EU/ACP Agreement: second revision of the EC /African, Caribbean and Pacific States' 2000 Cotonou Partnership Agreement

2011/0207(NLE) - 28/02/2017 - Final act

PURPOSE: to conclude an agreement amending, for the second time, the Cotonou Agreement of June 2000.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision (EU) 2017/435 on the conclusion of the Agreement amending for the second time the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000, as first amended in Luxembourg on 25 June 2005.

BACKGROUND: In its decision of 23 February 2009, the Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP States) with a view to the second revision of the Partnership Agreement between the ACP States and the European Community and its Member States of the other part (the Cotonou Agreement).

In accordance with Council Decision 2010/648/EU, the Agreement amending the Cotonou Agreement for the second time was signed by the parties on 22 June 2010 at the ACP-EU Council in Ouagadougou, subject to its conclusion at a later date.

In accordance with Decision No 2/2010 of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, the Agreement has been applied on a provisional basis since 31 October 2010.

It is now appropriate to approve the agreement on behalf of the EU.

CONTENT: With this Decision, the Agreement amending, for the second time, the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000 and amended for the first time in Luxembourg on 25 June 2005, is hereby concluded on behalf of the Union.

As a reminder, the Cotonou Agreement is the most comprehensive partnership agreement between developing countries and the EU.

Since 2000, it has been the framework for EU relations with all ACP countries.

Main provisions of the 2nd revision of the Cotonou Agreement: this revision of the Cotonou Agreement adapts the existing partnership in the following ways:

- **the increasing importance of regional integration in ACP countries and in EU-ACP cooperation:** the role of the EU in promoting cooperation, peace and security, in growth development and in the resolution Cross-border issues is highlighted;

- **security and fragility:** the amended agreement aims to focus on the interdependence between security and development and to jointly address security threats. It pays special attention to peacebuilding and conflict prevention. It provides for a comprehensive approach, combining diplomacy, security and development cooperation for situations of state fragility;

- **ACP challenges:** food security, fight against HIV/AIDS and sustainability of fisheries resources are the main challenges in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These are addressed in the renewed agreement. The importance of each of these areas for sustainable development, growth and poverty reduction is highlighted and common approaches to cooperation have been endorsed;

- **climate change:** for the first time, the EU and ACP countries recognise that the global challenge of climate change is an important aspect of their partnership. The Parties undertake to place greater emphasis on climate change in their development cooperation and to support ACP efforts to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change;

- **trade:** the trade chapter of the agreement reflects the new trade relationship and the expiry of preferences at the end of 2007. It reaffirms the role of the Economic Partnership Agreements in promoting economic development and the global economy. The revised agreement highlights the challenges faced by ACP countries in integrating into the global economy, including the effects of the expiry of preferences. It therefore stresses the importance of trade adaptation strategies and Aid for Trade;

- **more actors in the partnership:** the EU promotes a broad and solidarity-based partnership with the ACP countries. The renewed agreement clearly recognises the role of national parliaments, local authorities, civil society and the private sector in this regard;

- **more impact, more value for money:** the revision of the Cotonou Agreement finally makes it possible to put into practice the internationally agreed principles on aid effectiveness, in particular **donor coordination**. It also unlocks EU aid to ACP countries to reduce transaction costs. For the first time, the role of other EU policies in the development of the ACP countries is recognised and the EU commits itself to reinforcing the consistency of policies to this end.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: the Decision enters into force on 28.2.2017.