

Groupe des Etats d'Afrique
des Caraïbes et du Pacifique
(Groupe ACP)



African, Caribbean and
Pacific Group of States
(ACP Group)

REFERENCE **ACP/25/012/14/mgf**
[Final Version]

Brussels, 12 December 2014

**DECISIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND DECLARATION
OF THE 100th SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS HELD IN BRUSSELS (BELGIUM)
FROM 9th TO 12th DECEMBER 2014**

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ON THE ERUPTION OF THE VOLCANO OF FOGO IN CABO VERDE

2014

DECISIONS No.1/C/14
OF THE 100th SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FROM 9 TO 12 DECEMBER 2014

APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ACP GROUP *209*

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 9 to 12 December 2014,

HAVING REGARD TO the Georgetown Agreement creating the ACP Group;

HAVING REGARD TO the Staff Regulations of the ACP Secretariat;

HAVING REGARD TO Decisions 2 and 3 of the 99th Session of the Council of Ministers held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 16th to 18th June 2014 relating, respectively, to the modalities and the timetable for appointing the Secretary-General and Assistant Secretaries-General of the ACP Group;

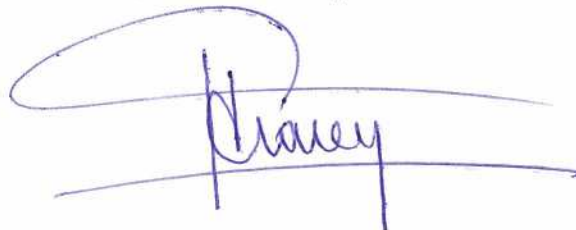
CONSIDERING that the term of office of the current Secretary-General expires on 28th February 2015;

HAVING EXAMINED the report of the Special Bureau of Council of Ministers dated 9th December 2014;

HEREBY DECIDES:

1. To appoint **Dr. Patrick Ignatius Gomes (Guyana)** as Secretary-General of the ACP Group for a period of 5 years, with effect from 1st March 2015;
2. That the term of office of **Dr. Patrick Ignatius Gomes** shall be governed by the Georgetown Agreement and any other relevant text adopted by the competent organs of the ACP Group. *209*

Done at Brussels, 12 December 2014



H.E. Mr. Mohamed DIARE
Minister of State in Charge of Economy
and Finance of the Republic of Guinea
President of the ACP Council of Ministers

DECISIONS No.2/C/14
OF THE 100th SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FROM 9 TO 12 DECEMBER 2014

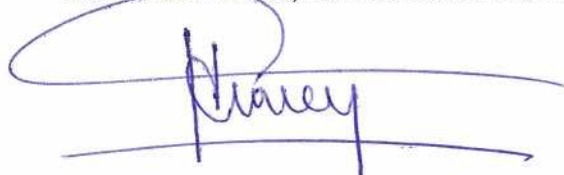
**THE ACP ISSUES PAPER ON THE LIMA CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE
(COP20)**

209

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 9 to 12 December 2014,
- A. **RECOGNISING** the adverse impacts of climate change on our planet's natural ecosystems and the living conditions of billions of people, as well as its potential threat on the very survival of ACP Member States;
- B. **NOTING** with grave concern the latest findings in the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC);
- C. **REAFFIRMING** our commitment to contribute to a successful outcome of the Lima Climate Change Conference that adequately addresses the concerns of the ACP Member States;
- D. **TAKING INTO ACCOUNT** the Report of the Committee of Ambassadors;
 - 1. **Welcomes** the outcome of the ACP Consultative Meeting in Preparation for Lima Climate Change Conference (COP 20); and
 - 2. **Endorses** the ACP Issues Paper on the Lima Climate Change Conference;
 - 3. **Mandates** the Committee of Ambassadors to continue its efforts to ensure that ACP Member States are adequately prepared for COP 21 in Paris, with a view to enhancing the effective participation of ACP in order to contribute to an ambitious and equitable 2015 Agreement. 209

Done at Brussels, 12 December 2014



H. E. Mr. Mohamed DIARE
Minister of State in Charge of Economy
and Finance of the Republic of Guinea
President of the ACP Council of Ministers

DECISION No.3/C/14
OF THE 100TH SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FROM 9 TO 12 DECEMBER 2014

ACP SECRETARIAT'S BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2015

2014

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 9 to 12 December 2014,

HAVING REGARD TO the provisions of the Georgetown Agreement, in particular Article 27, and Articles 5 and 6 of the Financial Regulations of the Secretariat of the ACP Group;

HAVING EXAMINED the ACP Secretariat's draft budget for 2015 [**Document ACP/45/027/14 Rev.7**] as recommended by the Committee of Ambassadors;

NOTING the observations and recommendations made by the Council of Ministers;

HEREBY DECIDES to adopt the ACP Secretariat's Budget for 2015 with a total expenditure amounting to €15,399,171. The contributions to the ACP Secretariat budget will be as follows:

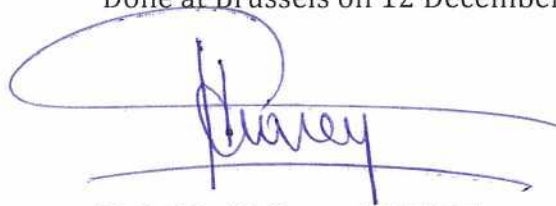
- | | | |
|--|-------------------|---------|
| - From Member States, (of which) | €7,952,613 | (51.6%) |
| • €7,209,971 Member States Contribution | | |
| • €603,198 part of the contributions from Cuba and Sudan which will be financed from Arrears in contribution | | |
| • €139,444 representing average interest from Arrears in Contribution from 2011 to 2013 | | |



- European Development Fund (EDF) Contributions	€6,100,000	(39.6%)
- Taxes levied on the emoluments of the Secretariat Staff	€1,346,558	(8.8%)
Total	€15,399,171	

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Done at Brussels on 12 December 2014



H. E. Mr. Mohamed DIARE
Minister of State in Charge of Economy
and Finance of the Republic of Guinea
President of the ACP Council of Ministers

DECISION No.4/C/14
OF THE 100TH SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FROM 9 TO 12 DECEMBER 2014

ENDORSEMENT OF THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2013

209

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, Belgium from 9 to 12 December 2014,

HAVING REGARD TO Article 18 (h) of the Financial Regulations of the Secretariat of the ACP Group [**Document ACP/45/018/03 Rev. 4**];

CONSIDERING THAT The External Auditor has certified that the Secretariat's accounts for 2013 give a "*true and fair view of the ACP Group of States' Secretariat's assets, liabilities and financial position in accordance with its financial rules*";

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

1. **Approve** the External Auditor's report for financial year ended 31st December 2013; and
2. **Grant discharge** to the Authorizing Officer for financial year 2013. 209

Done at Brussels on 12 December 2014



H. E. Mr. Mohamed DIARE
Minister of State in Charge of Economy
and Finance of the Republic of Guinea
President of the ACP Council of Ministers

DECISION No.5/C/14
OF THE 100TH SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FROM 9 TO 12 DECEMBER 2014

STATUS OF ARRIERS ON CONTRIBUTIONS BY ACP MEMBER STATES

209

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 9 to 12 December 2014,

CONCERNED by the fact that some Member States have not paid their full contributions to the ACP Secretariat for the 2014 budget year, adding to accumulated arrears, and the effect that this has on the organization's ability to function optimally;

HEREBY LAUNCH AN appeal to all member states that have outstanding contributions to regularize their situation with immediate effect. 209

Done at Brussels on 12 December 2014



H. E. Mr. Mohamed DIARE
Minister of State in Charge of Economy
and Finance of the Republic of Guinea
President of the ACP Council of Ministers

DECISION No.6/C/14
OF THE 100TH SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FROM 09 TO 12 DECEMBER 2014

REVIEW OF NEED AND RELEVANCE OF THE ACP GENEVA OFFICE

eog

The ACP Council of Ministers,


- Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 9 to 12 December 2014,

HAVING REGARD to the discussion of the ACP Secretariat Budget for Financial Year 2015 [ACP/45/027/14 Rev. 7];

HEREBY DECIDES:

To set up a Working Group made up of members of the Committee of Ambassadors, to review the need and relevance of the ACP Geneva Office in the light of the increasing costs of its operation. eog

Done at Brussels on 12 December 2014



H. E. Mr. Mohamed DIARE
Minister of State in Charge of Economy
and Finance of the Republic of Guinea
President of the ACP Council of Ministers

DECISION No.7/C/14

OF THE 100TH SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FROM 09 TO 12 DECEMBER 2014

REVISED ORGANOGRAM OF THE ACP SECRETARIAT *EOG*

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 9 to 12 December 2014,

HAVING REGARD to the discussion of the ACP Secretariat Budget for Financial Year 2015 [ACP/45/027/14 Rev. 7];

CONSIDERING the fact that following the departure on retirement of the occupant of the post on 31st March 2014, the ACP Secretariat has acquired an automated telephone system, thereby invalidating the need for a telephone operator;

HEREBY DECIDES:

To abolish the post of telephone operator from the Organigram of the ACP Secretariat. *EOG*

Done at Brussels on 12 December 2014



H. E. Mr. Mohamed DIARE
Minister of State in Charge of Economy
and Finance of the Republic of Guinea
President of the ACP Council of Ministers

**DECISION No.8/C/14
OF THE 100TH SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FROM 9 TO 12 DECEMBER 2014**

POST OF ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST: 209

The ACP Council of Ministers,

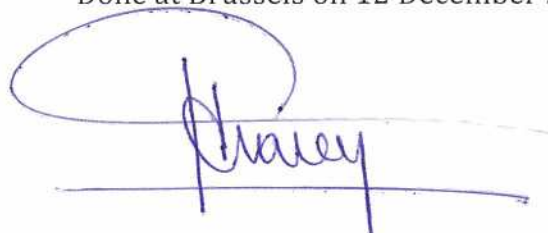
- Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 09 to 12 December 2014,

HAVING REGARD to the discussion of the ACP Secretariat Budget for Financial Year 2015 [ACP/45/027/14 Rev. 7];

HEREBY DECIDES:

That the position of the Administrative Analyst should be removed from the Organigram and have the duties performed by an existing staff member as additional responsibility. 209

Done at Brussels on 12 December 2014



H. E. Mr. Mohamed DIARE
Minister of State in Charge of Economy
and Finance of the Republic of Guinea
President of the ACP Council of Ministers

DECISION No.9/C/14
OF THE 100th SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FROM 9 TO 12 DECEMBER 2014

ACP PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY *ese*

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 9 to 12 December 2014;
- A. **HAVING REGARD** to the Strategic Framework for ACP Private Sector Development adopted in May 2014 [ACP/85/004/14 Final];
- B. **HAVING REGARD** to Decision No. 6/XCIX/14 adopted by the ACP Council of Ministers during its 99th session in Nairobi, Kenya on 18 June 2014, on the Centre for the Development of Enterprise;
- C. **HAVING REGARD** to Decision No. 7/XCIX/14 adopted by the ACP Council of Ministers during its 99th session held in Nairobi, Kenya, on 18 June 2014, on the joint ACP-EU Cooperation Framework for Private Sector Development in ACP countries;
- D. **RECALLING** the crucial role that the private sector plays in the economic and social development of ACP States and regions;
- E. **HAVING EXAMINED** the report of the Committee of Ambassadors on the ACP Strategy for ACP Private Sector Development;

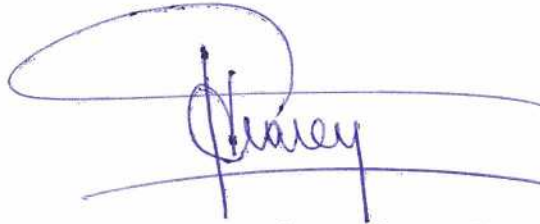
HEREBY DECIDES:

1. To approve the ACP Strategy for ACP Private Sector Development [ACP/85/070/14]; and,



2. **To invite** the Committee of Ambassadors to take all the necessary steps to implement the strategy in question with the collaboration of the stakeholders, particularly Regional Economic Communities and their specialised structures, regional and national intermediary organisations and development partners, notably the European Union; *eoq*

Done at Brussels on 12 December 2014



H. E. Mr. Mohamed DIARE
Minister of State in Charge of Economy
and Finance of the Republic of Guinea
President of the ACP Council of Ministers

DECISION No.10/C/14
OF THE 100th SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FROM 9 TO 12 DECEMBER 2014

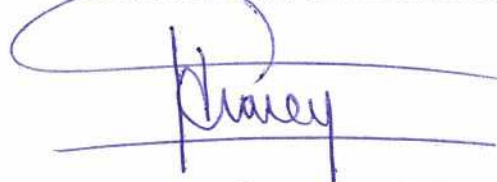
**THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SMALL ISLAND
DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS)** *209*

The ACP Council of Ministers,

Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 9th to 12th December 2014,

- A. RECALLING** the decision made by the Committee of Ambassadors at its 871st meeting, held on 27th March 2014, mandating the Ad-hoc Working Group (AWG) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, to develop an ACP Declaration on the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
- B. RECOGNIZING** the persistent development challenges and unique vulnerabilities facing Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
- C. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT** the Report of the Committee of Ambassadors;
1. **Welcomes** the ACP Secretariat Note on the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS); and
 2. **Approves** the recommendations contained therein;
 3. **MANDATES** the Committee of Ambassadors to actively monitor the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway in various ACP activities while taking into account the conclusions arising from up-coming major global conferences including the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Post 2015 Development Agenda, the Paris Climate Change Conference (COP21) and any others of direct relevance to the sustainable development of ACP Member States. *esa*

Done at Brussels on 12 December 2014



H. E. Mr. Mohamed DIARE
Minister of State in Charge of Economy
and Finance of the Republic of Guinea
President of the ACP Council of Ministers

**DECISIONS No.11/C/14
OF THE 100th SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FROM 9 TO 12 DECEMBER 2014**

THE FUTURE PERSPECTIVES OF THE ACP GROUP

esa

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 9 to 12 December 2014,

RECALLING the objectives of the Georgetown Agreement, including consolidating and strengthening the solidarity of the ACP Group;

RECALLING the Decision No.4/XCII/10 of the 92nd Session of the ACP Council of Ministers on 10th November 2010, which established the Ambassadorial Working Group on Future Perspectives (WGFP) with the mandate to carry out a process of reflection on how “to maintain and strengthen unity and solidarity within the ACP Group”;

HAVING CONSIDERED the report of the Ambassadorial Working Group on the Future Perspectives of the ACP Group;

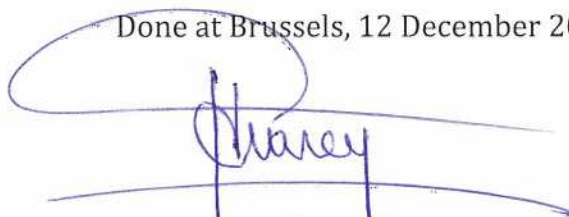
NOTING that the Ambassadorial Working Group on the Future Perspectives has identified Strategic Policy Domains which take account of the ACP Group as a Facilitator and Knowledge Hub for South-South & Triangular Cooperation as a modality in Development Finance Cooperation and as a platform for diversified partnerships with the Global South;

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

1. **Approve** the Final Report of the Ambassadorial Working Group on the Future Perspectives of the ACP Group;
2. **Mandate** the Committee of Ambassadors to forward the report and observations made by the Council of Ministers to the ACP Eminent Person Group (EPG);

esa

Done at Brussels, 12 December 2014



**H. E. Mr. Mohamed DIARE
Minister of State in Charge of Economy
and Finance of the Republic of Guinea
President of the ACP Council of Ministers**

DECISIONS No.12/C/14
OF THE 100th SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FROM 9 TO 12 DECEMBER 2014

ACP EMINENT PERSONS GROUP (EPG)

esa

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 9 to 12 December 2014,

RECALLING the objectives of the Georgetown Agreement, including consolidating and strengthening the solidarity of the ACP Group;

RECALLING Decision No. 2/XCVI/12 of the ACP Council of Ministers, taken in Malabo in December 2012 endorsed the Secretary-General's initiative to form an Eminent Persons Group (EPG) to widen and deepen reflections on the future of the ACP Group in its regions and the South;

RECALLING that the mandate of the EPG is to envision the future of the ACP Group in a changing and challenging global environment; to examine options for reform to shape the ACP Group as a contemporary organisation that is responsive to the aspirations and expectations of the citizens of its member states; and to hone its decision-making bodies and its Secretariat into a stronger more effective framework of cooperation and partnership;

WHEREAS the EPG was to report to the Council of Ministers and the Summit of Heads of State and Government at the end of its mandate in 2014, and **WHEREAS** the Summit of the Heads of State and Government did not take place in 2014;

HAVING CONSIDERED the progress report of the Eminent Persons Group (*Doc ACP/028/77/14.*);

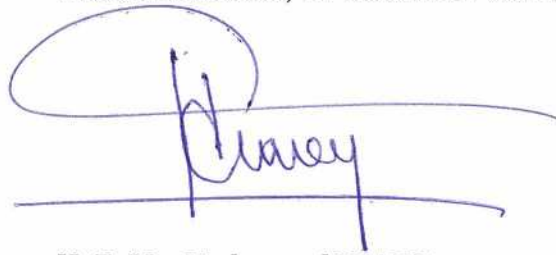
HEREBY DECIDES TO:

1. **Commend** the work of the Eminent Persons Group under the Chairmanship of Chief Olusegun OBASANJO;
2. **Take Note** of the Progress Report of the Eminent Persons Group; *esa*



3. **Instruct** the Secretary-General to ensure that the Report of the Ambassadorial Working Group on the Future Perspectives of the ACP Group is forwarded to the Eminent Persons Group. *2014*

Done at Brussels, 12 December 2014

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Diare', is written over two horizontal lines. The signature is stylized and includes a large loop at the top.

H. E. Mr. Mohamed DIARE
Minister of State in Charge of Economy
and Finance of the Republic of Guinea
President of the ACP Council of Ministers

RESOLUTIONS *2014*

RESOLUTIONS ON THE 100TH SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACP COMMODITIES SECTOR (DECEMBER 2014)

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 9 to 12 December 2014,

RECALLING the “Sipopo Declaration” on “The Future of the ACP Group in a Changing World: Challenges and Opportunities”, which marked the successful conclusion of the 7th Summit of ACP Heads of State and Government, in Sipopo, Equatorial Guinea, on 13 and 14 December 2012;

RECALLING the resolutions on sugar, cotton and bananas adopted by the 99th session of the ACP Council of Ministers held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 16 to 18 June 2014;

HAVING REGARD TO the end of the various protocols on commodities which served as a framework for trade relations between the European Union and the ACP Group for over four decades;

RECALLING the importance of commodities to the economies of ACP countries in respect of their share of total exports in those countries and in combating poverty in their contribution to combating poverty_rural areas;

HAVING REGARD TO the risks inherent to the vulnerability of speculation on the agricultural commodities, mining or mineral markets, given the extreme volatility of global prices,

CONVINCED that diversification in its two dimensions (horizontal and vertical) will help reduce ACP countries’ heavy dependence on commodities;

AWARE of the urgency of strengthening the processing of commodities to meet the imperatives for better integration by ACP countries in global trade;

BUILDING ON the recommendations of the Forum on the New Approach of the ACP Commodities Sector held in Brussels on 18 November 2014;

CALLS ON the ACP Secretariat, in its strategic “All ACP” vision, in collaboration with the EU Commission and other development partners, to identify and design programmes to:

- a) improve competitiveness of ACP Countries by modernising national and regional operating systems;
- b) reduce the cost of the factors of production;

est

- c) build ACP capacity to manage quality in correlation with standards set by import markets and supranational organizations (Codex Alimentarius, FAO).
- d) diversify exports by promoting value-added products.

URGES the ACP Secretariat in collaboration with other development partners to establish a special non-renewable commodities FUND dedicated to assist in their diversification of the national economy and investments in sectors with high development potential, for the benefit of SMEs and local populations

INVITES the European Union to support the implementation of the plan of action proposed by the Forum on the New Approach of the ACP Commodities Sector;

INVITES the European Union again, in its cooperation with ACP countries, to honour its commitments in respect of the various commodities sectors including sugar, bananas, cotton, kava and cashew nuts;

URGES the European Commission and the ACP Secretariat, yet again, to initiate discussions on ways of developing and financing a multiannual financial programme, in accordance with the recommendation of the Forum on the New Approach of the ACP Commodities Sector.

***ENCOURAGES** the Committee of Ambassadors to continue its reflections on the role that commodities play in the development of the ACP countries and to take any initiative required to increase cooperation among ACP States in the commodities sector within the framework of the 11th EDF.*

INSTRUCTS the President of the ACP Council of Ministers to forward this resolution to the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Congress and Senate of the United States of America, and the Director-General of the WTO.

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Brussels, 12 December 2014

SUGAR

2014

HAVING REGARD to the Resolution on Sugar adopted by the 99th session of the ACP Council of Ministers held in Nairobi, Kenya, from June 2014;

NOTING that with the end of the EU sugar and isoglucose quotas in September 2017 the ACP would lose its preferential market share as a result of open competition among ACP, EU and third country;

NOTING the December 2014 report by the European Commission Services entitled "Prospects for Agricultural Markets and Income in the EU 2014/2022" which concludes that following the abolition of sugar and isoglucose quotas in 2017:

1. the EU sugar price is expected to decline and approach the world market price and that despite the price decrease, production is expected to increase by 2 % as compared to the years before quota abolition, while imports would decrease.
2. the increasing use of isoglucose to slightly over 10 % of total sweetener use is expected to push sugar consumption down.

DEEPLY CONCERNED with the recent sharp decline in EU sugar prices well before the end of the quotas, as confirmed by the Commission report referred to above, that in the EU, prices started to decline from highs in the summer of 2013 and are projected to fall below 500 EUR/t for white sugar by the end of 2014;

NOTING FURTHER that the Commission report underlines that the most prominent effect of the EU sugar reform was to bring closer alignment of the EU white sugar price with the world market price thereby closing current price gap of over 200 EUR/t to about 50 EUR/t. resulting in a domestic price only slightly above 400 EUR/t by 2019.

RECALLING that the real value of the preference for the ACP Sugar suppliers which was the difference between the Sugar prices on the EU market, and those obtainable on the world market and which is likely to be reduced by the CAP reform as confirmed by the recent Commission report, could be further eroded by WTO negotiations not only by significant tariff reductions but also by reductions in domestic support and by constraints on subsidized exports;



NOTING that the ACP Ministerial Meeting in Nairobi called for a review of the economic consequences on ACP sugar suppliers of the current and forecast reduction in EU prices for sugar;

NOTING that Article 13.3 of Council Regulation 1528/2007 and other relevant provisions in respective EPAs provide for Sugar specific safeguard measures applicable to non LDC ACP countries post 30th September 2015 ;

CONCERNED that in its negotiations of FTAs with third parties, the EU has, provided certain concessions relating to the import of sugar which further erodes the preferences the ACP countries enjoy on the EU market;

DEEPLY CONCERNED that a total Euro94.5 million has been removed from the indicative amount of EURO 1,244 million under the DCI Accompanying Measures for Sugar Protocol (AMSP) countries (2007-2013) due to political situation (Art. 96) or problems of absorption capacity.

CONCERNED that any mandatory COOL (Country of origin labelling) requirement in the sugar sector would represent a major non technical barrier to ACP sugar trade;

NOTING the stated position of the EU to take into account development cooperation objectives in trade and other related policies in pursuit of policy coherence for development;

RECOGNIZING the significant positive technical results attained so far under the first phase of the ACP Sugar Research Programme in terms of deepening academic knowledge, provision of the required infrastructure, new infrastructures, development and capacity building, networking and partnerships for research and development as well as prospects for new industrial clusters based on the valorisation of new components extracted from the Sugar Cane biomass; and

NOTING the positive response to the call for project proposals received from ACP research centres and their partners which meet both the expectations of the relevant ACP States for enhancing competitiveness, and the broad guidelines established by the EU in economic and social matters.

1. **Calls on** the European Union and the European Commission to:

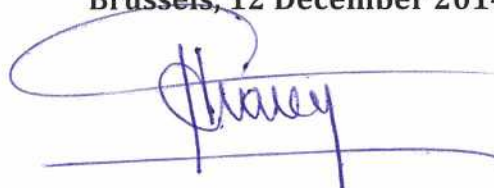
- **ensure** that its commitment in respect of policy coherence between trade, agriculture and development policies is fully respected in all decision making processes, particularly on sugar related issues;



- **commit** to an urgent review on the impact of the EU sugar reform and the earlier than anticipated rapid decline in EU sugar prices on the ACP Sugar Supplying States and to take corrective measures including through the reinstatement of the 94.5 Million Euros shortfall under AMSP;
 - **rescind** the sugar specific safeguard provisions applicable post September 2015 in the respective EPAs and to exclude such provisions in any upcoming sugar import implementation regulation resulting from the recent CAP agreement;
 - **display** flexibility in implementing the AMSP to allow full utilisation of allocated resources through reallocation amongst beneficiary countries;
 - **consider** reallocating such funds which may be decommitted by any beneficiary in respect of any uncompleted project to other projects proposed by the beneficiary;
 - **consider** granting new accompanying support in view of the new challenges which the ACP Sugar Supplying States are likely to face with the end of the EU quotas in 2017;
 - **ensure** that ACP preferences are not eroded as a result of market access concessions in its *FTA* negotiations and to ensure that they are maintained to the maximum extent possible in the WTO negotiations;
 - **ascertain** that "COOL" requirement is not mandatorily applied to the sugar ;
 - **provide** adequate funds for a new Sugar Research and Innovation Programme on the basis of proposals made by the ACP research centres and their partners;
2. **Instructs** the President of the Council of Ministers to forward this resolution to the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, and the European Parliament.



Brussels, 12 December 2014



BANANAS



HAVING REGARD to the Geneva Agreement on Trade in Bananas concluded in Geneva on 15 December 2009, between the European Union (EU) and some Latin American countries, and with the United States of America;

HAVING REGARD to the Regulation of the European Parliament and EU Council establishing the Banana Accompanying Measures (BAM), adopted on 13 December 2011, which confirms the allocation of 190 million euros for the implementation of these measures, as well as the promised allocation of an additional €10 million;

RECALLING with interest that the ACP countries concerned by the BAM have all submitted National Adaptation Strategies (NAS) approved by the European Union, and that the Multiannual Support Strategies, which represent the BAM contribution to the implementation of the NAS, have in turn been approved for all the selected countries;

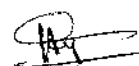
NOTING that information sharing has been initiated between the European Commission and the various stakeholders involved in actions linked to the BAM;

DEEPLY CONCERNED at the delay by the European Commission in disbursing the resources allocated for setting up the BAM, thereby undermining the expected effectiveness of these measures;

RECALLING the commitment made by Commissioner Karel De Gucht in his letter to the ACP Coordinating Minister for Bananas, dated 15 December 2009, to allocate additional budget support of 10 million euros for ACP banana-producing countries;

CONCERNED about the continuation of the diversification policy for the banana sector in the various banana-producing ACP countries;

RECALLING that the last Paragraph of Article 1, line 2, of the Regulation (EU) N°1341/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council which established the BAM, provides that "the BAM Programme and the progress made by the countries concerned shall be the subject of an assessment, which shall include recommendations on any to be taken and the nature thereof", and that this *rendez-vous* clause echoes the idea contained in the European Commission's letter of 15 December 2009 to the Minister/ACP Spokesman for Bananas in the framework of the arrangements for the conclusion of the Geneva Agreement on Trade in Bananas of December 2009, and formalised in the revised Cotonou Agreement of 2010, for all aid programmes set up to address the problem of preference erosion;



CONCERNED by the continued proliferation of trade agreements linking the European Commission to rival countries or regions of the ACP banana-producing countries and the consequences of such agreements on the exports of ACP banana-exporting countries;

DEEPLY CONCERNED by the alarming information circulated on the Panama disease detected in Mozambique in November 2013;

ENCOURAGES the European Union, once again, to provide support for its researchers so as to slow down the Panama disease as much as possible;

UNDERSCORING the need to address value-addition and support the formulation and implementation of diversification strategies in the ACP commodity sector;

1. **Calls on** the European Union to envisage a more inclusive approach to information-sharing among all the beneficiary countries and their representatives in Brussels, especially regarding the European Union's objectively-verifiable indicators for the implementation of the BAM;
2. **Further calls on** the European Union, in this regard, to make use of the facilities and exceptions provided for by its budgetary procedures and thereby facilitate the absorption of resources by the beneficiaries;
3. **Encourages** ACP banana-producing countries to improve their consultations and exchange of information on the implementation of the BAM in the respective countries with the diplomatic missions in Brussels and Geneva ;
4. **Reiterates** to the European Union the need to refrain from adopting a definitive position on future support to the ACP banana sector before the results of the implementation of the BAM are known;
5. **Invites** the Working Group on Bananas, in conjunction with the ACP Secretariat, to quickly take stock of the provision of the BAM resources in the various beneficiary countries and to report to the next Council session;
6. **Reiterates** the need to review the situation in the ACP banana sector, given the new risks to competitiveness as represented by the additional trade benefits proposed by the European Commission to third countries that are rivals of the ACP banana-producing countries, since the review of the developments on the banana market is part of the package of the Geneva Agreement on Trade in Bananas, as particularly reflected in the letter sent by the two European Commissioners to the ACP Ministerial spokesman on Bananas;



7. **Invites** the European Commission and the ACP Secretariat to begin discussions to include the issue of bananas among the priority areas in the framework of the programming of the 11th EDF ;
8. **Urges** the ACP Secretariat to pay adequate attention to the issue of bananas in the support provided to banana-producing Member States; and
9. **Instructs** the President of the Council of Ministers to forward this resolution to the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, EU Member States, and the European Commission.
10. **Calls on** the EU to make available to the ACP banana-producing countries, the additional budget support of 10 million euros promised by the European Commission in the framework of the implementation of the provisions of the December 2009 Agreement on Trade in Bananas.

esa

Brussels, 12 December 2014



COTTON

ESA

HAVING REGARD to the European Parliament's vote on, and approval of, the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and the major principles of the European Commission's proposals, particularly the application of a ceiling for payments that does not meet the ACP Group's demand for a shift from a 65% decoupling to a 100% decoupling of internal support granted to European Union cotton farmers;

HAVING REGARD to the new Farm Bill passed by the United States Senate on 21 June 2012, adopted by President Obama on 7 February 2014 and, which maintains stabilization instruments for cotton, which will develop a support system that will cause even greater trade distortions in favour of American cotton producers than the current distorting subsidies that run counter to WTO rules;

WISHING to implement the commitment made by all WTO members in Hong Kong, China, in 2005, to address the cotton dossier "ambitiously, expeditiously and specifically";

REITERATING ITS COMMENDATION of the continued efforts of the representatives of cotton-producing and ACP countries to get the European Union to apply a 100% decoupling to domestic subsidies for EU cotton production, using the opportunity offered by the current reform of the EU common agricultural policy, as well as action undertaken in respect of the authorities of the United States of America, in order to take advantage of the current reform of the Farm Bill to bring their support for the cotton sector into complete conformity with the WTO rules and to abolish distortive subsidies granted to their cotton farmers;

NOTING with satisfaction, the organisation of a series of consultations under the WTO Director-General's Consultative Framework Mechanism for Cotton facilitating an update on the support provided to the cotton sector, as called for in the Hong Kong mandate (China);

CONCERNED at the steady decline in the disbursement of funds for cotton which is constantly highlighted by C4 within the WTO Director-General's Consultative Framework Mechanism for Cotton;

COMMENDS AND ENCOURAGES the increase noted in the number of beneficiaries of development aid for cotton;



RECALLING the ambition expressed by the European Union and the African cotton-producing countries of the ACP Group when concluding the EU–Africa Partnership for the Development of the Cotton Sector in Paris, on 6 July 2004, this ambition having been reiterated in the Action Framework for the European Union-Africa Cotton Partnership agreed in 2009;

REITERATING ITS COMMENDATION of the continued efforts of cotton-producing countries to rebuild the cotton sector, including by adopting regional and national strategies to streamline the sustainable development of this sector and its contribution to the economic stability of States, as well as to rural development and food security;

CONVINCED of the urgent need to promote the processing of cotton using local and industrial methods in the producing countries and regions;

COMMENDING, once again, the new C-4 interim proposal on cotton of **24 October 2013** in the framework of the WTO negotiations, with a view to finding an agreement acceptable to all WTO members, while preserving the specificity of treating cotton ambitiously, expeditiously and specifically; and

ACKNOWLEDGING the Ministerial decision on cotton taken at the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference, which provides a basis on which to work towards the definitive resolution of the cotton issue;

1. **Invites** the WTO members to translate into reality the results of the Ministerial Conference in Bali with a view to reaching agreement on WTO modalities, including for cotton;
2. **Reiterates the call to** the European Union to ensure ambitious treatment for cotton by applying a 100% decoupling of support for European cotton producers, taking into account the fact that the average decoupling rate in the agriculture sector is set at 90%;
3. **Urges** the Authorities of the United States of America, once again, to seize the opportunity of the Farm Bill reform to bring the cotton support granted to their farmers into complete conformity with the WTO rules by abolishing any measures which could cause even further distortion in the international cotton market;
4. **Encourages** the WTO Director-General to continue the series of meetings of the Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton and again calls on aid providers to better coordinate their interventions and further improve information sharing and the level of support to be granted to the cotton sector;
5. **Undertakes** to carry out all and any high-level action required to bring about a change in the position of the European Commission and the United States in the direction desired by the ACP Group, notably the complete removal of all cotton subsidies;



6. **Encourages** the ACP Secretariat and the members of the Group as a whole, to take all the necessary steps in respect of relevant ACP, European and American bodies;
7. **Undertakes** to continue working together with the Cotton Group at the WTO to find a definitive solution to the commercial aspect of the cotton dossier and to coordinate its actions with COS-Cotton for the development of the cotton sector in ACP countries;
8. **Calls** for the support of bilateral and multilateral partners in the adoption and implementation of cotton policies whose primary objectives would be the development of cotton production, manufacturing and enhanced value-added at national, regional and continental level, and the transfer or acquisition of the necessary technologies and
9. **Invites** the European Commission and the ACP Secretariat to facilitate continued support for the inclusion of cotton among the priority sectors in the programming of the 11th EDF;
10. **Instructs** the President of the ACP Council of Ministers to forward this resolution to the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Congress and Senate of the United States of America, and the Director-General of the WTO. *esa*

Brussels, 12 December 2014



RESOLUTION
OF THE 100th SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS (BELGIUM) FROM 9th TO 12th DECEMBER 2014

ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS (EPAS)

esa

The ACP Council of Ministers, assert

Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 9th to 12th December 2014,

- A. RECALLING** that the African Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) and European Union (EU) set out to negotiate Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), which were meant to be “instruments for development” contributing to poverty reduction, sustainable development, regional integration, spurring trade and beneficial integration into the world economy;
- B. HAVING** received updates on the EPA process in the seven EPA regional configurations;
- C. NOTING** that ACP States are still facing challenges in the negotiation and implementation of full and interim EPAs, while issues that have been contentious are more or less the same in most regions;
- D. NOTING** that the EU has adopted different approaches with regard to the EPAs, such as trade liberalization of 75% of product coverage in one region differs from the demand for a minimum of 80% in other regions. The transition periods also differ;
- E. WELCOMING** progress achieved in the EPA processes in the West Africa, East Africa Community, Eastern and Southern Africa interim EPA signatory states;
- F. NOTING** however that the amendment of EC Regulation 1528/2007, contrary to the spirit of the ACP-EU partnership, resulted in the withdrawal of some ACP States from market access benefits in effect from 1 October 2014, and that this put undue pressure to ACP States to give concessions that led to the conclusion of negotiations in some regions;
- G. CONCERNED** that negotiating meetings have not been convened with Central Africa and the Pacific regions for long periods of time due to unilateral conditions being set by the EU side;



- H. **CONCERNED** that for regions that have not concluded the negotiations, the same contentious issues still remain, including in the areas of definition of substantially all trade (SAT) and time frames for liberalization, rules of origin, MFN clause, export taxes, trade distorting domestic and export subsidies, lack of additionality of resources, quantitative restrictions, relations with countries that are in a customs union with the European Union (including Turkey, St Martin and Andorra), development of benchmarks, indicators and targets for monitoring the implementation of the agreements and non-execution clause;
- I. **ACKNOWLEDGING** the need to undertake reforms that will enable affected ACP economies to operate in the new trading environment;
- J. **STRESSING** that proper follow-up and monitoring mechanism is necessary to ensure that EPAs are implemented in a manner that meets the development objectives of the concerned ACP States and regions;
- K. **EMPHASIZING** that EPAs need to have a positive impact on regional integration process in Africa as a whole, as well as in inter-regional efforts such as in the tripartite arrangement being discussed between COMESA, EAC and SADC;
- L. **NOTING** the progress made in the development of institutions of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA as well as the operational and implementation challenges as highlighted during the five-year review of the EPA
- M. **FURTHER NOTING** the progress and challenges in the implementation of the the EU-ESA and EU-Papua New Guinea and Fiji interim EPAs;
- N. **DESIROUS** of ensuring that concluded agreements provide benefits to ACP States and in this regard expressing their commitment to work together in solidarity in addressing implementation challenges being confronted;
- O. **CONCERNED** about the proposal to extend to 2020 the excessive tariffs and duties imposed under the *Octroi de mer* on products imported into French Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) and which will continue to adversely affect the competitiveness of ACP exports, and **HIGHLIGHTING** the contradiction between this measure and that of tariff reduction propagated by the European Union in the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) process.

HEREBY

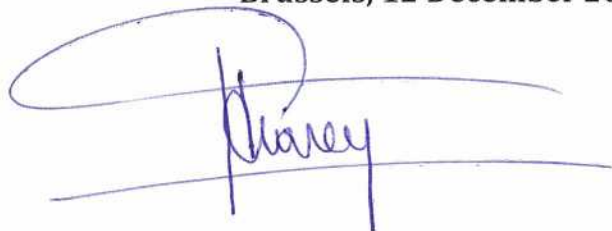
1. **Appeals** to the EU to exercise genuine and maximum flexibility so that outstanding aspects of the negotiations are resolved with a view to concluding mutually beneficial agreements;



2. **Stresses** the need for the EU to urgently and satisfactorily address challenges being faced in the implementation of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA as well as the EU-ESA and EU-Papua New Guinea and Fiji interim agreements, in order to make EPAs truly beneficial;
3. **Stresses** that adequate new and additional financial resources as well as technical support are required to implement the EPAs, commensurate with the scope and level of liberalization as well the degree of commitments made, otherwise it will be difficult for the EPA configurations to honour their commitments;
4. **Calls** for the convening of the ACP-EU Joint Ministerial Trade Committee as soon as possible and no later than the first half of 2015, in order to address all issues of concern in the EPA process;
5. **Calls** on the EU to exempt ACP EPA signatory States in its application of *octroi de mer*;
6. **Instructs** the President of Council to forward this resolution to the European Commission, Council of the European Union and the European Parliament.

esa

Brussels, 12 December 2014



Groupe des Etats d'Afrique
des Caraïbes et du Pacifique
(Groupe ACP)



African, Caribbean and
Pacific Group of States
(ACP Group)

REFERENCE **ACP/29/024/14 Rev.1**
PAHD: JFK/bm

Brussels, 12 December 2014

**DECLARATION OF THE ACP GROUP OF STATES
ON THE
ERUPTION OF THE VOLCANO OF FOGO IN CABO VERDE**

rsa

JFK

The ACP Council of Ministers at its 100th Session held at ACP House, in Brussels, Belgium from 10th to 12th December 2014;

Expressing its Deep Concern on the humanitarian impact of the eruption of the volcano of Fogo in Cabo Verde, which started in the morning of 23 November 2014 and affecting the entire population of Chã das Caldeiras and the surrounding areas, totalling nearly 2000 people and still spewing lava to this day;

Noting that the lava flow from this eruption has affected considerable agricultural land in Chã das Caldeiras and the surrounding areas, which threatens the livelihoods of inhabitants in the short and medium term;

Further noting with concern that the large emissions of toxic gases from this volcanic eruption, are causing a serious public health emergency to the local population;

Strongly commending the efforts of the Government of Cabo Verde, the United Nations specialized agencies and programmes, the European Commission (ECHO), the Community of Portuguese-speaking countries, ECOWAS and, more particularly, all those countries which have supported Cabo Verde's national emergency health plan, and helped to meet the humanitarian needs of the affected population including by providing support to enable the many displaced school-aged children to resume education;

Observing that additional needs to the humanitarian response for the displaced population, will be required in particular, transportation costs, food provision, water and sanitation, household supplies, electricity, among others;

Emphasizing the need to support the rehousing of the displaced population as well as rejuvenating their economic activities;

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized initial 'W' or 'V' followed by a horizontal line.

HEREBY:

Encourages the specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations System and the International Community to continue to support Cabo Verde in this humanitarian crisis resulting from the eruption of the volcano of Fogo;

Calls on the international community to provide the Government of Cabo Verde with specific assistance, including communication equipment, medical equipment and supplies, transportation equipment, and on-site technical support in the area of volcanology;

Appeals to ACP Member States, in the context of the solidarity of the ACP Group of States, to make contributions towards the humanitarian response to this volcanic eruption in Cabo Verde;

Urges further the international community to support the specific needs of the displaced children due to the volcanic eruption in Cabo Verde, particularly with respect to additional school equipment, adequate nutrition, child protection and psychological support services;

Recommends that resources be earmarked from the existing EDF Bridging Facility to support the humanitarian needs and requirements for the reallocation and the social and economic reintegration of the populations of Chã das Caldeiras and the surrounding areas in Cabo Verde that are affected by the eruption of the volcano of Fogo.

25/11

