STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ACP GROUP OF STATES H.E. GEORGES REBELO PINTO CHIKOTI ON THE OCCASION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY 2020

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As the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States commemorates International Women’s Day, we remain steadfast in our resolve to attain Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 8. In line with this year’s theme for Women’s Day, “I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women’s Rights”, the ACP Group is committed to promote inclusion through gender equality.

The year 2020 marks the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women. Through the Nairobí Ngúvu Ya Pamoja Declaration, adopted by ACP Heads of State and Government at their 9th Summit in December 2019, ACP Heads stated that:

“We recognise the crucial role of women and girls in fostering social mobility of their families and the transformation of economies, and commit to the elimination of discriminatory laws and policies, which entrench existing inequalities and widen the gaps in socio-economic and political development of women and girls in ACP States”.

The Nairobí Ngúvu Ya Pamoja Declaration dedicates the ACP Group of States to mainstream gender equality in all policies; to create enhanced opportunities for women to equal pay, decent work and more inclusive participation in our countries’ decision-making processes. The ACP Group of States is committed to fulfilling these aspirations, and to provide capacity-building aimed at promoting inclusion and equality.

A transformed ACP Group of States, committed to multilateralism, will ensure that the promotion of equality and women’s rights are at the centre of our collective commitment to reduce poverty and achieve people-centred sustainable development for ACP people.

The ACP Group of States remains committed to promote ACP Women’s empowerment through, inter alia, the:

1. Creation of gender-sensitive policies, frameworks and programmes;
2. Provision of an enabling political and socio-economic environment for women to take their rightful place in society, including at the national, regional, continental and international levels;
3. Promotion of gender mainstreaming tools such as gender-responsive budgeting in all aspects of economic and social sectors; and
4. Provision of continued support to initiatives to eliminate violence against women and girls.

The ACP Group of States will work to ensure that “no woman is left behind”, and strive to honour the words of President Nelson Mandela who said, “... gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance”.

[1] The joint EU-UN Gender Spotlight Initiative was launched on the 20th September 2017 at the UN General Assembly. The Initiative, in collaboration with ACP states, aims to eliminate violence against women and girls (VAWG), and reflects a comprehensive approach to prevent and respond to VAWG worldwide and to address its specific forms at regional and country levels. A total of 350M EUR was earmarked from intra-ACP resources for the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries in 2018.