EC/United States agreement : cooperation programme in higher education and training, renewal

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This communication has been established pursuant to article 7 of the agreement between the European Community and the United States of America signed on 18 December 2000and pursuant to article 7 of the agreement between the European Community and the Government of Canada signed on 19 December 2000.

This interim evaluation confirms the relevance of the EC/US and EC/Canada programmes, which have been successful in providing a strong stimulus to transatlantic cooperation in higher education and vocational training. The evaluators concluded that the great majority of projects were successful in implementing the planned curriculum development and student mobility activities and, more importantly, that the programmes have each been effective in creating long lasting institutional, professional and people-to-people links over the Atlantic.

The independent evaluation concluded that the programmes are a powerful tool for establishing long-term transatlantic partnerships in higher education and vocational training. The evaluators observed that almost all the projects succeeded in establishing student exchanges based on shared or mutually developed curricula. The programmes have given a tremendous stimulus to the participating institutions, faculty and students to build long-term relations with US and Canadian partners, and have significantly improved cross-cultural knowledge and skills of participants at all levels. The evaluators concluded that the programmes have a large unexploited potential that can be fulfilled only with a significant increase in the budgetary resources available. The Commission agrees that there is scope to

further exploit the potential of these programmes.

The evaluators have made a number of suggestions to improve certain aspects of the programmes but found no major shortcomings.