

Association of the overseas countries and territories OCTs with the European Community since 1st March 2001

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PURPOSE : to present a proposal for a Council Decision on the association of the overseas countries and territories with the European Community ('Overseas'). **CONTENT** : this proposal for a Decision is intended to succeed Council Decision 91/482/EEC on the association of the OCTs with the EC with effect from 1 March 2001. The broad lines of this new Decision were traced out in Declaration No 36 on the overseas countries and territories annexed to the final act of the Treaty of Amsterdam: a "Declaration concerning the Overseas Countries and Territories" was in fact inserted in the Final Act by the Conference. In it, the Intergovernmental Conference compares the development of the Community and the OCTs since 1957 and invites the Council, acting in accordance with Article 136 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, to review the association arrangements by February 2000, with a fourfold objective: - promoting the economic and social development of the OCTs more effectively; - developing economic relations between the OCTs and the European Union; - taking greater account of the diversity and specific characteristics of the individual OCTs, including aspects relating to freedom of establishment; - and ensuring that the effectiveness of the financial instrument is improved. Conceptually and semantically, this proposal draws on the EC-South Africa Agreement and the Cotonou Agreement with the ACP States. The structure of this document comprises of five parts: 1) general provisions; 2) areas of cooperation; 3) instruments of cooperation/economic and trade cooperation; 4) rights of individuals; 5) final provisions.