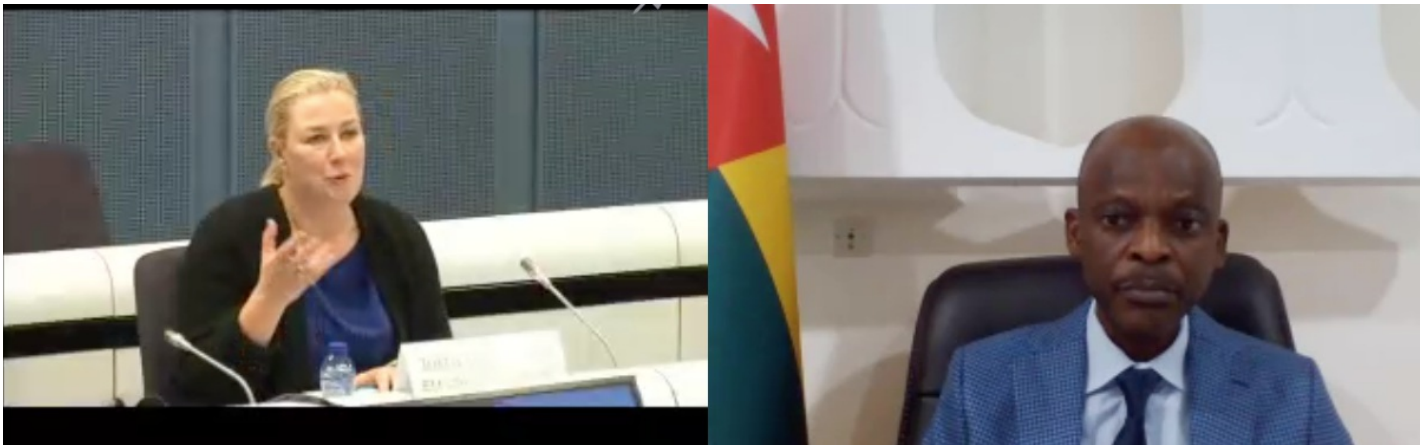


# Negotiators reach a political deal on a new EU/Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Post-Cotonou Partnership Agreement

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Brussels, 3 December 2020/OACPS : Today, the chief negotiators from the European Union (EU) and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), formerly known as the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, reached a political deal on the text for a new Partnership Agreement that will succeed the Cotonou Agreement. The Agreement, which will have to be approved, signed and ratified by the parties, will cover a large number of areas, ranging from sustainable development and growth, to human rights and peace and security and will be geared to empower each region. Once in effect, the Agreement will serve as the new legal framework and guide cooperation as well as political and economic relations between the EU and the 79 members of the OACPS for the next twenty years.

The EU and the members of the OACPS constitute an international force. Together, they represent over 1.5 billion people and more than half of the seats at the United Nations. With the new Agreement, EU and OACPS member countries will be better equipped to address the emerging needs and global challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, ocean governance, migration, peace and security issues.

Commissioner for International Partnerships and EU chief negotiator, **Jutta Urpilainen**, said: "Today's deal marks a step towards a new era for the EU, Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. People in all those four regions of the world will benefit from this ambitious Agreement, that will allow us to better deal with the new realities and challenges as global actors."

Professor **Robert Dussey**, Togo's Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Togolese Abroad, the OACPS' Chief Negotiator and Chair of the Ministerial Central Negotiating Group, said: "The political agreement, reached today, at the end of these long and intense negotiations, paves the way for a modern and more committed partnership at the national, regional and international levels. On this occasion, I extend my sincere congratulations to our lead negotiators who have worked tirelessly to achieve this result."

### Next steps

Now that the Chief Negotiators have reached a political deal, the text will go through internal procedures before the chief negotiators can initial the text, marking the end of the negotiations. The signature of the agreement will occur at a later stage in 2021. To enter into force, the Agreement must be concluded or ratified by a minimum selection and number of Parties. Signature, provisional application, and conclusion of the agreement will require the approval by the Council based on proposals from the Commission.

These proposals will be transmitted to the Council in early 2021, together with the negotiated text translated into all EU languages.

The Council will decide on the conclusion only after having received the European Parliament's consent, as indicated in article 218 (6) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

Although a political agreement has been found, it is proposed to further extend the Cotonou Agreement to allow appropriate time to carry out the internal EU process mentioned above. The EU and OACPS have agreed to further prolong the Cotonou Agreement until 30 November 2021, unless the new Agreement enters into force or is provisionally applied before that date. This would be the second prolongation, as a first set of transitional measures have already extended the Cotonou agreement, initially scheduled to expire on 29 February 2020, until 31 December 2020.

### Background

The post-Cotonou negotiations started in September 2018 in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York. The aim was to agree on a new treaty to succeed the Cotonou Agreement.

The new Partnership Agreement is composed of a "common foundation", which sets out the values and principles that bring the countries together and indicates the strategic priority areas that both sides intend to work on. These are: (i) human rights, democracy and governance, (ii) Peace and security, (iii) Human and social development, (iv) Environmental sustainability and climate change, (v) Inclusive sustainable economic growth and development, and (vi) Migration and mobility.

In the new Partnership Agreement the foundation is combined with three specific, action-oriented Regional Protocols for Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, which focus on each region's needs. This will allow for an unprecedented regional focus. The Regional Protocols will have their own specific governance to manage and steer the relations with the EU and different regions involved, including through joint parliamentary committees. There will also be an overarching joint OACPS-EU framework with a strong parliamentary dimension.

At the 9th Summit of ACP Heads of State and Government in December 2019, the ACP Group of States adopted the revised Georgetown Agreement, which resulted in a change of name, on 5 April 2020 to the Organisation of African, Caribbean and

Pacific States (OACPS).

**For more information:**

[Q&A on the Post-Cotonou new political deal](#) <sup>[1]</sup>

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