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*Plenary sitting*

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**A9-0159/2024**

25.3.2024

## REPORT

containing a motion for a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Partnership Agreement between the European Union, of the one part, and the members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, of the other part  
(COM(2023)0791 – C9-0029/2024 – 2023/0464M(NLE))

Committee on Development

Rapporteur: Tomas Tobé

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## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT NON-LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

**on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Partnership Agreement between the European Union, of the one part, and the members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, of the other part  
(COM(2023)0791 – C9-0029/2024 – 2023/0464M(NLE))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, of the other part, signed in Samoa on 15 November 2023 (the Samoa Agreement) (COM(2023)0791),
- having regard to the request for consent submitted by the Council in accordance with Article 207(4), first subparagraph, and Article 218(6), second subparagraph, point (a) (v), of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union,
- having regard to Article 208(1) TFEU, and in particular its statement that the ‘Union shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries’,
- having regard to the Georgetown Agreement as revised by Decision No 1/CX/19 of 7 December 2019,
- having regard to the ‘Joint Vision for 2030’ adopted at the 6th European Union-African Union Summit in February 2022,
- having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 16 September 2021 entitled ‘The EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific’ (JOIN(2021)0024),
- having regard to the outcome of the EU-Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) summit held in July 2023,
- having regard to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),
- having regard to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development of July 2015,
- having regard to the Agreement adopted at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris on 12 December 2015 (the Paris Agreement),
- having regard to the joint statement by the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European

Parliament and the Commission of 7 June 2017 entitled ‘The New European Consensus on Development – Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future’<sup>1</sup>,

- having regard to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in 1994 in Cairo and its programme of action, as well as the conclusions of its review conferences, and to the 2019 Nairobi Summit (ICPD+25) celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Cairo conference,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, amending and repealing Decision No 466/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Regulation (EU) 2017/1601 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 480/2009<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 1 December 2021 entitled ‘The Global Gateway’ (JOIN(2021)0030),
- having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 4 October 2022 entitled ‘Youth Action Plan (YAP) in EU external action for 2022-2027 – Promoting meaningful youth participation and empowerment in EU external action for sustainable development, equality and peace’ (JOIN(2022)0053),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 30 November 2022 entitled ‘EU Global Health Strategy – Better Health for All in a Changing World’ (COM(2022)0675),
- having regard to the 2023 Global Sustainable Development Report,
- having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 25 November 2020 entitled ‘EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III – An ambitious agenda for gender equality and women’s empowerment in EU external action’ (JOIN(2020)0017), and to the joint mid-term report on its implementation published on 20 November 2023 (JOIN(2023)0036),
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 20 May 2022 on the EU’s renewed partnership with Least Developed Countries,
- having regard to the statement adopted by the ACP-EU Follow-up committee on 9 November 2023,
- having regard to its resolutions of 4 October 2016 on the future of ACP-EU relations beyond 2020<sup>3</sup>, of 14 June 2018 on the upcoming negotiations for a new Partnership

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<sup>1</sup> [OJ C 210, 30.6.2017, p. 1.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [OJ L 209, 14.6.2021, p. 1.](#)

<sup>3</sup> [OJ C 215, 19.6.2018, p. 2.](#)

Agreement between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States<sup>4</sup>, and of 28 November 2019 on the ongoing negotiations for a new Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States<sup>5</sup>,

- having regard to its resolutions of 25 November 2020 on improving development effectiveness and the efficiency of aid<sup>6</sup>, of 15 June 2023 on the implementation and delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals<sup>7</sup>, and of 12 December 2023 on the implementation of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe<sup>8</sup>,
  - having regard to the resolution on the strategic significance and dimension of the ACP-EU partnership adopted by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in Bucharest (Romania) on 20 March 2019,
  - having regard to Rule 105(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the opinion of the Committee on International Trade,
  - having regard to the letter from the Committee of Foreign Affairs,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Development (A9-0159/2024),
- A. whereas more than two and a half years passed between the initialling in April 2021 of the new partnership agreement between the EU and the members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and the signature of the agreement in Samoa in November 2023;
- B. whereas the multiplication of crises such as the global consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of climate change, and the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, which worsened food crises around the world, call for the forging of stronger alliances and more effective partnerships between equals which deliver tangible results in order to better address emerging needs and global challenges by supporting early warning systems for a range of swift information sharing actions and early interventions in life-saving assistance;
- C. whereas the long-standing partnership between the EU and the ACP countries is of great importance given the number of countries it unites and the greater role it could play in the multilateral system, which is currently under strain; whereas this partnership agreement brings together more than half of the UN member states;
- D. whereas the EU and ACP countries must pursue a strengthened partnership in order to generate mutually beneficial outcomes on common and intersecting interests and in a spirit of shared responsibility, solidarity, reciprocity, mutual respect and accountability;

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<sup>4</sup> [OJ C 28, 27.1.2020, p. 101.](#)

<sup>5</sup> [OJ C 232, 16.6.2021, P. 64.](#)

<sup>6</sup> [OJ C 425, 20.10.2021, p. 73.](#)

<sup>7</sup> OJ C, C/2024/493, 23.1.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/493/oj>.

<sup>8</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0458.

- E. whereas the Global Gateway strategy aims to increase the EU's geopolitical influence in the global arena by providing a value-based offer to the partner countries, within the framework of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs;
- F. whereas Article 208 TFEU requires the EU to take into account development cooperation objectives in all internal and external policies that are likely to affect developing countries;

### ***Objectives, principles and terms of cooperation***

1. Strongly welcomes the long-awaited signature of the Samoa Agreement and the overarching objectives it lays out on achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and adhering to the Paris Agreement; recalls the importance of joining forces with ACP countries in a spirit of co-creation and establishing win-win partnerships of equals in the six priority areas of human rights, democracy and governance, peace and security, human and social development, inclusive, sustainable economic growth and development, environmental sustainability and climate change, and migration and mobility; calls for the swift signature and ratification of the agreement by all parties; recalls that countries that do not sign the agreement will not participate in its political and decision-making bodies and furthermore that the capacity of the European Investment Bank to deliver on Global Gateway projects in these countries will be greatly undermined;
2. Stresses that the new agreement provides for a strengthened, modernised and more ambitious framework for cooperation; reiterates, further, the important political, economic and cultural bonds which have been built over the last few decades between the EU and the ACP states;
3. Calls for the swift and comprehensive implementation of the agreement, as there is an urgent need to strengthen multilateral cooperation in the face of growing geopolitical instability and competition and unprecedented global challenges such as the multiplication of conflicts, the growth of social inequalities in and between countries, the need to address climate change and biodiversity loss, the fight against hunger and the eradication of poverty; points to the geopolitical value of the Samoa Agreement and its objectives, including poverty reduction, sustainable development and the promotion of democracy and human rights; highlights the joint statement of the OACPS and the EU for COP 28, published on 30 November 2023, as a clear example of cooperation on common interests and priorities in multilateral forums; calls on the Parties to strengthen their cooperation in multilateral organisations, to fully support the work of the UN Human Rights Council and to strive to take joint initiatives; encourages the Member States to engage regularly at ministerial level with the OACPS; reiterates its concern that the EU is losing influence and visibility to alternative offers made by China and Russia; stresses the importance for the EU of reinforcing its status as a reliable ally in development cooperation and of demonstrating that the international rules-based system can meet current and future challenges; underlines the importance of the new agreement in this context;
4. Strongly supports the principles set down in the Foundation section of the Partnership Agreement, notably that the Parties must pursue the objectives of the agreement in a

spirit of shared responsibility, solidarity, mutual respect and accountability; believes that this is well aligned with the EU's aim to create partnerships of equals that generate mutually beneficial outcomes on common and intersecting interests and in accordance with shared values;

5. Welcomes the fact that the agreement builds on several international agreements and identifies the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change as overarching guiding frameworks;
6. Reiterates the importance of the parliamentary dimension and of the parliamentary assembly as a forum for the representatives of civil society and aggregators of diversity from across four continents, and of political dialogue as an integral part of the partnership; considers it important that political dialogue should develop in an environment of full respect and equality between countries and calls for political dialogue to be used more effectively and systematically and in a proactive way in order to prevent political crises; welcomes the fact that parliamentary diplomacy is recognised as a pillar of the partnership and is reinforced by the establishment of three regional assemblies that will allow for in-depth debates on shared region-specific matters;
7. Calls for the provisions for responding to violations of the essential elements of the agreement to be used effectively; reiterates that it is necessary for the EU to take a more principled approach with regard to partner countries that are moving in the opposite direction when it comes to central values and principles;
8. Welcomes the inclusion of a specific article dedicated to policy coherence in the agreement, which is needed to enhance the effectiveness of development activities covered by the agreement; strongly presses for the Parties to reaffirm their determination to work towards poverty eradication, in line with Article 208 TFEU;
9. Calls for coherence and synergies to be built between the regional protocols of the Samoa Agreement and the other policy frameworks governing EU relations with Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific regions; welcomes in this context the fact that the regional protocol for Africa consistently refers to the African Union (AU); believes, furthermore, that both the continental EU-AU approach and the EU-OACPS framework complement and reinforce one another; calls for close consultations given that the Commission has announced its intention to review the EU partnership with Africa in the first quarter of 2024;
10. Calls for the strengthening of the EU-Caribbean partnership based on the Declaration of the EU-CELAC Summit of July 2023; is concerned about the increase in violence, organised crime and drug trafficking in the Caribbean; calls for a substantial increase in bi-regional cooperation under this agreement to fight against these threats;
11. Highlights the importance of the Pacific region amid regional geostrategic competition; underlines that preserving peace, stability and the freedom of navigation in the Pacific region remains of critical importance to the interests of the EU and its Member States; highlights that resources need to be pooled to effectively enhance the EU's political footprint and assert the EU as a reliable and strategic partner in the Pacific; calls for strategic coalitions to be built with the Pacific states on a number of global issues, in particular as regards climate change, ocean governance, peace and security; encourages

the Member States to engage annually at ministerial level with Pacific island states;

12. Calls on the EU and its Member States to turn to the outermost regions (ORs) and overseas countries and territories (OCTs) in order to strengthen relations and implement cooperation projects with OACPS member countries; calls for OR and OCT involvement in the regional cooperation processes and dialogue mechanisms provided for in the Samoa Agreement to be encouraged;

### *The strategic priorities*

13. Believes that the six strategic joint priorities identified in the general part of the agreement remain extremely relevant despite the changing geopolitical context; stresses the importance of addressing these areas of challenges and opportunities in a joint approach;
14. Welcomes the commitment to protect, promote and fulfil human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic principles and to strengthen the rule of law and good governance, notably when considering the declining trend for democracy and good governance in the world and the persistent threats to human rights globally; reiterates in this context that the EU's external action in support of democracy must adjust to a new geopolitical reality marked by competing governance models in order to better prevent and respond to democratic backsliding; further welcomes the commitment to promote universal human rights without discrimination based on any grounds; regrets, however, the fact that the agreement fails to mention explicitly that discrimination could be based on sexual orientation or on gender identity; urges the Parties to avoid any discrimination based on sexual orientation and to put an end to the criminalisation and punishment of LGBTI people, including the use of the death penalty;
15. Insists on the need to give greater prominence to the human and social development aspects of the agreement, including to improve access to quality education and vocational training, in order to enable ACP countries to unlock the human capital potential of their young people and to boost human development, economic growth and employment in their countries; stresses, furthermore, the need to improve resources for humanitarian aid and to guarantee effective channels of access to its implementation;
16. Stresses that the operationalisation of the 'EU Global Health Strategy' in ACP countries, especially regarding the transfer of technology and skills to boost the manufacturing of vaccines in ACP countries, should be tailored to local needs with the full participation of local and regional administrations, local professionals and experts, in order to ensure effective cooperation aimed at improving the quality of healthcare and health services in ACP countries;
17. Underlines that particular attention should be paid to the provisions on food security and improved nutrition, given the global rise in food insecurity, malnutrition and hunger, which have been particularly exacerbated by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine; reiterates that EU support in this area should be in line with its policy coherence for development commitments and contribute to the building of sustainable agri-food systems, notably with a focus on small-scale farmers, as they play a crucial role in food security in many ACP countries, bearing in mind the specificities of the



three regions;

18. Welcomes the inclusion of a specific article on youth and recalls that the active participation of young people in policies affecting them should be strongly encouraged; underlines in this respect the importance of seizing the opportunities offered by the youth action plan in external action to enhance meaningful youth participation and empowerment in the EU's external action policies; underlines that children face the greatest risk of violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect; urges the Parties to strengthen their efforts and cooperation aimed at protecting children's basic rights and well-being, and ensuring access to education and justice;
19. Welcomes the fact that gender equality and women's economic empowerment are recognised as key drivers for sustainable development and stresses that, as such, they must be mainstreamed throughout the implementation of the Samoa Agreement; further welcomes the fact that the Parties agree that they must adopt and strengthen enforceable legislation, legal frameworks and sound policies, programmes and mechanisms to ensure girls' and women's equal access to, equal control over, equal opportunities and full and equal participation in, all spheres of life; supports the commitments to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in the context of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the ICPD and the outcomes of their review conference, in line with SDG 5; reiterates the importance of maintaining and strengthening gender-sensitive development cooperation programmes in order to achieve the commitments set out in the agreement, in particular to combat all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, such as female genital mutilation; calls for the EU institutions to speed up the implementation of the Gender Action Plan III in ACP countries;
20. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the agreement is a basis for strengthening economic relations between the Parties in a mutually beneficial way, increasing the global market share of both EU and OACPS businesses and strengthening the role of local entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises; stresses that the mutual relationship between the EU and the OACPS should be based on common values and that economic relations must develop on a partnership basis; strongly supports the objective to mobilise investment, support trade and foster private sector development, with a view to achieving sustainable and inclusive growth and creating decent jobs for all; stresses, in this context, that a strong link will have to be established between the agreement and the Global Gateway initiative with the participation of local civil society and private sector actors, notably through the Global Gateway Civil Society and Local Authorities Dialogue Platform and the Business Advisory Group, in both the selection and implementation phases of Global Gateway projects in ACP countries; underlines the potential of the EU Global Gateway initiative; takes note of the EU-Latin America and the Caribbean Global Gateway investment agenda and the EU-Africa Global Gateway investment package; stresses that massive investments are required in both hard and soft infrastructure in ACP countries, from digital, transport and energy networks to health, education and food systems, and that these investments should be aligned with the targets of the SDGs; believes the Global Gateway initiative could be a response to this, aiming to provide a viable and attractive alternative for partner countries that delivers lasting benefits for local communities;

21. Is of the opinion that the Samoa Agreement may contribute positively to free, fair and open trade for achieving sustainable growth and development; stresses that the agreement's trade and investment provisions must be tailored to benefit all Parties in order to ensure an equal and mutually beneficial partnership; underlines that the Samoa Agreement will not change trading arrangements between the EU and OACPS countries, whose partnership will continue to be based on separate trade agreements and instruments, notably regional economic partnership agreements (EPAs) and the generalised system of preferences scheme (GSP); calls on the Commission to ensure that all its trade instruments targeting OACPS countries such as EPAs, the GSP and Aid for Trade are mutually reinforcing and consistent with the principle of policy coherence for development and its development cooperation objective of eradicating poverty and contributing to the achievement of the SDGs; highlights that the agreement contains a chapter on trade cooperation that reaffirms the commitment to implement and strengthen EPAs and establishes common priorities and dispositions; stresses that the key role of EPAs between the EU and African countries should be promoting long-term sustainable development, reducing poverty and boosting regional integration; acknowledges the diverging views on EPAs and calls on the Commission to address them by building trust and mutual understanding about the benefits of and concerns about EPAs; reiterates its request for an in-depth analysis of the impact of EPAs on local economies, regional integration and economic diversification, and their compliance with the SDGs and the principle of policy coherence for development;
22. Takes note of the fact that one of the aims of the agreement is to support the integration of ACP countries into the global economy; insists that the trade related provisions of the new Partnership Agreement should contribute to stimulating and increasing sustainable investments that deliver benefits for local populations, create jobs, foster private sector development, notably for SMEs, and enhance inclusive economic and sustainable trade cooperation; welcomes references to social, environmental and labour standards, corporate social responsibility, responsible business conduct and respect for the right to regulate throughout the agreement; believes that a positive link should be established between trade, the eradication of poverty, the fight against inequalities and support for sustainable development; stresses that sustainability provisions should be anchored in goals and commitments on which both Parties have agreed; acknowledges that Parties to the agreement may have differing interpretations of sustainability and is mindful of the Parties' respective levels of development and policy priorities; calls on the Commission to uphold the political, financial, technical and policy assistance provided to OACPS countries according to their assessed needs, including to its African partners, for the smooth implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, with a view to promoting intra-African trade;
23. Reiterates its call on the Commission to implement measures such as a prohibition on the importation of products related to severe human rights violations, such as forced labour or the worst forms of child labour; stresses the importance of including the objective of combating forced labour and child labour in the trade and sustainable development chapters of EU trade agreements;
24. Recalls Parliament's commitment to the European Green Deal and welcomes trade initiatives that contribute to achieving its objectives, including but not limited to the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism and the legislative proposal on mandatory due

diligence; insists that the Commission carefully monitor the impact of these initiatives on EU-OACPS trade and present accompanying measures to mitigate any short-term disruption; is convinced that in the long term, these legislative initiatives will result in more resilient and sustainable global value chains, benefiting citizens and businesses in the EU and the OACPS;

25. Welcomes the commitment to cooperate in order to strengthen energy security and increase access to energy in ACP countries, in line with the UN 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, notably by accelerating progress on SDG 7 and the Paris Agreement, with respect for the rights of all, including indigenous peoples, as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and local communities; stresses that the agreement must contribute fully to the electrification of developing countries in order to ensure that people's basic needs are met and productive activities are established; stresses notably the need to support African partner countries by harnessing the continent's great untapped renewable energy potential, which has the potential to boost economic growth, job creation and social development; welcomes the inclusion of a specific article dedicated to energy in the Africa regional protocol; notes further that the energy sector is identified as one of the investment priorities of the Global Gateway initiative, which should be aligned with the objectives of the SDGs;
26. Stresses the urgency of tackling global environmental challenges and of focusing on the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, especially by strengthening cooperation on resilience in the face of natural disasters and adaptation to climate change and contributing to the Loss and Damage Fund; highlights the conclusions of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2022 report, according to which global warming will progressively weaken soil health and ecosystem services, undermining food productivity in many regions on land and in the oceans; welcomes the fact that the Samoa Agreement, in contrast to the Cotonou Agreement, includes much more detailed provisions on environmental sustainability and climate change; notes that provisions on environmental sustainability, oceans, seas and marine resources, as well as climate change and natural disasters, are covered both in the Foundation section and the three regional protocols; calls for the EU and OACPS member countries to support cooperation projects designed to address shared challenges; highlights in particular the Great Green Wall project in Africa and the Blue Belt initiative for a global network for cooperation on protected marine areas and ocean governance;
27. Welcomes the recognition by both Parties of the essential role of the ocean for life on earth, sustainable development and food security, and their commitment to promote a blue economy and systemic, integrated and ambitious international ocean governance, notably in the context of ongoing global negotiations; insists on the importance of stepping up cooperation between the EU and OACPS countries on key growing challenges related to seabed mining, marine pollution (microplastics, pollution from military munitions dumped at sea, etc.), illegal fishing, the transition towards more sustainable management of fisheries resources and the decarbonisation of maritime transport;
28. Welcomes the Parties' commitment to enhancing cooperation on migration and mobility, including addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacements, for example due to conflict, instability and the consequences of climate

change, as well as to facilitate legal pathways for migration in full respect of international law and in accordance with the Parties' respective competences, as well as being in line with the objectives of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe;

29. Welcomes the fact that cooperation on peace and security is expected to be scaled up under the new agreement as that it is clearly an area of mutual interest; notes that the agreement has the potential to further cooperation in new areas ranging from piracy or the financing of terrorism, to cybercrime; calls for an integrated approach to conflicts and crises linking humanitarian, development, peace and security efforts at all stages; insists on the importance of implementing properly the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach across all crisis affected and fragile ACP countries; recalls, in this context, the need for clear policy orientations in order to bridge the gaps between the individual policy areas, while ensuring that the distinct legal character and principles of humanitarian aid are respected; reiterates that there cannot be sustainable development without peace and security, and that without inclusive development there cannot be sustainable peace and security; expresses concern over the increased footprint and presence of foreign actors including private military companies and/or state-sponsored proxies, such as the Wagner Group, in the Sahel, which undermines the security and the stability of the countries concerned and which has profound regional and international consequences;

#### *Means of cooperation and implementation*

30. Welcomes the budgetisation of the European Development Fund (EDF) in the Union's budget implemented as of 2021, which was a long-standing demand of the European Parliament; considers that this allows for better democratic scrutiny and for enhanced accountability and visibility of EU development financing;
31. Stresses the importance of ensuring development effectiveness and results; believes that the implementation of the agreement requires substantial and sustainable mobilisation of financial resources; welcomes, therefore, the recognition that the means of cooperation should be diversified, encompassing a range of policies and instruments from all available sources and actors following the triple nexus approach; recognises the important role of the private sector in generating financing for development;
32. Recalls that the mobilisation of domestic resources through taxation is one of the most important sources of revenue for financing sustainable development; urges the EU and the OACPS to show strong political will and determination in combating illicit financial flows, tax evasion and corruption; stresses the importance of supporting ACP partner countries' efforts to build robust domestic resource mobilisation systems in order to secure increased domestic funding for development and unlock the potential of ACP countries' economic development; recognises that corruption in public finance management is an obstacle to domestic resource mobilisation; supports, therefore, the Council conclusions of 4 May 2023 on corruption as an obstacle to development;
33. Welcomes the commitment of the Parties to the Samoa Agreement to address debt and work towards debt sustainability, as this underpins the achievement of the SDGs;

***Engagement of stakeholders, parliamentary dimension and multilateralism***

34. Insists on the importance of parliamentary diplomacy in the strengthening of the political dialogue between the EU and the members of the OACPS;
35. Calls for democratic accountability to be ensured at all levels of the agreement;
36. Recognises the contribution that the OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) has played in the past and will continue to play in the future; recalls that the JPA provides a platform for members to hold exchanges on policies and issues that are of mutual relevance to the EU and the OACPS;
37. Welcomes the setting up of the three regional assemblies that will further strengthen the parliamentary dimension and will allow for in-depth parliamentary debates on issues of a more regional nature;
38. Welcomes the commitment to promote a multi-stakeholder approach, enabling the active engagement of a wide variety of actors, including parliaments, local authorities, local civil society, women and young people, and the private sector; calls for this commitment to be rapidly translated into practice, which will necessitate the creation of an open and transparent mechanism for structured consultation in order to ensure the effective participation of stakeholders;
39. Is concerned, however, in view of the shrinking space for civil society, that the Parties have committed to increasing the participation of stakeholders only ‘where appropriate’, which might impose limitations on their effective participation; recalls the need to recognise and promote the multiple roles and contributions of civil society organisations and calls for the EU to enhance the participation of EU and ACP countries’ civil society actors in the implementation of the agreement;
40. Welcomes the provisions on global alliances and international cooperation included in the new agreement, with commitments to the rules-based international order and to promoting international dialogue and seeking multilateral solutions to drive global action forward, promoting peace and development and accelerating progress on SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals; calls on the EU and OACPS member countries to back the roadmap for the Paris Pact for People and the Planet, in particular in the fight against poverty and regarding climate change adaptation;
41. Calls on the Commission and the European External Action Service to strengthen strategic communication on the EU’s activities within the partnership framework;  

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42. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the European Investment Bank and the Organisation of

African, Caribbean and Pacific States Council of Ministers.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The Rapporteur strongly welcomes the signature on 15 November 2023 of the Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the members of the Organisation for African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) since it provides a strengthened and modernised framework for cooperation with ACP countries. In turbulent times of geopolitical multipolarity and instability, the EU needs to build even stronger ties with ACP countries, reinforcing partnerships to promote multilateralism. As such, the Rapporteur deeply regrets the repeated delays in the signature of the new Partnership Agreement, which has impacted the reputation of the EU as a credible partner.

The modernised agreement has the potential to enhance the political partnership between the EU and ACP countries, covering crucial issues such as sustainable economic growth and development, climate change, gender equality and women and girl's empowerment, food security and health, migration, human rights, democracy and governance, and peace and security. The Rapporteur stresses the importance to address these areas of challenges and opportunities in a joint approach. The Rapporteur welcomes that the new partnership sets a flexible framework built around a common Foundation applicable to all parties and tailor made regional protocols for Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific respectively, which takes into account the specificities of the regions.

Furthermore, the Rapporteur supports the fact that the new partnership builds on several international agreements and identifies the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change as overarching guiding frameworks. This is of crucial importance, particularly when considering that progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals is lagging behind, namely in least-developed countries, many of which are ACP countries.

The principles set down in the Foundation, notably that the parties shall pursue the objectives of the Agreement in a spirit of shared responsibility, solidarity, reciprocity, mutual respect and accountability, are strongly supported by the Rapporteur. This is well aligned with the EU's aim to create partnerships of equals that generate mutually beneficial outcomes on common and intersecting interests and in accordance with shared values.

The Rapporteur supports the integrated approach to cooperation, incorporating political, economic, social, environmental and cultural elements; the systematic promotion of the gender perspective, and the promotion of the multi-stakeholder approach enabling the engagement of a wide variety of actors in the partnership dialogue and cooperation processes, including parliaments, local authorities, civil society and the private sector. The Rapporteur is however concerned by the recurrent use of the term 'where appropriate' in parts of the Agreement in reference to the contribution of stakeholders. Such formulation might lead to a narrow interpretation of where it might be appropriate to involve civil society and private sector partners and local authorities. The Rapporteur stresses that the multi-stakeholder approach needs to be translated into practice, underlining that stakeholders shall be informed in a timely manner and be able to provide input into the broad process of dialogue.

### **Strategic priorities**

The Rapporteur is of the opinion that the six strategic joint priorities identified in the



Agreement (that go beyond development) are extremely relevant, despite the dramatic change of geopolitical context. The Rapporteur underlines that the Samoa Agreement offers an enhanced space for dialogue to deal jointly with the immediate and long term consequences of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, which have greatly impacted some ACP States.

On human rights, democracy and governance, the Rapporteur welcomes that the Samoa Agreement reaffirms the determination of the Parties to protect, promote, and fulfil human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic principles and to strengthen the rule of law and good governance. This becomes even more important when considering the declining trend for democracy and governance in the world and the persistent threats to human rights globally. The Rapporteur welcomes the commitment to promote universal human rights without discrimination based on any ground, but regrets that the Agreement fails to mention explicitly that discrimination could be based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

On peace and security, the Rapporteur welcomes that cooperation is expected to be scaled up under the new Agreement as it is clearly an area of mutual interest. The Rapporteur insists on the importance of implementing properly the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach across all crisis affected and fragile countries. In this context, the Rapporteur would like to recall the need for clear policy orientations in order to bridge the gaps between the individual policy areas, while ensuring that the distinct legal character and principles of humanitarian aid are respected. In addition, the Rapporteur reiterates that there cannot be sustainable development without peace and security, and without inclusive development there cannot be sustainable peace and security.

On human and social development, the Rapporteur strongly supports that the Agreement reaffirms that gender equality and women and girls' empowerment are an essential requirement to achieving inclusive and sustainable development. In particular, the Rapporteur welcomes that the Parties agree that they shall adopt and strengthen enforceable legislation, legal frameworks and sound policies, programmes and mechanisms to ensure girl's and women's equal access to, equal opportunities in, equal control over, and full and equal participation in, all spheres of life. Furthermore, the Rapporteur supports the commitment to sexual and reproductive health and rights. The active participation of young people in society, including in the development, implementation, and follow-up of policies affecting them should be strongly encouraged. On food security, the Rapporteur calls for the relevant provisions in the Agreement to be given particular attention, given the deterioration of global food security, due to rising costs of food and agricultural inputs, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and severe weather events. The Rapporteur would like EU programmes to prioritise the focus on building of resilient sustainable agri-food systems and on small-scale farmers as they play a crucial role in food security in many ACP countries. On health, the Rapporteur stresses that efforts should be geared towards supporting ACP countries in building sustainable health systems and strengthening resilience, which is crucial to help partner countries to face future pandemics. The COVID-19 Pandemic has demonstrated that multilateral cooperation is key to overcoming global health challenges, which is why the Rapporteur is pleased to see that the Parties will cooperate to address public health emergencies and strengthen international cooperation to mitigate the impact of global public health emergencies.

On inclusive sustainable economic growth and development, the Rapporteur welcomes that



the Agreement recognises the importance to strengthen the economic relations between the parties in their mutual interest and for mutual benefit, in line with the SDGs. The Agreement recognises the importance of private sector development for economic transformation and job creation with the Parties committing to the promotion of public-private dialogue and paying special attention to the growth and improved competitiveness of micro, small and medium-size enterprises. Furthermore, the agreement stipulates that the Parties shall support policies for the development of entrepreneurship among youth and women in the context of their economic empowerment and the promotion of inclusive development. The Rapporteur strongly supports these parts, as cooperation in these areas will be crucial in order to bolster economic growth, job creation and competitiveness in ACP countries, which is a critical element for reducing poverty and creating prosperity.

On environmental sustainability and climate change, the Rapporteur welcomes that the Samoa Agreement, in contrast to the Cotonou Agreement, includes much more detailed provisions on the matter. Provisions on environmental sustainability, oceans, seas and marine resources, as well as climate change and natural disasters, are covered both in the Foundation part and the three regional protocols. The Rapporteur supports this, as well as the fact that the Parties commit to the implementation of the Paris Agreement and to track progress towards their Nationally Determined Contributions, while taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities in light of different national circumstances. The Rapporteur agrees that it is indeed vital to focus on the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement and to deliver substantive progress.

On migration, the Rapporteur stresses the need to strengthen cooperation between Europe and ACP countries, underlining the need to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacements, such as political instability, poverty, lack of security, lack of economic opportunities, food safety, violence and the negative effects of climate change. At the same time, the Rapporteur underlines the need to facilitate legal pathways for migration, as mentioned in the Agreement.

### **Means of cooperation**

Regarding the means of cooperation and implementation of the Agreement, the Rapporteur stresses the importance of ensuring development effectiveness and results and welcomes the Agreement acknowledging that means of cooperation should be diversified, encompassing a range of policies and instruments, from all available sources and actors.

Since 2021, funding for ACP countries comes from the NDICI-Global Europe regulation. The Rapporteur calls on the Commission to take the opportunity of the mid-term review to check the coherence between the regulation and the strategic priorities of the Samoa Agreement. The implementation of the Agreement should be accompanied by an appropriate level of funding in order for the EU to live up to its commitments. A strong link also needs to be ensured between the Agreement and the Global Gateway initiative, which was launched after the closure of the negotiations.

### **Multilateralism and parliamentary diplomacy**

In addition to the abovementioned areas of cooperation, the Rapporteur welcomes the provisions on global alliances and international cooperation, with both parties stressing their commitment to the rules-based international order and to promoting international dialogue

and seeking multilateral solutions to drive global action forward. The Samoa Agreement can and should help forge global alliances in all the areas covered by the Agreement. The Rapporteur also insists on the importance of parliamentary diplomacy in the strengthening of the political dialogue between the EU and the OACPS. The Rapporteur believes that it is of utmost importance to ensure democratic accountability at all levels of the Agreement. Throughout the years, the OACPS-EU JPA has created a framework for parliamentary debate on a large scale, allowing for consistent parliamentary dialogue between MEPs and ACP Members of Parliaments. The JPA has been a champion of multilateralism and it is expected that it will bring years of experience to the Samoa Agreement.

**ANNEX: ENTITIES OR PERSONS  
FROM WHOM THE RAPPORTEUR HAS RECEIVED INPUT**

Pursuant to Article 8 of Annex I to the Rules of Procedure, the rapporteur declares that he has received input from the following entities or persons in the preparation of the report, until the adoption thereof in committee:

<b>Entity and/or person</b>
Professor Robert Dussey, Togo's Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Togolese Abroad, the OACPS' Chief Negotiator and Chair of the Ministerial Central Negotiating Group
European Commission
EEAS
European Investment Bank
European Economic and Social Committee
CONCORD Europe
DSW
UNICEF
ECDPM

The list above is drawn up under the exclusive responsibility of the rapporteur.

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

for the Committee on Development

containing a motion for a non-legislative resolution on the conclusion of the Partnership Agreement between the European Union, of the one part, and the members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific (OACPS) States, of the other part (2023/0464M(NLE))

Rapporteur for opinion: Samira Rafaela

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on International Trade calls on the Committee on Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Welcomes the conclusion of the negotiations of the new Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and the overarching objectives it lays out on achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and adhering to the Paris Agreement; insists that Parliament should have given its consent prior to a Council decision on the provisional application of the Post-Cotonou Agreement; underlines the important political, economic and cultural relationship between the EU and the OACPS; stresses that the EU contributes to sustainable economic development in the OACPS countries and to the advancement of their position within the global trading system; underlines that the Post-Cotonou Agreement will not change trading arrangements between the EU and the OACPS countries, whose partnership will continue to be based on separate trade agreements and instruments, notably the regional economic partnership agreements (EPAs) and the generalised system of preferences scheme (GSP); calls on the Commission to ensure that all its trade instruments targeting OACPS countries such as EPAs, the GSP and Aid for Trade are mutually reinforcing and aligned with the policy coherence for development principle;
2. Welcomes the overall aim of the Post-Cotonou Agreement to support the integration of the OACPS countries into the global economy; highlights that the agreement contains a chapter on trade cooperation that reaffirms the commitment to implement and strengthen EPAs, and establishes common priorities and dispositions, non-exhaustively, on trade and sustainable development, trade facilitation, trade in services, the promotion of multilateralism and the elimination of non-tariff barriers; welcomes, in particular, references to social, environmental and labour standards, corporate social responsibility, responsible business conduct and respect for the right to regulate throughout the agreement;

3. Stresses that the key role of the EPAs between the EU and African countries should be promoting long-term, sustainable development, reducing poverty and boosting regional integration; acknowledges the diverging views on EPAs and calls on the Commission to address them by building trust and mutual understanding on the benefits and concerns of EPAs; is attentive to the possibility of the positive and negative effects that the new Partnership Agreement between the EU and the members of the OACPS might have on intra-African trade; insists that any negative effects on intra-African trade should be avoided and addressed in close cooperation with our African partners; calls on the Commission to uphold the political, financial, technical and policy assistance provided to OACPS countries according to their assessed needs, namely to its African partners for the smooth implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, in view of promoting intra-African trade; insists on the need to accompany any trade arrangements with OACPS countries with capacity-building and technical assistance to effectively support their implementation; reiterates its request for an in-depth analysis of the impact of EPAs on local economies, regional integration, economic diversification and the SDGs before negotiating new EPAs;
4. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the EPAs between the EU and African countries benefit intra-African trade and the African population;
5. Reiterates its call on the Commission to implement measures such as a prohibition on the importation of products related to severe human rights violations, such as forced labour or the worst forms of child labour; stresses the importance of including the objective of combating forced labour and child labour in the trade and sustainable development chapters of EU trade agreements;
6. Insists that the agreement's trade and investment provisions must be tailored to benefit all parties in order to ensure an equitable partnership; underlines the need to strike the right balance of benefits between the EU and the OACPS countries, in line with the parties' rights and obligations under the Post-Cotonou Agreement; calls on the Commission to guarantee that both the EU and OACPS countries, citizens and industries benefit from trade relations; calls on the Commission to advance sustainable and inclusive development and growth; calls on the Commission to ensure that the agreement is a basis for strengthening economic relations between the parties in a mutually beneficial way, increasing the global market share of both EU and OACPS businesses and strengthening the role of local entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises; highlights that this should take into account their respective levels of development, allow them to protect their infant industries, support small-scale farming and meet EU and international sustainability standards for exporting their agricultural products; calls on the Commission to effectively address and concretely guarantee EU market access for OACPS producers in the revision process of EPAs; calls on the Commission to promote sustainable investments to advance digital and green infrastructure in the OACPS countries in line with its pledge in the Glasgow Climate Pact, while ensuring the responsible management of natural resources and raw materials;
7. Calls on the Commission to support all activities related to the development of science, technology, research, innovation and digital transformation, which significantly contribute to accelerating sustainable development, and to support the OACPS countries

in their determined efforts towards this process; insists that the implementation of the trade-related provisions of the new OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement must leave no one behind, contribute to stimulating and increasing strategic investment, create jobs, strengthen the role of the private sector and enhance economic and trade cooperation;

8. Recalls the importance of supporting smallholder farmers and the development of local and regional products and markets, avoiding promoting an exclusively export-oriented model of agriculture and strengthening circular economies' structures, intra-regional trade and commercial cooperation, which could contribute to preventing further deforestation and land grabbing processes;
9. Welcomes the commitment of the parties in Article 83 of the agreement to 'undertake measures to tackle tax avoidance, tax evasion and other harmful tax practices'; calls on the EU to support OACPS countries in combating illicit financial flows and tax evasion committed by EU companies and multinationals to ensure taxes are paid where profits and real economic value are generated in order to stop base erosion and profit-shifting;
10. Calls on the EU to review the restrictions on export taxes, the World Trade Organization-plus provisions and the provisions on the trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights in the current EPAs and future trade and cooperation agreements with OACPS countries;
11. Stresses that sustainability provisions should be anchored in goals and commitments on which both parties have agreed; acknowledges that parties to the agreement may have differing interpretations of sustainability and is mindful of the parties' respective levels of development and policy priorities; calls for an assessment to be carried out on the differences in interpretation and application in the Post-Cotonou Agreement, which could improve understanding of common sustainability goals by all parties and could support the UN free prior and informed consent principle; calls for the systematic inclusion of enforceable trade and sustainable development chapters in all currently negotiated and future EPAs;
12. Recalls Parliament's commitment to the European Green Deal and welcomes trade initiatives that contribute to achieving its objectives, including but not limited to the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism and the legislative proposal on mandatory due diligence; insists that the Commission carefully monitor the impact of these initiatives on EU-OACPS trade and present accompanying measures to mitigate any short-term disruption; is convinced that in the long-term, these legislative initiatives will result in more resilient and sustainable global value chains, benefiting citizens and businesses in the EU and the OACPS;
13. Calls on the African and European authorities to fight illicit financial phenomena, capital flight, tax avoidance schemes and national income loss due to tariff reduction, which is tantamount to 12 times the annual figure for official development assistance;
14. Underlines the provisional agreement for dialogue between the EU and OACPS countries on matters related to fundamental rights and other essential elements; recognises the strong human rights component in the EPAs; recalls the juridical standing of the Post-Cotonou Agreement, including the suspension clauses in Article 101(8) in the event of violations of human rights clauses; stresses the importance of

political dialogue and consultation procedures to ensure the effectiveness of these clauses and calls on the Commission to guarantee that the suspension clauses will be correctly applied in the event of violations of essential elements of the agreement, such as the provisions related to human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law; emphasises that the suspension of provisions should not harm the population, but should target those responsible for violations of these essential elements; underlines the importance of dialogue and structured and effective cooperation with civil society in implementing the agreement, including on trade issues, as this will provide transparency, accountability, good governance and democratic rule and will advance essential elements; welcomes the inclusion of the mechanism for consultation as a positive and distinctive feature of the agreement; further welcomes the strong parliamentary dimension of the agreement and commits to monitoring its implementation;

15. Strongly underlines the important link between trade, the eradication of poverty, the fight against inequalities and support for sustainable development, provided that adequate institutions are set up; invites the Commission to report to Parliament on how the trade and investment-related aspects of the agreement are contributing to the achievement of the SDGs; strongly stresses the importance of taking into account the SDGs in the EPAs revision process; underlines the role of women and young people in the economies and societies of the OACPS countries; recognises that the agreement's trade and investment provisions take appropriate steps to provide decent jobs for all and to socioeconomically empower marginalised groups; calls on the Commission to increase and to guarantee the participation of these groups in EU-OACPS trade and investment relations; emphasises that the empowerment of women and girls must be mainstreamed and urges the parties to take actions to achieve gender equality, most notably for intra-African trade, and as part of EU-OACPS trade and investment relations, in close cooperation with stakeholders; calls on the Commission to update its 2009 communication on fair and ethical trade;
16. Is concerned, in view of the shrinking space for civil society, that the parties have committed to increasing the effective participation of civil society only 'where appropriate'; calls on the EU to promote the establishment of institutional and operational structures and mechanisms to ensure the systematic participation of civil society through a transparent and open dialogue and consultation process with civil society representatives from the EU and OACPS countries;
17. Stresses that the mutual relationship between the EU and the OACPS should be based on common values and that economic relations must develop on a partnership basis; underlines that our common goal is to ensure stability and prosperity to guarantee sustainable economic and social growth;
18. Is of the opinion that the Post-Cotonou Agreement can contribute to the trade and investment policy objectives of the EU and OACPS countries and recommends that Parliament give its consent.

## **ANNEX: ENTITIES OR PERSONS FROM WHOM THE RAPPORTEUR HAS RECEIVED INPUT**

The rapporteur has received input from the following entities or persons in the preparation of the opinion, until the adoption thereof in committee:

<b>Entity and/or person</b>
Dr. James Nyomakwa-Obimpeh (PhD)
Professor Robert Dussey, Togo's Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Togolese Abroad, the OACPS' Chief Negotiator and Chair of the Ministerial Central Negotiating Group
CONCORD Europe

The list above is drawn up under the exclusive responsibility of the rapporteur.



## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	28.11.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">+:</div> <div>30</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">-:</div> <div>4</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">0:</div> <div>0</div> </div>
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Barry Andrews, Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou, Tiziana Beghin, Geert Bourgeois, Saskia Bricmont, Daniel Caspary, Paolo De Castro, Markéta Gregorová, Heidi Hautala, Danuta Maria Hübner, Karin Karlsbro, Martine Kemp, Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, Bernd Lange, Margarida Marques, Gabriel Mato, Sara Matthieu, Emmanuel Maurel, Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó, Samira Rafaela, Catharina Rinzema, Inma Rodríguez-Piñero, Helmut Scholz, Joachim Schuster, Mihai Tudose, Kathleen Van Brempt, Marie-Pierre Vedrenne, Jörgen Warborn, Iuliu Winkler, Jan Zahradil, Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Michiel Hoogeveen, Javier Moreno Sánchez, Ralf Seekatz

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

30	+
NI	Tiziana Beghin, Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó
PPE	Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou, Daniel Caspary, Danuta Maria Hübner, Martine Kemp, Gabriel Mato, Ralf Seekatz, Jörgen Warborn, Iuliu Winkler, Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez
Renew	Barry Andrews, Karin Karlsbro, Samira Rafaela, Catharina Rinzema, Marie-Pierre Vedrenne
S&D	Paolo De Castro, Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, Bernd Lange, Margarida Marques, Javier Moreno Sánchez, Inma Rodríguez-Piñero, Joachim Schuster, Mihai Tudose, Kathleen Van Brempt
The Left	Helmut Scholz
Verts/ALE	Saskia Bricmont, Markéta Gregorová, Heidi Hautala, Sara Matthieu

4	-
ECR	Geert Bourgeois, Michiel Hoogeveen, Jan Zahradil
The Left	Emmanuel Maurel

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

1.3.2024

## LETTER OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr Tomas Tobé  
Chair  
Committee on Development

Subject: Opinion to the accompanying resolution on the proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), of the other part (COM(2023)0791 – C9-0029/2024 – 2023/0464M(NLE))

Dear Chair,

Under the procedure referred to above, at its meeting of 22 February 2024<sup>1</sup>, the Committee on Foreign Affairs decided to send the opinion in the form of a letter and in particular to call on the Committee on Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution.

Yours sincerely,

David McAllister

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<sup>1</sup> The following were present for the final vote: David McAllister (Chair and rapporteur for opinion), Witold Jan Waszczykowski (Vice-Chair), Alexander Alexandrov Yordanov, François Alfonsi, Petras Auštrevičius, Adam Bielan, Benoît Biteau, Krzysztof Brejza, Udo Bullmann, Traian Băsescu, Olivier Chastel, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Anna Fotyga, Loucas Foulas, Giorgos Georgiou, Francisco Guerreiro, Bernard Guetta, Rasa Juknevičienė, Sandra Kalniete, Andrius Kubilius, Sergey Lagodinsky, David Lega, Sven Mikser, Francisco José Millán Mon, Alessandra Moretti, Demetris Papadakis, Kostas Papadakis, Tonino Picula, Wolfram Pirchner, René Repasi, Thijs Reuten, Mounir Satouri, Jordi Solé, Tineke Strik, Nacho Sánchez Amor, Dominik Tarczyński, Lucia Vuolo, Mick Wallace, Charlie Weimers, Isabel Wiseler Lima, Salima Yenbou and João Albuquerque, Milan Brglez, Mónica Silvana González, Christophe Grudler, Georgios Kyrtos, Maria Veronica Rossi (pursuant to Rule 209(7)).

## SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the Committee on Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Welcomes the signature of the new Partnership agreement with the Members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and its regional protocols that will establish an overarching legal framework over the next twenty years and provide an unprecedented regional focus on African, Caribbean and Pacific countries;
2. Highlights the importance of political dialogue as an integral part of the partnership between the EU and the ACP countries, totalling 105 states, accounting for one-fifth of the world's population and more than half of the seats at the United Nations General Assembly; points to the geopolitical value of the Samoa Agreement; highlights the Joint Statement of 30 November 2023 of the OACPS and the EU for COP 28 as a clear example of cooperation on common interests and priorities in multilateral forums;
3. Recalls the importance of joining forces with ACP countries and establishing win-win partnerships of equals in the six priority areas of human rights, democracy and governance, peace and security, human and social development, inclusive, sustainable economic growth and development, environmental sustainability and climate change, and migration and mobility; underlines the large potential of the EU Global Gateway initiative and calls for further deepening of the partnership with ACP countries in this regard;
4. Underlines that the cornerstone of a strengthened ACP-EU political partnership needs to be the multilateral rules-based order and the promotion of peace, security and territorial integrity worldwide; welcomes the inclusion of the peace and security chapter among the six strategic priorities; notes that the Agreement has a potential to further cooperation in new areas ranging from piracy or financing of terrorism, to cybercrime;
5. Calls for an integrated approach to conflicts and crisis linking humanitarian, development, peace and security efforts at all stages;
6. Underlines the need for continued political dialogue between the EU and each of the partner states and regions as a key component of the respective partnerships, particularly amidst growing global uncertainty, direct attacks on democratic values, and geopolitical challenges; calls on the Parties to strengthen their cooperation in multilateral organisations, to fully support the work of the UN Human Rights Council and strive to take joint initiatives; encourages the Member States to engage regularly at ministerial level with the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific states;
7. Welcomes the parties' commitment to democracy but underlines that a number of ACP countries still fail to guarantee media freedom and the integrity of electoral processes;
8. Welcomes the Parties' commitment to enhancing cooperation on migration and mobility, stresses their commitment to ensuring respect for the dignity of all refugees and migrants and protection of their human rights, also in countries of transit; strongly supports their decision to pursue efforts to adopt effective integration policies for those who reside

legally in their territories; recognises the need to enhance cooperation to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacements in full respect of international law;

9. Highlights the Parties commitment to apply in full the principle of non-discrimination; urges the Parties also to avoid any discrimination based on sexual orientation and to put an end to the criminalisation and punishment, including death penalty, of LGBTI people; notes that gender equality and women's economic empowerment must be mainstreamed throughout the implementation of the Samoa Agreement; supports the commitments to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for all people, especially girls and young women; calls for the EU institutions to speed up the implementation of the Gender Action Plan III in ACP countries;
10. Welcomes the Parties' commitment to social dialogue and to the promotion and effective implementation of the internationally recognised core labour standards, as defined by the relevant ILO conventions and protocols; considers it highly important that the Parties adhere to their obligations as members of the ILO and their commitments under the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights; calls on the EU to continuously engage with ACP partners for the ratification and implementation of all the ILO fundamental conventions;
11. Insists that it is necessary to strengthen parliamentary diplomacy with partners in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific in order to contribute to the EU's objective of strengthening relations with ACP partners to address common geopolitical, economic, social and environmental challenges; welcomes that parliamentary diplomacy is recognised as a pillar of the Partnership and is reinforced by the establishment of three regional parliamentary assemblies that will allow for in-depth debates on shared region-specific matters;
12. Welcomes the Commission's preparation of a "new strategic approach to the partnership with Africa" in order to foster security, peace and lasting prosperity; underlines the importance of implementing the commitments of the EU-African Union summit of February 2022 to deepen cooperation on initiatives of shared interest and for the EU to meet the needs of partner countries in Africa; emphasises that the EU should pursue geographical priorities on a bilateral as well as regional level, focusing on a revision of the regional strategies for the Sahel and an effective implementation of the strategy for the Gulf of Guinea, the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa; expresses concern over the increased footprint of the Wagner Group and the growing instability in the Sahel, which undermines the security and stability of the countries concerned and which has profound regional and international consequences; takes the view that EU policy as regards the Sahel has not produced expected results and takes note of the VP/HR's announcement about revising the EU's strategy with regard to the Sahel.
13. Calls for the strengthening of the Caribbean-EU partnership based on the Declaration of the EU-CELAC Summit of July 2023; is concerned about the increase in violence, organised crime and drug trafficking in the Caribbean, calls for a substantial increase in bi-regional cooperation under this Agreement to fight against these threats;
14. Highlights the importance of the Pacific region amid regional geostrategic competition;

underlines that preserving peace, stability and the freedom of navigation in the Pacific region remains of critical importance to the interests of the EU and its Member States; highlights that resources need to be pooled to effectively enhance the EU's political footprint and assert the EU as a reliable and strategic partner in the Pacific; calls to build strategic coalitions with the Pacific states on a number of global issues, in particular as regards climate change, ocean governance, peace and security; encourages the Member States to engage annually at ministerial level with Pacific island countries;

15. Calls for the swift signature and ratification of the Agreement by all parties, recalls that countries that do not sign the Agreement will not participate in its political and decision making bodies; highlights that a new stakeholders engagement mechanism has been created to strengthen the voice of civil society in decision-making; calls for the Agreement's comprehensive implementation in the face of growing geopolitical instability and global challenges;
16. Calls on the Commission and the EEAS to strengthen strategic communication on the EU's activities within the Partnership framework.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

<b>Date adopted</b>	19.3.2024
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+ : 14 - : 1 0 : 4
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Barry Andrews, Stéphane Bijoux, Dominique Bilde, Mercedes Bresso, Catherine Chabaud, Ryszard Czarnecki, Mónica Silvana González, Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana, György Hölvényi, Rasa Juknevičienė, Beata Kempa, Christian Sagartz, François Thiollet, Tomas Tobé, Miguel Urbán Crespo, Bernhard Zimniok
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Caroline Roose, Carlos Zorrinho
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Sven Simon

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

14	+
PPE	György Hölvényi, Rasa Juknevičienė, Christian Sagartz, Sven Simon, Tomas Tobé
Renew	Barry Andrews, Stéphane Bijoux, Catherine Chabaud
S&D	Mercedes Bresso, Mónica Silvana González, Carlos Zorrinho
Verts/ALE	Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana, Caroline Roose, François Thiollet

1	-
ID	Bernhard Zimniok

4	0
ECR	Ryszard Czarnecki, Beata Kempa
ID	Dominique Bilde
The Left	Miguel Urbán Crespo

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention