

# EU/Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement

2016/0298(NLE) - 21/09/2016 - Preparatory document

**PURPOSE:** to conclude, on behalf of the European Union, the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Cuba, of the other.

**PROPOSED ACT:** Joint Proposal for a Council Decision.

**ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT:** Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

**BACKGROUND:** relations between the European Union and Cuba are currently governed by the [EU's Common Position 96/697/CFSP](#) of 2 December 1996.

On 10 February 2014, the Council adopted a Decision authorising the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to open negotiations for a Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement (PDCA) between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Cuba, of the other part.

The negotiations began on 29 April 2014 and were concluded after seven rounds in March 2016. The Agreement was initialled on 11 March 2016 in Havana, in the presence of the High Representative and the Commissioner for International Development and Cooperation.

The European Parliament was also kept informed throughout the negotiations.

It is now necessary to approve the Agreement.

**CONTENT:** the Commission proposes that the Council approve, on behalf of the Union, the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Cuba, of the other part is hereby approved on behalf of the Union. The Agreement should supersede Common Position 96/697/CFSP.

**The PDCA is the first bilateral agreement between the EU and Cuba.** It aims to consolidate and strengthen links between the parties in the areas of political dialogue, cooperation and trade, on the basis of mutual respect, reciprocity, common interest and respect for their sovereignty.

The relationship will be geared to supporting the modernisation of the Cuban economy and society, cooperating bilaterally and in international fora with a view to strengthening human rights and democracy, countering discrimination and achieving the sustainable development goals.

The Agreement builds essentially on a **three-pillar structure**:

- **political dialogue:** the relevant provisions cover a range of policy areas, including human rights, small arms and light weapons, disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, serious crimes of international concern (including the International Criminal Court),

unilateral coercive measures (i.e. US embargo), combating the production, trafficking and consumption of illicit drugs, combating racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and sustainable development;

- **cooperation and sector policy dialogue:** these provisions cover a very wide range of areas for future cooperation, including political and legal (governance and human rights, justice, citizen security and migration), social, environmental, economic and developmental issues. Particular attention is also given to regional (Caribbean and Latin American) integration and cooperation;
- **trade and trade cooperation:** this part codifies the conventional (WTO-related) basis for EU-Cuba trade. In addition, it includes provisions on trade facilitation and cooperation in areas such as technical barriers to trade and standards, with a view to improving the prospects for deeper economic relations. It also includes a clause envisaging the future development of a stronger framework for investments.

The Agreement also establishes an **institutional framework** composed of a Joint Council and a Joint Committee and includes a provision on the fulfilment of obligations. The Agreement is concluded for an unlimited period and can be terminated at six months' notice.