

# European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States commence negotiations on a new Partnership Agreement

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**Today the EU and 79 countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) group will begin negotiations on the future of their cooperation after 2020. The ambition is to transform today's partnership into a modern political alliance.**

The countries in the EU and the ACP represent more than half of all UN member countries and unite over 1.5 billion people. The current partnership, governed by the Cotonou agreement, is one of the longest-standing and most comprehensive framework for cooperation between the EU and developing countries. The current agreement expires in 2020.

To mark the opening of the first round of political negotiations in New York, in the margins of United Nations General Assembly, the EU's Chief Negotiator, Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, said: "The partnership between the EU and the countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, is an asset for the EU and multilateralism at large. The revision of the existing agreement is a great opportunity to further deepen the partnership and modernise it in response to global developments such as the UN 2030 Agenda or the Paris Agreement on climate change."

In turn, Professor Robert Dussey, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Togo and Chief negotiator for the ACP Group of States, recalled that "The connection between the ACP Group and the EU was established in 1975 in first Article of the Georgetown Agreement, the Constitutive Act of the ACP Group". He underlined that "the ACP-EU partnership is a valuable and unique achievement that has strengthened bonds between ACP and EU peoples and countries throughout the last 45 years of its existence. The opening of the negotiations today heralds the continuity of trust and confidence cherished by parties to this Partnership".

The partnership seeks closer political cooperation on the world stage to tackle major global challenges, aiming to be a shining example of multilateralism as the cornerstone of a rule-based world order. In concrete terms, this will notably mean working jointly towards the Sustainable Development Goals. It will also guide the partnership countries' joint efforts to address pressing challenges such as climate change, migration and peace and security. To have the intended impact, the future partnership will adapt to the new realities in the European Union, Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, taking into account geographical specificities. The future partnership will aim at facilitating strong alliance-building in global forums and address key issues from which current and future generations alike can benefit.

### Background

The Cotonou Agreement governing EU-ACP relations is due to expire in February 2020.

Article 95 of the Cotonou Agreement requires partners to enter into negotiations at least 18 months before the expiry of the current deal. To meet this deadline, the negotiation process was launched in July 2018, through an exchange of letters and respective negotiating mandates.

### For More Information

[ACP Negotiating Mandate](#) <sup>[1]</sup>

[EU Negotiation Directives](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

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[2] <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-8094-2018-ADD-1/en/pdf>

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