtailing civil society activities must be limited to what is strictly justified and necessary from a public health perspective; whereas measures that abuse the pandemic as an excuse to limit civil society space undermine the credibility and effectiveness of the response to the pandemic;
- BR. whereas terrorist groups seek to exploit the discontent resulting from COVID-19-related government measures and from the economic consequences of the pandemic, through radicalisation and recruitment activities;
- BS. whereas misinformation and disinformation about the COVID-19 pandemic are a fact and may make the fight against the disease considerably more difficult and, if false information about alternative treatments contrary to medical knowledge is disseminated, pose a serious threat to the life and health of citizens;
- BT. whereas there is an interdependence between health crises and environmental and climate crises; whereas such crises will multiply in the years ahead, in particular as a result of climate change and the loss of biodiversity;
- BU. whereas the lack of good-quality and independent journalism increases the risk of malicious disinformation campaigns that could pose risks to democracy and public health;
- BV. whereas under the African Investment Platform, nearly 80% of blended grant allocations in sub-Saharan Africa went to infrastructure projects, while only small amounts went to other sectors such as public sector development, ICT, agriculture, forestry and urban development;
- BW. whereas the current situation offers an opportunity to reflect on better preservation and more sustainable use of marine resources, which are essential for the social and economic development of the coastal countries affected by the pandemic;
- BX. whereas marine resources play an important role in scientific research, particularly in manufacturing tests to detect COVID-19, and whereas it is therefore necessary to ensure that they are protected;
- BY. whereas the regional dimension is important in combating the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly through action by local authorities and civil society organisations;

## **I. Economic impact and policy responses**

1. Welcomes, as a first step, the EU Global Response to COVID-19 and the ‘Team Europe’ package; highlights the risk of creating ‘aid orphans’ in other key areas and sectors as donors prioritise immediate responses to the pandemic; calls, therefore, for ODA to be urgently scaled up as part of a more comprehensive and systematic multilateral response; calls for the EU and ACP states, meanwhile, to envisage more ambitious budget support for the most fragile countries while not neglecting existing challenges such as security, extreme poverty, the lack of decent work, access to quality

education, access to healthcare, democracy, equal opportunities and climate change, and while ensuring strict control of spending to prevent mismanagement;

2. Reaffirms the inalienable right of peoples to choose their own political, economic and social development; condemns any attempt by foreign powers and multinationals to destabilise and interfere in the ACP countries;
3. Underlines that the consequences of a combined health pandemic and global recession will seriously undermine the ability of developing countries, notably least developed countries (LDCs), to achieve the SDGs and calls for a far-reaching policy response adapted to the reality of COVID-19 and based on the core Agenda 2030 principle of 'leaving no one behind';
4. Notes with concern that public debt in the Global South was already at unprecedented levels before COVID-19, which resulted in an increasing proportion of public budgets being used to service external debts and therefore hampered governments' efforts to adequately fund and deliver basic public services; is alarmed that the current crisis has exacerbated these pre-existing debt vulnerabilities, notably in a context where financial support for developing countries to tackle the pandemic is being provided principally in the form of new loans;
5. Takes the view that not only countries with low incomes afflicted by conflicts and with weak healthcare systems will suffer, but also those dependent on the export of raw materials and unprocessed commodities, particularly oil-producing countries that have been exposed to the unprecedented collapse in international oil prices; considers, moreover, that developing countries should be supported to ensure that their economies do not suffer and calls for programmes to help SMEs and entrepreneurs, as well as other developing countries that are seeing sharp declines in export revenues due to the sudden halt in global trade and the collapse of commodity prices, in addition to falls in tourism income and remittances and record levels of capital flight;
6. Recalls that one of the main challenges for developing countries is to climb up the global value chain through economic diversification; calls, to this end, for the EU to refrain from adopting a trade policy that prohibits, as a general rule, ACP countries from levying export taxes on raw materials insofar as this is WTO-compatible, notably for industrial development and environmental protection purposes;
7. Calls on the OACPS and the EU to work hand in hand to mitigate the human, social and economic impact of the crisis, taking into account the opinion expressed by local authorities and civil society in the countries concerned, including by sharing best practices at global and regional levels;
8. Calls on the ACP countries and the EU to demonstrate their solidarity by working together to tackle the health and socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis; stresses that such cooperation should involve not only policymakers but also scientists, economists, and humanitarian and development actors;
9. Highlights the huge fiscal constraints facing ACP countries in their efforts to deal with the socio-economic consequences of the pandemic, such as high debt-to-GDP ratios, large fiscal deficits, substantial borrowing costs, and the depreciation of many African

currencies; against this background, calls for the EU and ACP to actively work to coordinate the global response of the international community to support ACP countries, particularly those with the most vulnerable economies, based on the principle of solidarity;

10. Recalls the commitment made by international donors to spend 0.7% of GNI on ODA; notes, however, that the average figure for 2019 was just 0.3%, with only five ODA committee members meeting or exceeding the spending target (the United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark, Luxembourg and Norway); urges donors to rapidly scale up ODA to achieve the levels to which they had already committed but never delivered;
11. Recalls UNCTAD's estimate that developing countries need USD 1 trillion in post-COVID-19 debt relief; commends, as a first step, the measures on debt relief taken by the World Bank, the IMF, the G20 and the G7 for the world's poorest countries, the majority of which are ACP countries, and praises the EU's support of these measures;
12. Notes the swift implementation by the Paris Club and G20 creditors of the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), suspending public external debt for a group of 77 developing countries – including most of the ACP countries – until the end of 2020 to help tackle the COVID-19 crisis; stresses that the payments are staggered over three years and that, while this gesture makes it possible to release USD 20 billion in liquidity for the African continent, this moratorium relates only to a small part of the public debt which these countries have to repay every year, both to states and to international institutions; encourages other major public and private creditors to follow suit, with the aim to secure the participation of all creditors, including the World Bank and other multilateral development banks, as well as private creditors, in the DSSI and any further debt relief offers, so as to avoid the public sector bailing out private creditors; stresses equally the need to raise IMF Special Drawing Rights to provide liquidity to African countries over the next two years; more broadly, calls for the creation of a multilateral debt workout mechanism, under UN auspices, to address both the impact of the crisis and the financing requirements of the Agenda 2030; believes that steps should also be taken towards agreement on binding rules on responsible sovereign lending and borrowing in order to support improved debt crisis prevention;
13. Welcomes the G20's decision to suspend debt payments and calls for the deployment of a large-scale economic stimulus package for OACPS members in order to give them the fiscal space they need to devote more public health resources to fighting the virus, while mitigating its economic and social consequences;
14. Stresses that short-term measures such as debt relief only provide short-term assistance and that only economically sustainable measures such as investment in job creation and diversification of the economic production and supply chains can deliver solutions in the medium and long term;
15. Stresses that additional debt relief efforts will only be effective if they bring about additional fiscal space to finance policies that are centred on human rights and facilitate a transition to climate-resilient and sustainable economies;
16. Notes with concern that over the past few years, the level of ODA concessionality has gradually decreased for developing countries in general and for LDCs in particular,

even though concessionality is particularly important for LDCs to prevent unsustainable debt burdens;

17. Stresses the need for donors to prioritise grant-based financing, especially for LDCs, in a context where, before the outbreak of the pandemic, the poorer countries were already spending more money on debt service payments than health services;
18. Underlines that development aid should be dedicated primarily to delivering far-reaching universal healthcare coverage through a holistic and rights-based approach which, inter alia, takes full account of the multidimensional nature of health and its close links to gender, food security, nutrition, water, sanitation, education and poverty;
19. Notes that the Commission still envisages a prominent role for blending mechanisms in EU development policy, at the expense of other aid modalities; stresses that while blended finance has grown rapidly, there is little evidence of its development impact, as most of it currently goes to middle-income countries and only a small proportion to LDCs; underlines the European Court of Auditors' conclusion that it is impossible to assess the contribution of the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD) to the achievement of the SDGs or the implementation of the Paris Agreement; recalls, moreover, that blending raises concerns in terms of debt sustainability; calls on the EU and its Member States to adopt a cautious approach to blended finance and ensure that all finance mobilised through blending meets development effectiveness principles;
20. Underlines that the global health response must be guided by the principle of solidarity, considering health as a global public good, and that the EU should work hand in hand with ACP countries to improve the resilience and preparedness of healthcare systems for the most vulnerable; stresses that debt relief options could be complemented with conditionality measures that specifically target public health systems, particularly as failing to address the physical and mental health issues arising from COVID-19 within their populations will further impede efforts to promote development and reduce poverty;
21. Calls on the EU, other donors and the ACP states to address restoring and maintaining the good physical and mental health of ACP populations as a matter of priority, as a large proportion of people will be severely and negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic; urges that people suffering in these ways be treated and cared for with the utmost attention, to ensure that they are able to play a full part in civil society;
22. Recalls the binding international obligations of fair and equitable benefit-sharing under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya Protocol thereto with particular regard to genetic materials; calls on the EU to take a leading role, under the auspices of the WHO and the UN, to ensure fair and equitable benefit-sharing of medical products arising from the sharing of virus samples and digital DNA sequencing information;
23. Underlines that the disruptions caused by COVID-19 have highlighted the vulnerabilities of the global food system; takes the view that the crisis is having a severe impact on agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and food security, as well as on people's lives, livelihoods and nutrition, as social distancing and restrictions on movement have resulted in supply chain disruptions, including transport and customs delays, with a major impact on perishable and labour-intensive foodstuffs such as fruits, vegetables

and fish; highlights that border closures, quarantines and supply chain and trade disruptions restrict people's access to sufficient sources of food, especially in vulnerable communities and in ACP countries that are already affected by high levels of food insecurity; recognises the FAO's contribution in mitigating the related risks through adjusting its humanitarian and resilience programmes to the needs emerging from COVID-19 for ensuring the continuous delivery of assistance;

24. Calls on the EU and the ACP countries to ensure the flow of food systems and value chains, which are important for the food and nutritional security of their populations, as well as the protection of the most vulnerable rural areas, including indigenous peoples, migrants, and informal and small-scale workers;
25. Calls for the EU to allocate a greater percentage of EU ODA to sustainable agriculture, rural development and farmer resilience, in line with SDG 2 'Zero Hunger'; insists that EU funding for agriculture be in line with the transformative nature of Agenda 2030, the Paris Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity;
26. Calls on the EU and its Member States to enhance their financial support for sustainable aquaculture and fisheries practices, and the protection of marine biodiversity that is vital for human health, in line with SDG 14;
27. Highlights that the 'One Health' approach, which combines animal, human and environmental health, is particularly relevant to tackling threats such as COVID-19 and is critical for preventing another devastating pandemic; stresses that a sustainable food system is a core element of the One Health approach, notably since healthier diets, a key outcome of a sustainable food system, would support stronger immune systems and thereby reduce the impact of a crisis such as COVID-19; notes with concern, however, that most agricultural development funding in sub-Saharan Africa still supports Green Revolution approaches, where the use of public finances to unlock private investment opportunities (e.g. PPPs, blended finance models) mostly target export commodity production and agropoles, and is increasingly conducive to food system industrialisation, while smallholders, and particularly women, struggle to access credit, and financial support for agro-ecological alternatives remains negligible;
28. Stresses that the COVID-19 crisis has amplified profound fault lines in the functioning of global value chains (GVCs) and exposed the fragility of a model characterised by high interdependencies between leading firms and suppliers located across several continents; in the light of this, stresses the need to support endogenous development based on domestic production (rather than an export-led growth model); considers, furthermore that economic diversification, the development of a green growth model and digitalisation are key for ACP countries to move towards a more sustainable and resilient economic model for the benefit of future generations;
29. Stresses that an open, fair, multilateral and rules-based trading system that provides a level playing field for companies is important for the further integration of ACP countries into GVCs; stresses, however, that strengthening regional value chains should be a priority for developing countries in order to diversify risk, reduce vulnerability, increase resilience and foster industrial development; stresses the importance of relaunching and stepping up trade relations between the EU and the ACP states; points

out that EU-ACP trade relations must contribute to sustainable growth and to job creation, to the promotion of human rights, the eradication of poverty and the attainment of the SDGs and the objectives of the Paris Agreement ;

30. Calls on the EU and the OACPS to resist protectionism, recognising the importance of free movement and economic integration, as included in the AU's Agenda 2063, while giving priority to regional economic integration, including through the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), envisaging one of world's largest single markets; stresses that the creation of this continental free trade area should be done for the benefit of all African peoples, including the most marginalised;
31. Calls on the EU and the OACPS to develop a global programme for connectivity and digital skills, with clearly defined goals for 2030 following the clear principles of the right to privacy and connectivity, freedom of speech, free flow of data and cybersecurity;
32. Commends the support provided to the private sector through the EU Global Response Plan; calls on the EU and the OACPS to support entrepreneurship, develop measures that contribute to the creation of jobs and stimulate businesses and private investments, including through developing infrastructure and devising emergency credit lines for individual entrepreneurs and SMEs; stresses that SMEs play a major role in sustainable and inclusive development, economic growth and job creation within the ACP states; commits the Commission, the EU Member States and the ACP countries to enhance their support to SMEs and their workers in the ACP states, in order to encourage the recovery of economic activity and to support them in making the transitions that are necessary to a more digital and greener economy;
33. Points out that the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to exacerbate burdens of unpaid care and domestic work on girls and women; highlights that quarantine measures are putting girls and women at heightened risk of violence at home from family members and are also limiting their access to essential healthcare services;
34. Takes the view that unemployment has particularly affected the most vulnerable, including women and girls, who mostly work in the informal economy, as well as the less skilled and young people who have been hit by mass redundancies as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and that the impact of job losses on ACP countries is much higher because of social protection systems being less developed than in EU countries; stresses the need to cut the cost of remittance fees to close to zero, and at a minimum to 3%, as called for in SDG 10 'Reduced Inequalities'; calls for the EU and ACP countries to step up their efforts to facilitate international transactions for remittances along these lines;
35. Notes that, often, a number of economic activities in rural areas, particularly in developing countries, are based on precarious and informal employment and self-employment; stresses that, due to job insecurity, many rural workers are excluded from social protection at work, including social security and employment guarantees; notes that casual and seasonal workers are typically even poorer and more vulnerable than the majority of workers in rural areas;
36. Is opposed to any attempt to use the pandemic as a pretext to backtrack on social advances; considers that one of the main priorities in addressing the crisis is increasing

pay globally, including in the most female-dominated sectors of health, education and care, and making career paths more secure; stresses, similarly, the need for a global decrease in working time in order to combat precarious jobs, part-time working and mass unemployment;

37. Considers that countries dependent on tourism, including small island developing states that are already particularly affected by climate change and supply chain disruptions, will be dramatically affected by the limited movement of people and the associated drop in foreign direct investment (FDI), and that swift solutions are needed for them to cope with the short- and long-term consequences;
38. Calls on the ACP countries to assume full ownership of the solution and develop resilience packages, boost economic diversification and the sustainable use of natural resources, support entrepreneurship and increase investment in their healthcare systems and social security; urges, in this connection, in-depth thinking about social protection models, particularly universal income; urges the EU, equally, to ensure that its trade, double taxation and investment agreements are consistent with the objective of domestic resource mobilisation of ACP countries and translate into tangible and sustainable development outcomes, in line with the principle of Policy Coherence for Development, as enshrined in Article 208 of the Lisbon Treaty; in particular, urges the EU and ACP countries to make the fight against illicit financial flows, and more broadly, a partnership on fiscal capacity, a key priority of its relations;
39. Supports, once again, a huge investment in public services, particularly in health, education, care for dependent persons and the care sector, transport and research in order to meet residents' needs; stresses the need to develop a solidarity-based universal public healthcare system; is alarmed by the drastic consequences of budget cuts and austerity measures in the health sector over the past 30 years;
40. Acknowledges that some ACP states have already adopted stimulus packages; encourages them to share best practices with others, while also recognising that countries plagued by conflicts, malnourishment and natural disasters need special assistance; recalls, in particular, that the UN Economic Commission for Africa reported that close to 40% of children under five years of age in Africa are undernourished; stresses that the urgent need for recovery must go hand in hand with commitments by the EU and the ACP states to implement the SDGs and the Paris Agreement objectives;
41. Notes the EU humanitarian response, as well as the EU and ACP group of countries' support to the UN Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19 and their coordination with other stakeholders, but also calls for sustained long-term measures and the full effectiveness of aid spending to be ensured; calls for a regular report on the actual disbursement of funds by the European institutions and their use;

## **II. Impact on social structure, distribution of resources and welfare, education, health care and the environment**

42. Calls on the ACP countries and the EU Member States to mitigate the social effects of the pandemic by revising their national social spending, and to adopt expansionary measures to protect and strengthen their healthcare systems in order to counter the unprecedented crisis generated by the pandemic; urges the International Monetary Fund

and the World Bank to accommodate such national priorities;

43. Calls on the ACP countries and EU Member States to develop digital solutions to improve the continuity and the quality of education services through e-learning, and to promote digital solutions to enhance the quality and efficiency of health services, for example through monitoring and surveillance;
44. Calls for fiscal, monetary and economic policies to support the direct provision of resources to workers and households, families, family farms and local SMEs, as engines of development, the provision of health and unemployment insurance, scaled-up social protection and support to businesses, especially SMEs, to prevent bankruptcies and massive job losses; calls for the setting-up of and support to job retention schemes; calls for accompanying programmes that would have a positive social effect on the population, their health conditions and wellbeing;
45. Notes that poor people in rural areas frequently encounter numerous difficulties, whether in accessing markets outside their regions, or in accessing liquidity and bank loans, which are exacerbated by the scarcity of employment opportunities, income insecurity and dependency on informal markets, where they usually sell their produce; stresses that poor people, including regional SMEs in rural areas, have few financial reserves enabling them to manage or cope with this crisis, and that there is a need for state support and emergency credit measures;
46. Calls on the EU Member States, the Commission and ACP states to make combating youth unemployment a priority for the EU-ACP partnership and to make full use of European financial instruments and programmes in order to address youth unemployment in the ACP states and enhance youth employability;
47. Calls for human development to be the guiding principle to ensure a people-centred approach to ending the crisis, with priority given to mitigating the effects of the crisis by addressing inequalities and poverty and ensuring good governance, social inclusion, human rights, access to opportunities and enhancement of solution-oriented skills, taking in account the principle of 'leaving no one behind'; stresses that social inclusion and human development should focus on basic social services such as health, education, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene, and social protection;
48. Expresses concerns about the lack of social protection and economic opportunities, in combination with rapid population growth and youth unemployment, in most ACP countries; calls for more detailed consideration to be given to social protection models in line with core elements of the Decent Work Agenda and figures that appear prominently in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs (for example in SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5 and 8);
49. Emphasises that education is a right and a prerequisite for child protection and girls' empowerment, including in emergency situations, and that it is necessary to address barriers that girls face in their access to quality, safe and inclusive education and training at all levels; encourages support for access to quality education, training and employment in situations of fragility, crisis and prolonged crises as key factors for stability and for ensuring livelihoods;

50. Calls on states to invest heavily in infrastructure to allow the greatest number of children to be able to integrate into the school system in order to build an educated population and to ensure that they are ready to become citizens who can take control of their own futures;
51. Calls on all relevant actors to create social development programmes to mitigate the increased risk of different forms of violence including FGM and child marriage, against vulnerable groups such as migrants, internally-displaced persons (IDPs), persons with disabilities, women children and LGBTIQ+ people; underlines the fundamental importance of supporting women's rights defenders and women's rights organisations;
52. Calls on all relevant actors to create social development programmes to mitigate the increased risk of violence against minorities, including religious minorities;
53. Urges EU and ACP countries to ensure that all schools have access to water and sanitation, sufficient numbers of adequately trained teachers and appropriate, accessible school infrastructure;
54. Calls on all relevant actors to provide remedial education for children who were unable to follow distance education and for children who were out of school due to other causes prior to the pandemic; believes that governments should especially focus on children who are most excluded or at risk, including children with disabilities, children living in poverty, refugee and migrant children, children who work and children in rural areas, paying particular attention to girls within these groups;
55. Calls on the international community to support and stimulate local activities such as setting up handwashing facilities or producing masks during the pandemic; stresses that the EU and ACP should continue to promote access to clean water and improved sanitation, including through awareness-raising campaigns for all, paying special attention to vulnerable people and those suffering discrimination, including people with disabilities; invest more in adequate infrastructure,, particularly in schools and health centres, providing sanitation facilities and encouraging hygiene at every level, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, as well as expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency and wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies;
56. Highlights the fact that ACP countries are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change and that these impacts are a risk factor for destabilisation, violence and conflict; stresses the need not to diminish the fight against climate change, despite the huge economic, social and health crises which are among the consequences of COVID-19; stresses the need to put environmental considerations at the heart of all decisions aimed at solving the COVID-19 crisis and to support adaptation and climate change resilience for disadvantaged communities and countries;
57. Calls on the EU and ACP to offer concrete, predictable, accountable and long-term financial and technical support to ACP countries to meet their climate adaptation and mitigation targets; recalls the need to ensure that any related activity must be compliant with climate objectives, and in particular with climate change adaptation and efforts to

empower the most vulnerable;

58. Calls on all relevant actors to strengthen their support to local populations through investments and capacity-building in conservation and restoration projects that will drastically limit deforestation;; stresses that deforestation increases the emergence of new zoonotic diseases, in addition to the irreversible damage it causes in terms of loss of biodiversity and resilience, soil depletion and human rights violations, as well as the acceleration of climate change; welcomes in this regard efforts for reforestation, for example the African Union's Great Green Wall in Africa; calls for the strengthening of EU-ACP cooperation in order to tackle the increasing problem of deforestation, forest degradation and desertification in these countries through the development of action plans and climate adaptation strategies aimed at improving the management and conservation of forests and forest biodiversity while protecting human rights; stresses the importance of understanding the root causes of deforestation; urges the EU and ACP states, therefore, to improve sustainable forest management and tackle deforestation and forest degradation through an integrated and comprehensive approach to the forest value chain and the interlinked sectors such as agriculture, energy and mining infrastructure;
59. Calls for the EU and the ACP countries to enhance their cooperation in order to improve the conservation and restoration of marine biodiversity, which is vital in regulating the climate and which forms part of the food security and economy of coastal countries;
60. Is deeply concerned about the disproportionate impact the COVID-19 crisis has on people with physical and intellectual disabilities, people with chronic medical conditions, people with mental health problems, elderly people and their families, creating additional burdens for caring family members, many of whom are women;
61. Emphasises that people with disabilities, people with chronic medical conditions, people with mental health problems and elderly people should not get further isolated when exiting the lockdown phase; stresses, moreover, that they should be treated as a priority during this phase;
62. Deplores the prolonged closure of schools in all the ACP countries, since this situation often leaves minors exposed to greater vulnerability to violence, exploitation and the loss of school meals; urges the governments of those countries, therefore, to swiftly reopen schools in a safe way that complies with the measures necessary to limit the spread of the virus;
63. Emphasises, in this connection, that a fundamental condition for reopening is being able to guarantee a safe return to the physical premises, at the same time maintaining physical distancing and applying public health measures such as the use of masks and frequent hand washing;
64. Calls on the international community to strengthen energy infrastructure, improve internet access and increase the use of technology in education, for example, providing the opportunity to use low-cost systems by means of mass media (particularly radio) and establishing or extending access to distance or online learning platforms;
65. Calls for a progressive reopening of caregiving institutions and cooperatives dealing with persons with disabilities, persons with chronic medical conditions, persons with

mental health problems and elderly persons and emphasises the imperative that they be offered appropriate and effective mental and physical health support where necessary;

66. Calls for the full involvement of civil society groups from across all sectors in both crisis management and post-crisis recovery; insists that countries should provide opportunities for all people to be heard with regard to how best to mitigate the crisis, leaving no one behind;
67. Calls, furthermore, for programmes to help victims of abuse, women's shelters, facilities for children, educational establishments and workshops, particularly for women, to promote entrepreneurship and financial literacy, and to support skills training and apprenticeship structures, with a key aim being efficiency and self-reliance;
68. Urges EU and ACP countries to redirect funding to the COVID-19 treatments that seem to be the most promising by following independent scientific advice and results; calls for fully equitable and free access to vaccines; stresses in this regard the already existing conflict over vaccines against COVID-19 and calls for fair and equal distribution;
69. Supports the call by the WHO in its resolution of 19 May 2020 for the vaccine to be a 'global public good'; supports the establishment of a state-financed drug research, production and distribution cluster at national and European levels in order to guarantee universal access, free of charge, to the COVID-19 vaccine; urges the Commission and the Member States to commit to making anti-pandemic vaccines and treatments a global public good, freely accessible to all;
70. Urges the restoration of the mass immunisation programmes for diseases such as measles, cholera, diphtheria, polio, mumps and yellow fever;
71. Points out that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical role that technology can play in slowing the spread of viruses by enabling social distancing and helping to minimise physical contact; calls for increased investment in digitalisation to enable young people and teachers to access digital educational content and the internet in order to prevent interruptions to learning which might lead to increased school dropout rates in some of the most marginalised communities;
72. Is concerned that the COVID-19 crisis increases the number of children who face food insecurity; urges governments to prevent the devastating nutrition and health consequences of millions of children missing out on school meals due to school closures;
73. Urges the creation of a dedicated EU-ACP microcredit scheme, in addition to the ACP Investment Facility, to support the smallest local producers and providers of micro services; notes that such a scheme would be especially appropriate now, with imports substituted by local production; calls, in this regard, for protection mechanisms such as insurance schemes to help borrowers who face financial difficulties and are unable to repay loans so that they do not lose all of their assets;
74. Emphasises that education is a right and a prerequisite and that ACP countries and EU Member States must aim to strengthen the public delivery of education services and

universal access to quality education at all levels; calls for greater North-South mobility in the areas of vocational training and academic exchanges;

75. Recalls that the development of local production and distribution networks ensures local consumption and short food supply chains and increases environmental resilience; calls on the ACP countries and EU Member States to take stock of the provisional arrangements for local self-sufficiency and to tailor a longer-lasting model based on local production and consumption, with a low impact on the environment and climate change; notes that the development of local supply chains and support for local production can bolster resistance to shortages of key products such as food, medicines, personal protective equipment and hygiene products in the event of future disruption of global supply chains;
76. Calls for the EU and ACP countries to ease restrictive measures in order to avoid the prolonged severance of rural producers from their urban markets with the dire effects this has on food security;
77. Stresses that poaching and trafficking wild animals is increasing not only the risks of transmitting viruses to humans and causing an irreversible loss of biodiversity, but also fosters instability, violence and corruption; calls on the ACP countries to continue to protect wildlife effectively in spite of the pandemic, and urges the EU to help the ACP partners in these efforts; calls, in particular, for support for capacity-building in the ACP countries, particularly through an increase in the numbers of rangers and an improvement in their training, and through a closer association of local communities with the protection of animals;
78. Calls on the EU and ACP countries to ensure wider access to education for schoolchildren and young people, including during the pandemic; notes that ACP countries often do not have sufficient tools to enable remote access to education on a large scale;

### **III. Human Rights, democracy, the rule of law, peace and international cooperation in the times of the COVID-19 pandemic**

79. Recalls that the current COVID-19 pandemic is a global crisis that requires a global response; calls on EU and ACP states to continue to cooperate constructively in confronting the pandemic in the framework of multilateral institutions, which are needed more than ever before, and which should be further strengthened rather than weakened;
80. Calls on the EU and its Member States to assist ACP countries, in particular those with the most vulnerable populations and the most fragile economies and health systems;
81. Calls on all governments to enhance their support for the United Nations system and the WHO's work aimed at providing expert advice, information and guidelines in relation to the pandemic and the best means to contain it by medical and non-medical interventions at local, national, regional and international level; supports the ongoing efforts of the WHO, the African Centres for Disease Control, the Caribbean Public Health Agency and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control; calls for the further strengthening of their capabilities in disease prevention, data collection,

processing and analysis, surveillance and the early detection of health risks;

82. Notes that competition and restrictive measures taken between countries over access to medical devices, personal protective equipment, diagnostics and vaccines result in disruption of production and price spikes; stresses, therefore, that a political commitment, led by vaccine manufacturing countries, is essential to encourage governments to collectively ensure that supply chains remain open, scientific collaboration is supported and sustainable, and equitable access to a future COVID-19 vaccine is guaranteed; considers in this regard that a vaccine should be seen as a global public good and calls on ACP and EU governments to lead collaboration via an established international or multilateral organisation to prevent so-called vaccine nationalism;
83. Calls for the consideration of some local remedies that have a proven positive effect or track record in mitigating the virus; encourages, where possible, scientific proof of their effects to be sought; reaffirms that local remedies should never undermine internationally acclaimed good practices and established medications, but should complement them;
84. Calls for all EU institutions, EU and ACP authorities, the public and private media and civil society to actively fight the spreading of fake news, disinformation and conspiracy theories, violent extremism, hate speech, discrimination and radicalisation while safeguarding access to information, privacy and freedom of speech, including the right to criticise government actions and the measures taken to contain the pandemic; urges all of the aforementioned institutions and authorities to develop programmes to improve critical thinking skills and thereby raise the levels of overall critical literacy of the public; calls for all these institutions and bodies to combat disinformation by promoting official channels of communication on COVID-19 as a source of verified information, such as government services and EU or World Health Organization services, and to raise public awareness through extensive information campaigns on prevention;
85. Points out that different forms of misinformation and disinformation, as well as other forms of information relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, continue to proliferate around the world, targeting in many cases those most vulnerable and deprived and having potentially harmful consequences for public security, health and effective crisis management; recalls that all measures to combat disinformation, including those taken in the context of the COVID-19 emergency, need to be necessary, proportionate and subject to regular oversight, and may under no circumstances prevent journalists and media actors from carrying out their work;
86. Calls on ACP and EU governments to actively engage civil society organisations in all efforts to respond to the current crisis while respecting their plurality and autonomy; underlines the role of NGOs, particularly in the provision of the most needed medical equipment and in the deployment of medical staff; emphasises the role of the European Solidarity Corps in supporting NGOs in terms of the assistance given to the most vulnerable, such as the elderly and persons with disabilities;
87. Condemns all forms of exclusion and discrimination against those infected with COVID-19, as well as any instrumentalisation of the crisis to marginalise any part of the

population; calls on ACP and EU countries to step up their fight against xenophobia, homophobia, hate speech, racism, discrimination and social exclusion, and to actively ensure that minorities, including religious minorities, have access to treatment and are appropriately protected in the context of the pandemic;

88. Calls for quality media and independent journalism to be supported in ACP countries as they are the best way to keep societies informed and resilient against malicious disinformation that can lead to health risks and disruption of stability, harm democracy and fuel discrimination and hate crime;
89. Notes that refugees and displaced persons are more vulnerable to the consequences of the crisis, as they are often faced with more precarious living conditions and tend to face greater obstacles in accessing basic health services than local populations; calls, therefore, on the governments of ACP and EU countries to enhance physical and mental healthcare access, including access to sexual and reproductive health care, and provide targeted support to refugees and displaced populations, in particular women, children and other vulnerable groups such as the LGBTI+ community, in order to avoid their being disproportionately affected by the pandemic and to avoid their further stigmatisation;
90. Notes that the conditions in overcrowded prisons are leaving prisoners and staff at an increased risk of contracting the virus, and calls for the immediate release of prisoners of conscience, as well as journalists and human rights defenders; notes that, in addition to prisons, an increased risk of infection exists in other closed facilities such as nursing homes, psychiatric hospitals and addiction treatment centres, and calls on EU and ACP countries to ensure that hygiene products and personal protective equipment, as well as access to treatment in the event of illness, are available in closed facilities; calls for EU and ACP countries to take proportionate and non-discriminatory measures to minimise the risk of infection in closed facilities, and, in the event of restrictions on direct contact with relatives being introduced, to provide alternative possibilities for such contact, for example through increased telephone contact;
91. Stresses that women living in rural areas are disproportionately affected in this crisis, not only as employees, but also as regular informal caregivers for relatives (in particular, children and elderly people), due to the prevalence of certain social expectations regarding the role of women and to enduring structures of gender inequality;
92. Is deeply concerned at the surge in domestic and gender-based violence and violence against children, including child sexual abuse, reported in several EU and ACP countries as a result of the pandemic and lockdown and quarantine measures; calls for EU and ACP states to step up their efforts in terms of prevention and awareness-raising and risk communication in order to enable victims of violence to have alternative and free opportunities to report cases of domestic violence to the relevant services, to extend the offer of free services and channels through which victims can seek help, such as a helpline for women and children, as well as to ensure the provision of lifesaving medical treatment, social and psychological support, including access to sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence services, and legal representation for the victims; stresses that women should be involved in all parts of the criminal justice

system and that all people who are in contact with victims should be trained in secondary victimisation prevention in order to increase reporting of gender-based crime and hate crime, such as sexual abuse and domestic violence, as well as to prevent further psychological harm from being caused to the victims;

93. Condemns any attempt to use the pandemic as a pretext for backtracking on the fundamental rights of women; reaffirms the inalienable right to control over one's body, including reproductive rights, rights to contraception and to safe abortion, the development of public and universal health infrastructure and 100% coverage of costs; stresses the need for huge investment to combat sex-discriminatory and gender-based violence against women, whether physical, sexual or psychological, and to ensure that they receive emergency assistance with access to accommodation, psychological and financial support, and assistance in achieving financial independence;
94. Calls for EU and ACP countries to integrate FGM risk mitigation and response into their gender-based violence and child protection COVID-19 preparedness and response plans;
95. Stresses that lockdown and quarantine measures may further restrict access to sexual and reproductive health services; calls on EU and ACP states to ensure that women have continuous access to these services;
96. Urges EU and ACP countries to secure access to sexual and reproductive health services in compliance with international commitments on this matter;
97. Underlines that postponing elections can only be justified for public health reasons and may be necessary for ensuring free and fair elections if the measures to contain the pandemic limit the opportunities for candidates and parties to campaign, for the media to report on and for voters to engage with the election process;
98. Stresses, however, that respecting the term limits stipulated in constitutions remains paramount and that decisions to postpone elections should respect the relevant constitutional and legal requirements and should include clear prospects for the resumption of the electoral cycle; stresses that governments should consult with the opposition and all relevant stakeholders to build consensus on the necessary and urgent decisions to tackle the crisis; stresses that all political players should also strive for compromise and not use the situation to destabilise the political situation in the country;
99. Underlines that a state of emergency has, by its very nature, negative effects on human rights and fundamental freedoms, and must therefore always be limited in time, duly justified through democratic and legal procedures, proportionate to the emergency and respect the constitutional order and international human rights law; stands against any abuse of extraordinary powers and insists that health emergencies should therefore never be used as a pretext to undermine the rule of law, democratic institutions, democratic accountability and judicial control, or to harass the opposition, journalists or human rights defenders; calls, furthermore, on the EU, the Member States and ACP countries to step up their judicial cooperation programmes so as to promote the exchange of best practices and an effective legal arsenal in the fight against corruption;
100. Stresses that the use of force by state authorities must always be exercised with caution,

must be proportional and must respect the right to life; deplores, in this regard, the loss of life in several countries in the context of curfews and lockdowns;

101. Notes that civil society organisations face significant financial and logistical constraints to their operations during the crisis, notably the inability to organise large meetings, rallies and protests owing to social distancing requirements; emphasises the important role played by opposition parties, independent judiciaries, the free press and NGOs in holding governments to account; calls on all parliaments in ACP and EU countries to continue to play an active role in scrutinising government measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic and in assessing the human rights implications of public health measures, including equality before the law, basic freedoms and access to housing or shelter, education and health services;
102. Strongly encourages ACP and EU countries to step up their cooperation in the area of public health and disease control, and to accelerate progress in implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction;
103. Strongly encourages ACP and EU countries to step up their cooperation in the area of education, to ensure that all students have access to free primary education and that secondary education is accessible and free; urges governments, as part of their COVID-19 response packages, to provide financial support to offset school-related expenses for children whose families have suffered economic hardship and who would otherwise not be able to return to school; furthermore, urges governments in countries where girls' enrolment in or completion of secondary school is lower than boys' to consider launching or continuing financial incentives to ensure that parents enable girls to return to school as soon as it is safe to do so;
104. Underlines that lockdowns and border closures curtail freedom of movement and could lead to disruptions in local trade and access to food and essential services; stresses that ACP and EU countries should therefore coordinate regionally and restrict lockdown measures, applying them only to the extent where they are absolutely necessary, and to carry out regular reassessments of their usefulness and scope based on epidemiological criteria; stresses that the measures should be adapted to address the changing situation on the ground; urges ACP and EU countries to follow expert advice, including that of the WHO, on border measures and to close borders only as a last resort and based on public health information;
105. Stresses that the pandemic causes particular damage in fragile states and risks exacerbating existing conflicts, especially by disrupting humanitarian aid provision and peacekeeping operations;
106. Strongly supports the UN Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire and the Security Council resolution of 1 July 2020 which supports it; welcomes the fact that governments and non-state armed groups in several conflict-affected countries have responded positively; encourages all parliamentarians of EU and ACP countries to promote the call for a global ceasefire<sup>60</sup>; calls on the international community to respond to all signs of goodwill and to continue supporting local and regional peace and reconciliation efforts; calls for the EU to increase its support to disarmament,

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<sup>60</sup> [https://secure.avaz.org/campaign/en/global\\_ceasefire\\_loc/](https://secure.avaz.org/campaign/en/global_ceasefire_loc/)

demobilisation and reintegration;

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107. Instructs its Co-Presidents to forward this resolution to the ACP Council of Ministers, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the European Council, the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament, the regional and national parliaments of the ACP countries and of the EU Member States, and the regional organisations of ACP countries.

Provisional version