

THE GEORGETOWN AGREEMENT

Amended in accordance with the Council of Ministers' Decision adopted at its 55th Session held in Brussels from 24 to 26 November 1992 Document ACP/27/028/92

THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC STATES,

Hereinafter called as the "**ACP GROUP**",

HAVING CONTRIBUTED, through united and concerted endeavours to the acceleration of the process of solidarity of developing countries,

HAVING REGARD to the ACP-EEC Lome Convention,

REAFFIRMING their attachment to the fundamental principles of human dignity, human rights and the rights of peoples;

DESIROUS of consolidating and strengthening the existing solidarity of the ACP Group, and of promoting improved cooperation between the peoples on the basis of their interdependence, complementarity and mutual interest;

RESOLVED to promote and develop greater and closer trade, economic, social and cultural relations between the ACP States;

DETERMINED to ensure that the Lome Convention contributes to the realization of the common aspirations of developing countries, and to self-reliant, endogenous and self-sustained development based on their systems of cultural and social values;

DETERMINED to ensure the effective promotion of regional, inter-regional and intra-ACP cooperation among the ACP States;

RESOLVED to establish the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States to achieve the above objectives and to contribute towards the realization of a new, fairer and more equitable world order;

HAVE AGREED as follows:

CHAPTER I THE ORGANIZATION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ACP GROUP

Article 1 - The Group

There is hereby formally established the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States which shall be known as the "ACP Group".

The Members of the ACP Group shall be the African, Caribbean and Pacific States which are signatory to the Convention of Lome and to this Agreement.

Any other State which accedes to the Lome Convention may become a member of the ACP Group in accordance with Article 22 of this Agreement.

The ACP Group shall have legal personality. It shall have the capacity to contract, acquire, and dispose of movable and immovable property and to institute legal proceedings.

Article 2 - The Objectives of the ACP Group

The objectives of the ACP Group shall be as follows -

- (a) to ensure the realization of the objectives of the Lome Convention,
- (b) to coordinate the activities of the ACP States in the application of the Lome Convention,
- (c) to define a common stand for the ACP Group vis-a-vis the EEC on matters covered by the Lome Convention and on the relevant issues tackled by international bodies and liable to affect the implementation of the Lome Convention,
- (d) to promote and strengthen the existing solidarity of the ACP States and understanding between ACP peoples and governments,

(e) to contribute to the development of greater and closer economic, social and cultural relations among developing countries and, to that end, cooperation between the ACP States in the fields of trade, science and technology, industry, transport and communications, education, training and research, information and communication, the environment, demography and human resources,

(f) to contribute to the promotion of effective regional, inter-regional and intra-ACP co-operation among the ACP States and between developing countries in general, and to strengthen the regional organizations to which they belong,

(g) to promote the establishment of a fairer and more equitable new world order.

CHAPTER II ORGANS OF THE GROUP

Article 3

The decision-making bodies of the ACP Group shall be the Council of Ministers and the Committee of Ambassadors.

The Council of Ministers and the Committee of Ambassadors shall take the appropriate measures to ensure a liaison with the ACP members of the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly set up by the Lome Convention.

The ACP members of the Joint Assembly shall constitute an advisory body.

These bodies shall be assisted by an administrative body, namely, the ACP General Secretariat.

Article 4 - The Council of Ministers

The Council of Ministers shall consist of a member of the Government of each of the ACP States or a representative designated by the latter.

Article 5

The Council of Ministers shall define the broad outlines of the work to be undertaken for the attainment of the objectives specified in Article 2 of this Agreement.

It shall periodically review the attainment of the objectives set out in Article 2.

Article 6

The Council of Ministers may delegate to the Committee of Ambassadors any of its powers.

Article 7

The Council of Ministers shall elect its Bureau at the end of each ordinary session of the Council of Ministers.

The Bureau shall be composed of six members designated as follows -

- four from Africa
- one from the Caribbean, and
- one from the Pacific

Council shall elect its President from among the members of the Bureau on the basis of rotation between the four regions of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. All six regions will have equal opportunity to preside over the ACP and ACP-EEC Council of Ministers.

Article 8

The Council of Ministers shall meet in ordinary session once in each six months.

In addition the Council may meet in special session whenever necessary on the decision of the President after consultation with all the members of the Bureau.

Article 9

The acts of the Council of Ministers may take the form of a decision, resolution or recommendation.

Article 10 - Decision-making within the Council

Decisions by the Council of Ministers shall be arrived at on the basis of a consensus of its members.

However, under special circumstances and after consultation, decisions may be reached by a majority of four-fifths of the members of the Council.

In the event of such a majority not being obtained after voting at two successive meetings of Council, the matter shall be postponed to the next session at which a vote by two-thirds majority of the members of Council shall be sufficient for a decision.

Article 11

The Council of Ministers shall adopt its rules of procedure.

Article 12 - The Committee of Ambassadors

The Committee of Ambassadors shall consist of an Ambassador or other representative of each of the ACP States.

Article 13

The Committee of Ambassadors shall assist the Council of Ministers in the performance of its functions and shall carry out any mandate entrusted to it by the Council of Ministers.

In particular the Committee of Ambassadors shall ensure the implementation of the Lome Convention.

The Committee of Ambassadors shall present to each meeting of the Council of Ministers a report of its activities.

Article 14

There shall be a Bureau of the Committee of Ambassadors which shall coordinate the work of the Committee of Ambassadors.

The Bureau of the Committee of Ambassadors shall be composed of a Chairman and five Vice-Chairmen who shall hold office for a period of six months.

Article 15

The acts of the Committee of Ambassadors shall take the form of a decision, resolution or recommendation.

Article 16

Decisions made by the Committee of Ambassadors shall be arrived at on the basis of a consensus of the members.

Article 17

The Committee of Ambassadors shall adopt its own rules of procedure.

CHAPTER III ACP MEMBERS OF THE ACP-EEC JOINT ASSEMBLY

Article 18

The ACP members of the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly shall meet in ordinary session twice a year prior to each meeting of the Assembly.

The ACP members of the Joint Assembly shall be members of Parliament, failing which they shall be representatives appointed by the ACP States, with each State having one representative.

Their main functions shall be:

- to reflect on all matters relating to ACP-EEC Cooperation, development problems in particular
- to examine the annual report of the ACP-EEC Council of Ministers, and
- to submit proposals, resolutions and recommendations for the consideration of the relevant bodies of the Lome Convention

A Bureau of ACP members of the Joint Assembly shall be set up to coordinate the latter's activities.

The ACP members of the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly shall lay down their rules of procedure.

Subject to prior approval by the contracting parties to this agreement, the Council of Ministers may, in due course, set up an ACP Assembly and determine its membership, duties and operating procedures.

CHAPTER IV THE ACP GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Article 19

The ACP General Secretariat shall be located in Brussels, Belgium.

The ACP General Secretariat, under the authority of the bodies of the ACP Group, shall:

- monitor the implementation of the Lome Convention
- service the bodies of the ACP Group and the joint institutions established under the Lome Convention, and
- carry out such tasks as may be assigned to it by the Council of Ministers, the Committee of Ambassadors and the ACP members of ACP-EC Joint Assembly

Article 20

The Council of Ministers, on the proposal of the Committee of Ambassadors, shall determine the organizational structure of the ACP General Secretariat, and define its staff regulations.

Without prejudice to the provisions of the preceding paragraph, the Council of Ministers shall appoint a Secretary General as the principal Executive Officer of the ACP General Secretariat on the basis of merit, qualification and integrity.

With respect to the appointment of the Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General of the ACP Secretariat as well as the most senior posts of the ACP-EC joint institutions that fall to the ACP Group, account shall be taken of the need to ensure an equitable and balanced representation of the three geographical regions of the ACP Group namely Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

The Secretary General shall be backed by the necessary staff recruited in accordance with the ACP Secretariat's staff regulations. In addition to professional competence, the staff complement shall, to the fullest extent possible, reflect an equitable and balanced representation of the member States of the ACP Group.

Article 21

The Council of Ministers shall establish the financial regulations and Budget of the ACP General Secretariat.

Each ACP State shall contribute to the Budget in accordance with provisions established by the Council of Ministers.

CHAPTER V FINAL AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 22

The State which accedes to the Lome Convention may accede to this Agreement, with the approval of the Council of Ministers. The new State shall assume all the rights and the obligations arising from this Agreement.

Article 23

Regional bodies of the ACP States shall be entitled to participate as observers in the meetings of the organs of the ACP Group.

Article 24

The provisions of this Agreement may be amended by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

Article 25

The Working languages of the ACP Group shall be English, French, Portuguese and any other language as may be decided by the Council of Ministers.

A delegation may oppose the examination of any text if it has not been drawn up in the three languages.

Article 26

This Agreement is open for signature at the ACP General Secretariat from the Sixth day of June, 1975, being the date of which the approved text, in the English and French languages, was initialled in Georgetown, Guyana.

This Agreement shall come into force two months after signature thereof by at least two-thirds of the Member States of the ACP Group.

In witness whereof the respective ACP States through their duly authorized representatives have signed this Agreement in the English and French, both texts being equally authentic, on the dates specified in relation to the signatures.

The preceding text is a certified true copy of the Georgetown Agreement deposited in the archives of the General Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States, in Brussels.

Brussels
The Secretary-General
of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States

ANNEX

EXPLANATORY NOTE ON THE ROTATION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

(Article 7)

In accordance with Article 7 of the Georgetown Agreement the presidency of the Council of Ministers rotates every six months in the following manner:

Period	Meetings	Region
November 1992 - May 1993	ACP and ACP-EEC	East Africa
May 1993 - November 1993	ACP	West Africa
November 1993 - May 1994	ACP and ACP-EEC	Caribbean
May 1994 - November 1994	ACP	Central Africa
November 1994 - May 1995	ACP and ACP-EEC	Southern Africa
May 1995 - November 1995	ACP	Pacific
November 1995 - May 1996	ACP and ACP-EEC	West Africa
May 1996 - November 1996	ACP	East Africa
November 1996 - May 1997	ACP and ACP-EEC	Pacific
May 1997 - November 1997	ACP	Southern Africa
November 1997 - May 1998	ACP and ACP-EEC	Central Africa
May 1998 - November 1998	ACP	Caribbean