RESOLUTIONS AND DECLARATIONS
OF THE 81st SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, ON 21st AND 22nd JUNE 2005
SUMMARY

RESOLUTIONS

No.1 BANANAS
No.2 COTTON
No.3 SUGAR
No.4 RUM
No.5 POSITION OF THE ACP GROUP ON THE DRAFT EUROPEAN UNION LEGISLATION CONCERNING THE REGISTRATION, EVALUATION, AUTHORIZATION AND RESTRICTION OF CHEMICALS (REACH)

No.6 ON PEACE IN THE SUDAN AND NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SUDAN AND THE EUROPEAN UNION AND RESUMPTION OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

No.7 ON THE FINANCING OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

No.8 ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

DECLARATIONS

N° 1 ON THE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS (EPAs)
N° 2 ON THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ACP GROUP OF STATES
RESOLUTION
OF THE 81ST SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, ON 21ST AND 22ND JUNE 2005

BANANAS

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, on 21st to 22nd June 2005,

A. HAVING REGARD to the Resolution of the 80th Session of the Council of Ministers held in Brussels from 29 November to 2nd December 2004;

B. WHEREAS the Community is bound by Article 36.3 of the Cotonou Agreement under which the non-reciprocal trade preferences applied under the Fourth ACP-EC Convention shall be maintained under the conditions defined in Annex 5;

C. RECALLING the WTO Decision of the 4th WTO Ministerial Conference on the EC Transitional Regime for Bananas adopted in 14 November 2001 which recognises “the need to afford sufficient protection to the ACP banana supplying countries, including the most vulnerable”;

D. RECALLING the provisions of Article 12 of the Cotonou Agreement and the Annex to the Decision of waiver for ACP-EC Partnership Agreement adopted on November 14, 2001 at the 4th WTO Ministerial Conference;

E. WHEREAS the Community is bound by the Cotonou Agreement, especially Protocol 5 Article 1, to take measures to ensure the viability of the ACP banana export industries as well as the maintenance of outlets for ACP bananas on the Community market;

F. AWARE of the considerable importance of banana production and trade to the economic and social stability and development of ACP countries;

G. CONCERNED about the continuing deterioration of prices for ACP bananas on the European market due to the reforms of the Common Market Organisation which threatens the viability of the ACP banana industries and have resulted in the temporary closure of the banana industry in Suriname and the serious threat to continued production of bananas from the Windward Islands and Belize;
H. NOTING that the Suriname banana industry has been restarted and is successfully implementing a restructuring programme but that the sustainability is jeopardized by the fact that the Suriname banana industry is experiencing financial difficulties due to the high costs involved with the purchasing of licenses, needed for the import of bananas into the European market;

I. RECALLING the vulnerability of many ACP banana producing countries to natural disasters, such as those in the Caribbean region, which crippled their banana industries in 2004;

J. RECALLING that the SFA was established to assist ACP States’ banana industries in improving their competitiveness and diversification efforts and that delays in the disbursement of the funds under this arrangement due to, inter alia, changes in the EU financial regulations, have served to militate against the achievement of these objectives;

K. RECOGNISING that preservation of market stability and adequate preferential and viable access to the EU market in the wake of the abolition of the current tariff rate quota system requires a minimum tariff of €275;

L. RECALLING HOWEVER, that on 1st February 2005, the EU notified the WTO of its intention to introduce a tariff on MFN banana imports of €230 per tonne as from January 1st 2006;

M. NOTING that the ongoing process of the WTO Arbitration allows ACP Banana producing countries to participate, in a limited manner;

N. REAFFIRMING the convergence of positions with that of the EU that the arbitration is limited to a review of the tariff on MFN banana imports into the EU market and will not affect ACP Preferences;

1. Calls on the European Union to:
   - Continue to advocate that the tariff for bananas under the single tariff regime is set at a level which ensures continued market access for and viability of the ACP banana industries;
   - Put in place a special safeguard mechanism to guard against import surges under a single tariff regime;
• Maintain preference for ACP banana producing countries in a manner respecting entirely its obligations under the Cotonou Agreement;

• Designate bananas as a sensitive product in the current WTO negotiations for the liberalization of trade in agricultural products;

• Implement modalities for Suriname, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon and Belize to access the EU market by allocating licenses to market operators identified by the ACP States concerned, thereby supporting and sustaining the viability of their respective banana industries;

• Accelerate its support in the aftermath of the 2004 natural disasters in the Caribbean region in particular the Eastern Caribbean, Dominican Republic and Jamaica and provide urgent support for restoration of plantations, and special assistance to small farmers, including for housing and community services destroyed during the recent hurricanes;

• Expedite the disbursement of funds which have been outstanding under the Special Framework of Assistance (SFA) to enable ACP States’ banana industries to meet their objectives of competitiveness and diversification and to keep the ACP States informed of the status of disbursement.

2. **INSTRUCTS** the President of the Council of Ministers to forward this resolution to the EU Council, European Parliament and the European Commission.

**************
The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, on 21st to 22nd June 2005,

A. Recalling Decision No. 8/LXXVIII/03 of 28 November 2003 of the 78th Session of Council, concerning the Strengthening of the cotton sector in ACP countries;

B. Having regard to the Resolution on Cotton adopted by the 80th session of the ACP Council of Ministers held in Brussels from 30 November to 2 December 2004;

C. Considering that the EU-Africa Cotton Partnership, adopted in Paris since July 2004, is regarded as a framework for the swift implementation of actions designed to provide urgent solutions to the dangers that threaten the survival of African cotton producers;

D. Extremely concerned by the significant delay in the implementation of the Plan of Action relating to the EU-Africa Cotton Partnership, which is due primarily to the determination of the European Union, despite the recognised specificity and urgency of the situation in the cotton sector, to link the treatment of the dossier to the implementation of the general Plan of Action on agricultural commodities;

E. Noting the effective commencement of work and developments in the discussions within the WTO Cotton Subcommittee;

F. Recognising that the measures announced by the European Commissioner for Trade in his declaration made in Bamako, on 19 April 2005, contain elements for a specific implementation of a future agreement on the cotton dossier, but that these elements incorporate doubts regarding the ambitious and expeditious treatment required by the General Council of the WTO, as well as the implementation date, since they are dependent on the conclusion of an agreement on the entire series of negotiations of the Doha Work Programme;
G. **Welcoming** the new proposals of 19 April 2005, submitted by the African Group in the framework of the WTO Cotton Subcommittee, which outline specific modalities for ensuring the stability of the international cotton market and the setting up of an interim emergency fund and which more adequately reflect the crisis situation in the sector;

H. **Considering** the support provided for the above-mentioned proposals by the Trade Ministers of the Member States of the African Union, who met in their third ordinary session in Cairo on 8 and 9 June 2005:

1. **Reaffirms** the ACP Group’s firm support for the proposals submitted by the African Group within the WTO Cotton Subcommittee, and recalls that swift resolution of the cotton dossier within the WTO will serve as a positive signal which is necessary for the successful conclusion of the negotiations in the framework of the Doha Development Agenda;

2. **Urges** the European Union to fully appreciate and give proper consideration to the urgency of the situation in the cotton sector and to take the necessary measures to accelerate the autonomous implementation of the EU-Africa plan of action on cotton;

3. **Calls on** the European Union to strongly support the proposals of the African Group within the WTO Cotton Subcommittee, by accepting, in addition to the initiatives announced by the European Trade Commissioner in his statement of 19 April 2005, the modalities proposed for stabilising the sector and creating an emergency fund for the cotton sector;

4. **Instructs** the President of the Council of Ministers to forward this resolution to the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament and the European Commission.

**************
The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, on 21st to 22nd June 2005,

A. **HAVING REGARD** to its Resolution adopted at its 80th Session held in Brussels from 29 November to 2nd December 2004;

B. **RECALLING** the Resolution on Sugar of the 4th Summit of ACP Heads of State and Government held on 23 and 24 June 2004 in Maputo, Mozambique;

C. **RECALLING** the Resolution on ACP Sugar Protocol and LDC/EBA sugar adopted by the 79th Session of the ACP Council of Ministers held in Gaborone (Botswana) on the 4th and 5th May 2004;

D. **RECALLING** also the resolution on Food Aid and Food Security adopted by the 8th Session of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly held in the Hague from 22 to 25 November 2004;

E. **HAVING REGARD** to the political dialogue on the reform of the EC sugar regime and the proposed Action Plan that took place on 24 January, 2005 between the EU Council of Ministers of Agriculture and the ACP and LDC Ministers;

F. **RECOGNISING** the continued fundamental contribution of the ACP-EU Sugar Protocol to the sustained growth and sustainable socio-economic development of the ACP sugar supplying States through the provision of an adequate level of earnings on a stable and predictable basis underpinned by a remunerative guaranteed price;

G. **NOTING** with concern the reluctance by the Commission to reach a decision on the ACP request for the funding of an intra ACP research project on sugar, for increasing the competitiveness of the ACP sugar industry;
H. EMPHASISING that the ACP-EU Sugar Protocol is a longstanding intergovernmental contractual agreement of indefinite duration implemented within the EC sugar regime and annexed to the Cotonou Agreement for administrative purposes;

I. REAFFIRMING the provisions of Article 36 (4) of the Cotonou Agreement, particularly the commitment to safeguard the benefits accruing to the ACP States concerned, which are LDCs, land-locked, small, weak, vulnerable island and single-commodity dependent States;

J. STRESSING the ruling of the WTO Panel that the EC shall stand by its International Commitments with respect to imports, including its commitments to developing countries;

K. ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of the Everything But Arms (EBA) initiative which provides an opportunity for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to export sugar to the EU under preferential terms, including a guaranteed remunerative price;

L. STRESSING that tariff-rate quota as well as duty and quota-free access without a remunerative price will be economically meaningless and will make the sugar export of ACP States and LDCs suffer the same fate as coffee and cocoa;

M. HAVING REGARD to the communication from the Commission to the EU Council and the European Parliament on July 14, 2004 on the EU Sugar Reform now overtaken by the ruling of the WTO panel and the more drastic proposals announced on 22 June 2005;

N. DEEPLY CONCERNED that the Commission has completely ignored the proposals made by the Sugar Protocol ACP Sugar Supplying States and LDCs regarding the future EU Sugar Regime;
O. **REITERATING** the LDCs response of 13 September 2004 to the Communication from the Commission to EU Council and the European Parliament concerning the proposed reform of the EU Sugar Regime and their request for an adaptation of the EBA initiative through the introduction of a second quota until 2016;

1. **DECLARES** that the proposal on the Sugar Regime reforms presented by the European Commission to the European Parliament on 22 June 2005 will cause serious injury to ACP sugar producers, if approved;

2. **ENDORSES and REITERATES** the ACP position on the EU Commission’s communication of the 14 July 2004 concerning the reform of the EU Sugar Regime which was submitted on 6 October 2004 to the European Union, its Member States, the European Parliament and the Commission;

3. **CALLS ON** the EU to honour the legal and political commitment enshrined in the Sugar Protocol as well as the provisions of Article 36(4) of the Cotonou Agreement and the EBA Initiative respectively, through the maintenance of an adequate level of remunerative price for the ACP and LDC supplying States, thereby safeguarding the benefits that these States currently derive from the export of sugar to the EU;

4. **CALLS ON** the EU Council and the Commission to introduce in the new EC Sugar regime a more reasonable duration of not less than 8 years starting in 2008 with a minimum price cut required to meet its present and future WTO obligations, to be phased in during the transitional period;

5. **CALLS ON** the EU Commission to declare sugar as a sensitive product within the context of the Doha Development Agenda at the World Trade Organisation to assist the development goals of ACP Sugar Supplying States, while recognising the multifunctional role it plays in the ACP States concerned;
6. **CALLS ON** the European Commission to work closely with the ACP States concerned on a special safeguard mechanism on agriculture in the context of the ongoing WTO Doha Development Round;

7. **CALLS ON** the EU, its Member States and the Commission to ensure coherence in the EU policies on trade, agriculture and development cooperation so as to ensure that the reform of the EU sugar regime does not undermine the capacity of the ACP States and the LDCs to achieve the MDGs;

8. **URGES** the EU and the European Commission to ensure that the ACP and the LDC supplying States are guaranteed at least treatment comparable to that to be provided to the EU outermost regions whose specificities and development needs are similar to most ACP sugar supplying states, as any discrimination in the level of price and earnings will be contrary to the letter and spirit of ACP-EU cooperation;

9. **CALLS ON** the EU to grant the ACP and LDC Sugar Producers accelerated and increased market access for sugar at remunerative prices in order to enable them to diversify within the sugar sector and build capacity for competitive trade;

10. **REQUESTS** that the Sugar Protocol and EBA beneficiary States are fully supported, in line with the EU farmers, through an appropriate dedicated budgetary line or the European Agricultural Development Guarantee Fund which is meant to finance long-term development of ACP States through quick disbursement mechanisms to guarantee a stable and predictable flow of resources, which would enable them to restructure and modernise their sugar industries so that they can operate competitively under a future reformed Sugar Regime;

11. **URGES** the EU and the Commission to set up in 2005 a Competitiveness Fund with adequate resources to support the ACP States concerned to restructure and modernise their sugar industries so that they can operate competitively under a future reformed Sugar Regime;
12. **CALLS ON** the Commission to urgently examine and approve the longstanding request for the funding of intra ACP research projects on sugar independently of the Programme for Science and Technology Innovation and Capacity Building for ACP States;

13. **REQUESTS** the President of the Council of Ministers to forward this Resolution to the European Commission, the European Council, EU Member States and the European Parliament.
RESOLUTION
OF THE 81ST SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, ON 21ST AND 22ND JUNE 2005

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, on 21st to 22nd June 2005,

A. RECALLING the objectives contained in the Georgetown Agreement and the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement;

B. RECALLING in particular, commitments contained in Article 12 of the Cotonou Agreement in respect of the Coherence of Community policies and measures which might affect the interests of the ACP States, which provides for consultations between the ACP States and the Community on Commission proposals before final decisions are made;

C. MINDFUL of the commitments made in Declaration XXV of the Cotonou Agreement on rum in which the Community undertakes to consult the ACP States on any bilateral or multilateral decisions, including tariff reductions, which may impact on the competitive position of the ACP rum industry in the Community market;

D. RECOGNISING the provisions of the Memorandum on Rum attached to the EU/US 1997 Zero for Zero Agreement on White Spirits and the bound and finite nature of the liberalisation agreed for rum;

E. RECOGNISING that the present MFN tariff was expressly designed by the EU to provide the ACP, for a finite period, with protection through a complex two-phase tariff elimination schedule while its industry developed the ability to move from commodity rum to branded products in order to compete in a liberalised market;

F. RECOGNISING the decision by the European Development Fund Committee in 2001 to commit the sum of €70m to a programme to enhance the competitiveness of the ACP rum industry and to enable it to move from the production of commodity rum to value added branded products during the period covered by the Memorandum on Rum attached to the EU/US 1997 Zero for Zero Agreement on White Spirits;
G. **EMPHASISING** that the ACP States, the Caribbean rum industry and the EU understood this process of liberalisation to be finite;

H. **FURTHER EMPHASISING** that rum is a product of special economic importance to the ACP States particularly the Caribbean region;

I. **STRESSING** the positive impact that the residual tariff, which is specified in the Memorandum on Rum annexed to the March 1997 EU/US bilateral agreement on White Spirits has had on maintaining a small degree of preference in the EU market for traditional suppliers of rum;

1. **NOTES** that tariff lines of 220840 for rum have been included by the European Commission in the Ad Valorem equivalence conversion process in the context of the WTO Agricultural Negotiations as a basis for developing modalities for the process of future tariff reductions, leading to the further liberalisation of rum along with all other agricultural products in the negotiations at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to achieve the Doha Development agenda;

2. **NOTES** with concern that despite the 1997 Zero for Zero Agreement on White Spirits having been bound at the WTO, the Directorate General for Enterprise has applied, without consultation with the ACP rum producing States, a formula of reduction that may be used in the ongoing WTO negotiations to trade away the finite residual tariff before it phases as programmed;

3. **STATES** that such actions by the EC taken through a Directorate with which the ACP rum industry has infrequent contact has been without prior consultation with the ACP States and as such runs counter to the European Union commitments in Article 12 of the Cotonou Agreement and in its Declaration on Rum (Declaration XXV) on prior consultations on any new trade measures that will disadvantage the ACP States;

4. **EMPHASISES** that such actions are detrimental to the interests of the ACP Caribbean rum industry and will enable large multinational suppliers of rum with global brands to take control of the international market before traditional suppliers of rum in the Caribbean have had time to prepare for the full market liberalisation that had already been agreed in 1997;
5. **EXPRESSES ITS CONCERN** that any decision to speed up the already agreed period of liberalisation will wholly undercut the effect of the on-going €70m EDF funded transitional programme for the ACP Caribbean rum industry and will also threaten the viability of the industry that has taken out commercial loans under the counterpart funding of the EDF financing agreement;

6. **URGES** the European Community to recognise that the basis for full liberalisation of white spirits was achieved in 1997 and that any change to this agreement (through further tariff reductions or a duty free quota system) will impede the capacity of the ACP Caribbean rum industry to compete internationally with one of the very few value added agro-industrial products that the region is capable of producing;

7. **URGENTLY CALLS ON** the European Commission to ensure that the small residual and finite tariff on third country rums entering the EU agreed in 1997 and specified in a Memorandum on Rum attached to the 1997 Zero for Zero Agreement on White Spirits is not traded away in negotiations at the World Trade Organization;

8. **CALLS ON** the European Commission to exclude from any other bi-lateral, bi-regional or multilateral trade negotiations the MFN residual tariffs on third country rum contained in the 1997 EU/US White Spirits Agreement;

9. **INSISTS** that rum should be treated by the European Commission as an excluded product in the context of the negotiations being held at the WTO in relation to market access for agriculture on the grounds that the rum sector is already undergoing a process of liberalisation;

10. **REQUESTS** the President of the Council of Ministers to forward this Resolution to the European Commission, the European Council, EU Member States and the European Parliament.
RESOLUTION
OF THE 81ST SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, ON 21ST TO 22ND JUNE 2005

POSITION OF THE ACP GROUP ON THE DRAFT EUROPEAN UNION LEGISLATION CONCERNING THE REGISTRATION, EVALUATION, AND AUTHORIZATION OF CHEMICALS (REACH)

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, on 21st to 22nd June 2005,

A. Having regard to the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement signed in Cotonou, Benin on 23 June 2000, and in particular Article 68 that recognizes the key role that commodities play in the economic stability of ACP States;

B. Recalling the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg, South Africa during September 2002, and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation that calls for measures to reduce the adverse effects of the production and use of chemicals by 2020;

C. Having regard to the international obligations of ACP States under the provisions of the World Trade Organization (WTO);

D. Having regard also to the efforts to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);

E. Recalling the 1st Meeting of ACP Ministers responsible for the Environment, held in Brussels on 10 December 2004, and the Brussels Declaration on the Environment for Sustainable Development in ACP States;

F. Referring to the European Commission’s White Paper on the Strategy for a Future Chemical Policy, which suggests that through the Registration, Evaluation and Authorization of Chemicals (REACH), the competitiveness of the EU chemicals industry and the protection of human health and the environment from the risk of chemicals will be improved;
G. **Having regard** to the draft report on Agriculture and Mining Commodities of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (APP/3765);

H. **Acknowledging** that almost two-thirds of the member states of the ACP Group are mining countries and/or have mining potential, which, if exploited rationally could contribute to their economic and social development;

I. **Recognising** the key role that commodities play in the economic stability of ACP States, and that the instability of export earnings, particularly in the mining and agricultural sectors, may adversely affect the ACP States’ capacity to attain the Millennium Development Goals;

J. **Acknowledging** that many ACP States depend on the mining sector of the economy for, inter alia, employment, export revenue, industrialization and related economic activities;

K. **Supporting** the broad objectives of REACH to improve human health and the protection of the environment;

L. **Deeply concerned** by the potential negative impact of REACH on exports, particularly in commodities such as minerals and metals, from ACP States to the EU;

M. **Considering** the fact that the REACH regulation may also have adverse effects on other production sectors such as the textile industry;

N. **Convinced** that REACH will be expensive to implement, which may lead to the development of substitute materials with devastating consequences and effects to ACP States with mining economies, and/or the diversion of imports to the EU from non-ACP States;

O. **Conscious** of the lack of technological and human resource capacities in ACP States to detect, register and engage the authorization processes as foreseen in the proposed REACH Regulation;

P. **Convinced** that REACH will adversely affect SMMEs of ACP States, as the emerging small-scale miners would not afford the costs, capacities and resources for compliance with the new EU chemical policy;
Q. Conscious that the additional cost to implement and apply REACH may lead to disinvestment from ACP States, which may result in the loss of employment and the livelihood of millions of people;

R. Recognizing the efforts of ACP States, in particular the commitment and determination of the African leaders, to effectively address the challenges of poverty, underdevelopment, marginalization, social exclusion, economic disparities, instability and insecurity, through initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD);

HEREBY:

1. **Calls** on the EU to ensure that the identified objectives of REACH are in compliance with, and complement the core objectives of the Cotonou Agreement, namely the reduction and eventual eradication of poverty consistent with the objectives of sustainable development, and the gradual integration of ACP States into the world economy;

2. **Calls** upon the EU to, as a matter of urgency, conduct feasibility impact studies on the effects of REACH on ACP States;

3. **Expresses** its willingness to cooperate fully with the EU, and within the spirit of the ACP-EC Partnership, to find joint and common solutions that will negate the potential negative impact of REACH on ACP States;

4. **Further urges** the EU to engage the ACP Group in a transparent and substantive manner in relation to the future discussion, possible amendment, and implementation of the draft REACH legislation;

5. **Calls** on the EU to consider, inter alia, the following amendments to the draft REACH legislation:

   - Exemption of ores, minerals, and alloys from Registration and Authorization;
   
   - Exemption of metals in massive form from Authorization; and
   
   - Reduction of bureaucratic and cost burden implication for ACP States.
6. **Urges** the EU to ensure that the draft REACH legislation will not adversely affect SMMEs of ACP States, and that an enabling environment will be created for the emerging small-scale miners in relation to compliance with the new EU chemical policy;

7. **Calls** upon the EU to provide resources for technical and human resource capacity building programmes to enable, allow and ensure compliance with the proposed REACH legislation by ACP States;

8. **Urges** ACP States to become actively involved in the discussions and debate in relation to REACH, and also calls for intra-ACP exchanges of information on the potential adverse affects of REACH;

9. **Further urges** ACP States to liaise closely with other mine commodity producing countries, such as Australia, Sweden, India, Brazil and Chile, to share knowledge on the potential impact of REACH on commodities such as minerals and metals;

10. **Calls** on the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) to become involved in the discussions and debates in relation to REACH, and to consider the adoption of a Resolution on the impact of REACH on developing countries, and in particular the ACP States;

11. **Requests** the President of the Council of Ministers to forward this Resolution to the Presidents of the EU Council, European Parliament, and European Commission, respectively, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA), and the Heads of ACP Regional Integration Organizations.
The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, on 21st to 22nd June 2005,

Having regard to the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Nairobi – Kenya on the 9th of January 2005;

Having regard to its resolutions in its 74th, 75th and 77th Sessions held in Brussels and Punta Cana on 4-7 December 2001 and 25-27 June 2002 and 13-15 May 2003 respectively, urging the European Commission to normalize relations with the Sudan and resume development cooperation and release the latter’s entitlements under the Stabex for the years 1990-1999;

Having regard to the resolution of the 3rd Summit of ACP Heads of State and Government on resumption of Development Cooperation between the EU and certain ACP States;

1. Warmly welcomes the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Nairobi (Kenya) on the 9th of January 2005 and the progress achieved so far in the implementation of that Agreement;

2. Urges the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) to continue implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in good faith;

3. Welcomes the signing of the Country Strategy Paper for Sudan, the memorandum of understanding governing the utilisation of the Stabex transfers and the National Indicative Programme, on the 25th of January 2005;

4. Urges the European Commission to speed up implementation of the National Indicative Programme under the EDF 9 and previous EDFs with a view to consolidating the peace environment in the Sudan and making the people of Sudan benefit from peace dividends;
5. **Fully** supports the role of the African Union in preserving peace in the Sudan and commends the efforts of the IGAD and partners, especially the Government of Kenya;

6. **Calls on** the EU to continue offering humanitarian assistance to both South Sudan and Darfur regions;

7. **Requests** the President of the Council of Ministers to forward this resolution to the European Commission and the ACP-EC Council of Ministers and the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.

***************
RESOLUTION
OF THE 81ST SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, ON 21ST AND 22ND JUNE 2005

ON THE FINANCING OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, on 21st to 22nd June 2005,

A. RECALLING:

- the objectives contained in the Georgetown Agreement and the Cotonou Partnership Agreement;

- the Declaration of the 4th Summit of ACP Heads of State and Government held on 23 and 24 June 2004 in Maputo, Mozambique, with regard to measures to address poverty and marginalisation of ACP countries; and Decision No. 2 of the 4th Summit on the Millennium Development Goals;

B. HAVING REGARD to the Resolution of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly held in Bamako (Mali) from 13 to 21 April 2005, with regard to "poverty-related diseases and reproductive health in ACP States, in the context of 9th EDF";

c. RECALLING the commitments of the international community on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to eradicate abject poverty and achieve the rest of the seven (07) MDGs and respective targets by 2015 as contained in the UN Millennium Declaration of September 2000;

D. RECALLING:

- the outcome of the G-8 Summit at Kananaskis of 25 – 27 June 2002 and in particular its Plan of Action for Africa and the commitment of the G-8 to systematically monitor the implementation of this Plan of Action;
the commitments of the international community made at the United Nations Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey, 2002) in particular the call for developed nations to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) for official development assistance (ODA); and at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2003);

E. **REAFFIRMING** that advancing the development agenda requires genuine international cooperation and the full implementation of agreed commitments. Increased attention should be given to the implementation of the commitments made at the Conferences of Rio, Beijing, Copenhagen, Cairo and Monterrey, the World Summit on Sustainable Development as well as in the Brussels, Almaty and Mauritius Programmes of Action in favor of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS respectively;

F. **HAVING EXAMINED** the UN Secretary-General's report - In Larger Freedom - of March 2005 and looking forward to the outcome of the UN Summit in September 2005 specifically on the financing of the MDG’s;

G. **HAVING EXAMINED** the recommendations of the UN Millennium Project on the financing of the Millennium Development Goals of 17 January 2005 "Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals";

H. **HAVING EXAMINED** the report and recommendations of the Commission for Africa of March 2005 in particular its call on the international community to agree, in 2005, on a **development plan** (the big push) for a new deal between developed and developing countries as bold and as generous as the Marshall Plan of the 1940s;

I. **HAVING EXAMINED and WELCOMING** the conclusions of the Council of the European Union of 24 May 2005 on the “Millennium Development Goals: EU Contribution to the Review of the MDGs at the UN 2005 High Level Event” and the conclusions on the five key subjects, namely: (a) accelerating progress towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals, (b) financing for development, (c) trade and development, (d) policy coherence for development, and (e) focus on Africa;

J. **HAVING CONSIDERED** the possible implications of the renewed initiative to financing and achieving the MDGs by 2015 on the development prospects of the ACP and the rest of the developing countries;
K. **AWARE** of the need to infuse a greater political impetus to the renewed initiative to financing and achieving the MDGs;

L. **AWARE** of the impending decision by the world leaders at their UN Summit in September 2005, five years after the Millennium Summit, on measures to achieve the MDGs within the remaining ten years of the agreed time-line up to 2015;

M. **AWARE** of the intent of the Government of the United Kingdom to present the recommendations of the Commission for Africa to the Gleneagles G-8 Summit as one of the two substantive agenda issues, the other being climate change;

N. **AWARE** of the growing centrality of the MDGs in global development cooperation dialogue, and that these have become globally accepted benchmarks for broader progress, embraced by donors, developing countries, civil society and major development institutions alike;

O. **AWARE** of the considerable importance of availability of additional financial resources and trading opportunities to the economic and social stability and sustainable development of ACP and other developing countries;

P. **GRAVELY CONCERNED** over the possible increase in the huge gap between scaling-up of ODA and actual aid disbursements in light of the rather onerous conditionalities, tying of aid, rules and procedures that impede aid delivery, in particular the IMF-established expenditure ceilings;

Q. **DEEPLY CONCERNED** about the slow progress in achieving the MDGs particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, and that any failure to inject new impetus will simply protract the marginalization of the ACP countries in the global economy;

R. **ACKNOWLEDGING** the need for additional resources from innovative sources of financing to complement official flows and private direct investment without additional conditionalities on developing countries;

S. **AGREEING** on the need for support to developing countries in attracting greater flows of foreign direct investments (FDIs) and transfer of technology in order to enhance their development;
T. **RECALLING** that the United Nations Millennium Declaration stresses the resolve of the General Assembly to address the special needs and vulnerabilities of small island developing States;

U. **HAVING CONSIDERED** the possible implications of the European Union's new timeline for meeting its ODA commitments and the new ODA pledges by the new EU-10 Members States on the current negotiations of the economic partnership agreements (EPAs), in particular the outstanding issue of additionality of resources;

V. **CONCERNED** by the high volatility of and long-term downward slide in commodity prices of primary products of export interest of ACP States and its impact on export revenues, competitiveness and debt sustainability;

W. **CONCERNED EQUALLY** by the adverse effect of the reform of the EU Common Agricultural Policy, in particular the EC Sugar regime, on the capacity of the ACP States to achieve the MDGs;

X. **CONCERNED EQUALLY** by the already evident adverse effects of climate variability, the increase in the severe weather events, the high frequency of devastating natural disasters on the more vulnerable developing countries, and the climate induced threats to agricultural productivity, to food security, water and energy security and to health that undermine the developing countries’ ability to achieve the MDGs;

Y. **RECALLING** the central objectives of the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement: the eradication of poverty, economic growth, sustainable development, and the gradual integration of ACP States into the global economy;

Z. **REAFFIRMING** our commitments to the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015;

1. **WELCOMES and SUPPORTS** the renewed initiative and the high political commitment to achieving the MDGs by 2015 and, in particular, the financing proposals and the redefinition of debt sustainability in the context of achieving the MDGs;

2. **WELCOMES** the UN agenda to seek a reaffirmation of commitments for achieving the MDGs by 2015 by the world leaders at their Summit in September 2005 in New York;
3. WELCOMES and SUPPORTS the recommendations of the UN Millennium Project on (a) doubling the ODA through achievement of the 0.7% target of Gross National Income (GNI) for ODA by 2015 and reaching 0.5% by 2009; (b) front-loading a large part of this increase through an International Finance Facility; (c) immediate action to support a series of “Quick Wins”; (d) redefining debt sustainability as the level of debt that allows a country to achieve the MDGs and to reach 2015 without an increase in debt ratio; (e) scaling-up mobilization effort through MDG-based poverty reduction development strategies; and (f) the urgent need for the Doha round of trade negotiations to fulfill its development promise;

4. WELCOMES and SUPPORTS the recommendations of the Commission for Africa on financing the MDGs through (i) an immediate 100% debt cancellation for low income countries in sub-Saharan Africa as part of the financing package for these countries to achieve the MDGs; (ii) establishing a debt relief mechanism for all sub-Saharan African countries including those currently excluded from the current schemes; (iii) a special facility to support African countries to address problems caused by commodity-related shocks;

5. WELCOMES and SUPPORTS the recommendations of the Commission for Africa on the development-based trade governance in particular those related to the need for developed countries to ensure that the Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations makes development its absolute priority and delivers this promise;

6. STRESS that economic partnership agreements (EPAs) must be designed to achieve long-term development, economic growth and poverty reduction in ACP countries; and, in this regard, CALLS ON the EU to take a non-merchantilist approach and put development first and integral to the EPA negotiations, and allow each ACP State and Region to make its own decisions on the timing, pace, sequencing, and product coverage of market opening in line with individual countries’ national development plans and poverty reduction strategies;

7. NOTES that the recommendations of the Commission for Africa covers areas of interest to all ACP Member States and, therefore, CALLS for their application to be extended to the entire ACP Group of States;
WELCOMES and SUPPORTS the EU Council decision on scaling-up EU contribution to achieving the MDGs through (i) the EU's reaffirmation of the Barcelona ODA commitments (the Barcelona aquis); (ii) the new timelines for scaling-up ODA commitments by 2009 and 2015 including ODA commitments by the new (EU-10) Member States; (iii) the set-up and implementation of alternative, tailor-made debt relief options for post-conflict and post-natural disaster countries that have been excluded from the HIPC Initiative; (iv) exploring the possibility of using a temporary relief facility for debt servicing that would mitigate external shocks on debt stress; and (v) the three-pronged special focus on Africa; 

WELCOMES and SUPPORTS the EU Council decision with regard to providing (i) additional support for trade adjustment and integration in view of the expected high trade integration costs faced by developing countries; and (ii) substantive financing for trade-related assistance (TRA); 

SUPPORTS the concerted efforts to infuse a new political impetus to achieving the MDGs and related commitments by 2015; 

CALLS ON the world leaders at their next UN Summit in September 2005 in New York, to agree on concrete financing and implementation mechanisms that should ensure quick disbursement of resources for the achievement of the MDGs within the agreed timeframe of 2015; and these mechanisms should build on the recommendations of the UN Millennium Project in particular the pursuit of the MDGs as minimum policy targets in developing countries; 

CALLS ON the UN and other multilateral agencies coordinating global debt relief measures to redefine debt sustainability to include internal debt stock in the context of achieving the MDGs; 

CALLS UPON all parties involved in the preparatory process of the Gleanegles G-8 Summit to accord the report of the Commission for Africa its due attention in order to facilitate the adoption of its recommendations at the G-8 Summit and their implementation thereafter;
14. **CALLS ON** the leaders of the G-8 at their next Summit at Gleanegles to make progress on their commitments for Africa as contained in the Action Plan for Africa that was agreed upon at the Kananaskis Summit (2003); to support the UN target for achieving the MDGs by 2015 and the related financing; and to support the recommendations of the Commission for Africa on ODA targets, MDG-based debt relief and development-based trade governance;

15. **CALLS ON** the EU Members States – as the world’s biggest donor community with over 50% of worldwide ODA – to play their appropriate role by fully implementing the conclusions of the Council of the European Union of 24 May 2005 on the “Millennium Development Goals: EU Contribution to the Review of the MDGs at the UN 2005 High Level Event” and the recommendations of the United Nations on the ODA targets;

16. **COMMENDS** the four EU Member States that have already achieved the goal of 0.7% ODA/GNI and have committed to maintain their ODA at least at that level (Denmark, Luxemburg, the Netherlands and Sweden) and the six other Member States (Belgium, France, Finland, Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom) that have established firm timetables to achieve this target prior to 2015;

17. **CALLS** upon the EU member states to take into consideration the circumstances of highly indebted ACP countries which no longer qualify for some types of ODA, because of their GDP per capita, but which are in need of urgent help if they are to attain the MDGs;

18. **URGES** the remaining of the EU-15 Member States to establish firm timetables for meeting the 0.7% ODA/GNI target by 2015;

19. **CALLS UPON** the new EU-10 Members States to establish firm timetables to reach the “Barcelona acquis” of 0.51% GNI/ODA target by 2015;
20. CALLS ON the European Commission to:

- develop proposals for scaling-up ODA to MDG fast-track countries in 2005 within the context of the ACP-EU cooperation; while recognizing that many countries are already in a position for a massive scale-up on the basis of their needs;

- develop proposals for translating the scaling-up (doubling) of ODA commitments by 2010 through a commensurate doubling of development resources for the next financing protocol;

- develop proposals for leveraging the centralized EU development aid with those of the individual EU Member States with the view of translating the proposed doubling of the EU aid budget into commensurate resources available for all ACP countries across the board;

- establish an **ACP-EU debt relief facility** with sizable funding from the scaled-up ODA which should take up the special debt relief requirements of the ACP countries and, in particular the post-conflict and post-natural disaster countries, and those facing severe and prolonged declines in export price earnings;

- synchronise the proposals on debt relief and focus on Africa to those of the Commission for Africa and adopt the UN proposed redefinition of debt sustainability in the context of achieving the MDGs by also including internal debt stock that constrain the affected countries' capacities to increase and sustain MDG-related investments;

- consider urgently, in the light of the EU Council decision on ODA scaling-up and additional support for trade adjustment, the need for sizable additionality of resources to support the EPA process;

- scale-down the level of conditionalities, rules and procedures governing its ODA with the view of facilitating higher disbursement performance, closer integration with national development strategies, greater predictability and stability, and genuine national ownership and improvement in aid delivery that is commensurate with the proposed scaling-up of ODA;
• prioritise support for measures to improve absorptive capacities for development aid in the ACP countries including mutual recognition of financial rules and procedures in countries where governance structures are well established;

• make the proposals on scaled-up ODA, MDG based debt relief, development-based trade governance, and Commission for Africa-equivalent focus on Africa the new baselines for the ACP-EU cooperation;

21. **STRESSES** that the G-8 Summit’s adoption of the proposed plan of action for achieving the MDGs by 2015 and the related ODA commitments would infuse the much needed political impetus into the UN Summit process and outcome, and the subsequent implementation of global financing mechanisms for achieving the MDGs;

22. **STRESSES** that the proposed new financing commitments (scaling-up of ODA, debt relief and new sources of finance) and commitments on development-based global trade governance should be made part and parcel of the consensus document that will be adopted by the September Global Summit in New York;

23. **EMPHASISES** the importance of an open, and pro-development rule-based multilateral trading system that takes into account the level of development and needs of ACP States, and aims at promotion of economic development and the facilitation of developing countries’ integration into the global economy;

24. **EMPHASISES** the need for the UN and other multilateral agencies to address the specific challenges of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and to implement fully the Barbados Programme for Action for Sustainable Development of SIDS and the follow-up Mauritius Strategy and calls on the EU Members States to play a supportive role in the implementation of these decisions;
25. **CALLS ON** the EU and its Member States and the European Commission to ensure effective coherence in the EU policies on trade, agriculture and development cooperation and, in this regard, urges the EU and its Member States to ensure that the reform proposal of the sugar regime is fair, just and equitable and is respectful of the EU legal and trade obligations towards the ACP States, and through the provision of a remunerative price facilitate the ACP States to achieve the MDGs;

26. **FURTHER EMPHASISES** the need for support to strengthening supply side capabilities and productive capacity in developing countries to improve export capacities and competitiveness as recommended by the Millennium Project Report;

27. **EMPHASISES** the importance of securing reforms of the international financial architecture for an effective voice and participation of developing countries in international decision-making process, and for the full implementation of the Monterrey Consensus with the view to creating stability, reducing the risk of economic and financial crisis, and enhancing the capacity of developing countries to respond to such crises;

28. **CALLS ON** the EU Member States and other developed countries to set targets for greater use of new cleaner technologies and encourage their use in developing countries, and urges the donor community to meet their commitments on funding to help ACP and other developing countries to adapt to the risks and impact of climate change taking cue of the recently established ACP-EU natural disaster facility;

29. **ENCOURAGES** ACP States to put in place appropriate policy frameworks aimed at supporting programmes designed to contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, and **COMMITS OURSELVES** to ensure that domestic and ODA resources for achieving the MDGs will be utilised solely for that course;

30. **COMMITS OURSELVES** to closely monitor the implementation of measures to achieve the MDGs by 2015;

31. **REQUESTS** the President of the Council of Ministers to forward this Resolution to the European Commission, the European Council, EU Member States, the European Parliament, the G-8 Members States, the United Nations (New York).
RESOLUTION
OF THE 81ST SESSION OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
HELD IN BRUSSELS, ON 21ST AND 22ND JUNE 2005

ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, on 21st to 22nd June 2005,

B. RECALLING the objectives contained in the Georgetown Agreement and the Cotonou Partnership Agreement and the Cotonou Partnership Agreement;

B. RECALLING the Declaration of the 4th Summit of ACP Heads of State and Government held on 23 and 24 June 2004 in Maputo, Mozambique, with regard to measures to address poverty and marginalisation of ACP countries; and Decision No. 2 of the 4th Summit on the Millennium Development Goals;

C. HAVING REGARD to the Resolution of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly held in Bamako (Mali) from 13 to 21 April 2005, with regard to “poverty-related diseases and reproductive health in ACP States, in the context of 9th EDF”;

D. RECALLING and EMPHASIZING the commitments of the international community on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to eradicate absolute poverty and achieve the rest of the seven (07) MDGs and respective targets by 2015 as contained in the UN Millennium Declaration of September 2000;

E. RECALLING and EMPHASIZING the outcome of the G-8 Summit at Kananaskis of 25 - 27 June 2002 and in particular its Plan of Action for Africa in response to the NEPAD initiative and the commitment of the G-8 Governments to systematically monitor the implementation of this Plan of Action;

F. RECALLING and EMPHASIZING the commitments of the international community made at the United Nations Conference on Finance for Development (Monterrey, 2003) in particular with regard to its reaffirmation of the commitment by developed nations to achieve the 0.7% target of Gross National Income (GNI) for official development assistance (ODA); and at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2003);

H. **HAVING EXAMINED** the report and recommendations of the Commission for Africa of March 2005 entitled “Our Common Interest” in particular its call on the international community to agree, in 2005, on a development plan (the big push) for a new deal between developed and developing countries as bold and as generous as the Marshall Plan of the 1940s;

I. **HAVING EXAMINED** the recommendations of the G-7 Finance Ministers of 11 June 2005 on the 100% debt relief for the HIPCs and possible extension of the facility to other developing countries with high indebtedness;

J. **HAVING CONSIDERED** the possible implications of the recommendations of the Commission for Africa in particular those on the finance for development, debt relief, and development-based trade governance on Africa’s development opportunities and prospects;

K. **HAVING CONSIDERED** the possible implications of the recommendations of the Commission for Africa on the on-going negotiations of the ACP-EC economic partnership agreements (EPAs) in particular the pursuit for further liberalization of the trade regimes in the African countries as part of the reciprocity requirements of the EPAs, the additionality of financing the EPA-related development needs and to offset costs related to volatility in commodity prices, debt relief measures partly tied to commodity price fluctuations, and fiscal and balance of payments sustainability in the context of achieving the MDGs and socio-economic development goals;

L. **HAVING CONSIDERED** the possible implications of the recommendations of the Commission for Africa on the on-going Doha negotiations at the WTO, in particular the negotiations on agriculture, NAMA, services, review of the WTO rules for regional trade agreements (RTAs), and the need to establish more precise, effective and operational special and differential treatment (S&DT);
M. **HAVING EXAMINED** and **WELCOMING** the conclusions of the Council of the European Union of 24 May 2005 on the “Millennium Development Goals: EU Contribution to the Review of the MDGs at the UN 2005 High Level Event” and the conclusions on five key subjects: (a) accelerating progress towards attaining the millennium development goals, (b) financing for development, (c) trade and development, (d) policy coherence for development, and (e) focus on Africa;

N. **AWARE** of the fact that the outcome of the G-8 Summit will infuse the much needed political impetus to the renewed initiative to financing and achieving the MDGs, and to the impeding decision by the world leaders at their UN Summit in September 2005 on measures to achieve the MDGs within the remaining ten years of the agreed time-line up to 2015;

O. **DEEPLY CONCERNED** about the slow progress in achieving the MDGs, and that any failure to inject new impetus will simply protract the marginalization of Africa and the rest of the ACP countries in the global economy;

P. **CONCERNED** by the high volatility of and long-term downward slide in commodity prices of primary products of export interest of ACP States and its impact on export revenues, competitiveness and debt sustainability;

Q. **CONCERNED** by the high vulnerability of developing countries to natural disasters and by the unprecedented impacts of these natural disasters on the sustainability of the economic development of these countries;

R. **CONCERNED EQUALLY** by the already evident adverse effects of climate variability and the increase in the severe weather events, and the more frequency and more devastating natural disasters on the more vulnerable developing countries, and the climate induced threats to agricultural productivity, to food security, water and energy security and to health that undermines the developing countries’ ability to achieve the MDGs;
S. **WELCOMING** the initiative of the Chairman of the G-8 to place Africa high on the agenda of the G-8 Summit at Gleneagles;

1. **WELCOMES** the recommendations of the Commission for Africa in particular those on the finance for development, debt relief, growth and poverty reduction, development-based trade;

2. **WELCOMES and SUPPORTS** the renewed initiative and the high political commitment to achieving the MDGs by 2015 and, in particular, the financing proposals and the related policy implications, and the redefinition of debt sustainability in the context of achieving the MDGs;

**On finance for development**

3. **WELCOMES** the recommendation to seek a reaffirmation of commitments for achieving the MDGs by 2015 by the developed countries;

4. **WELCOMES and SUPPORTS** the recommendation to double the volume of ODA to Africa and the time-line for delivery of this support and the inherent review process;

5. **WELCOMES** the recommendation of the Commission for Africa for annual meetings between the Finance Ministers of the OECD countries and African Finance Ministers along with representatives of international organizations and civil society to consider aid allocation criteria and suggestions for better allocation of ODA;

6. **CALLS ON** the G-8 Countries to demonstrate leadership by making firm commitments and time-tables for achieving the 0.7% GNI/ODA by 2015;

7. **CALLS ON** the EU Members States – as the world’s biggest donor community with over 50% of worldwide ODA and the biggest development partners for Africa – to play their appropriate role by supporting and implementing the recommendations of the Commission for Africa and those of the United Nations on the ODA targets and related policy implications;
8. **COMMENDS** the four EU Member States that have already achieved the goal of 0.7% ODA/GNI and have committed to maintain their ODA at least at that level (Denmark, Luxemburg, the Netherlands and Sweden) and the six other Member States (Belgium, France, Finland, Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom) that have established firm timetables to achieve this target prior to 2015;

9. **URGES** the remaining EU-15 Member States to establish firm timetables for meeting the 0.7% ODA/GNI target by 2015;

10. **CALLS ON** the EU Member States and other developed countries to set targets for greater use of new cleaner technologies and encourage their use in developing countries, and urges the donor community to establish a special financing facility to help ACP and other developing countries to adapt to the risks and impact of climate change taking cue from the recently established ACP-EU natural disaster facility;

11. **STRESSES** that the G-8 Summit’s adoption of the proposed plan of action for achieving the MDGs by 2015 and the related ODA commitments will infuse the much needed political impetus into the UN Summit process and outcome, and the subsequent implementation of a global financing mechanisms for achieving the MDGs;

**On debt relief**

12. **WELCOMES and SUPPORTS** the recommendations of the Commission for Africa on financing the MDGs through:

   i. an immediate 100% debt cancellation for low income countries in sub-Saharan Africa as part of the financing package for these countries to achieve the MDGs;

   ii. establishing a debt relief mechanism for all sub-Saharan African countries including those currently excluded from the current schemes; and

   iii. establish a special debt relief facility to support African countries to address problems caused by commodity-related shocks;
13. **WELCOMES** the recommendations of the G-7 Finance Ministers of 11 June 2005 on the 100% debt relief for the HIPCs and possible extension of the facility to other developing countries with high indebtedness;

14. **CALLS ON** the G-8 Countries to adopt the recommendations on comprehensive and immediate debt relief for Africa and to adopt the recommendations of the United Nations for the redefinition of debt sustainability in the context of achieving the MDGs by also including internal debt stock that constrain the affected countries’ capacities to increase and sustain MDG-related investments;

15. **CALLS ON** the shareholders of the World Bank, IMF and the African Development Bank to support the recommendations of the G-7 Finance Ministers during the respective annual meetings of these institutions in September;

16. **CALLS ON** the different segments of major donor countries to match the proposals on debt relief and focus on Africa to those of the Commission for Africa;

**On trade governance**

17. **WELCOMES and SUPPORTS** the recommendations of the Commission for Africa on the development-based trade governance in particular those related to the need for developed countries to ensure that the Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations makes development its absolute priority and delivers this promise;

18. **STRESS** that economic partnership agreements (EPAs) must be designed to achieve long-term development, economic growth and poverty reduction in ACP countries; and, in this regard, **CALLS ON** the EU to take a non-merchantilist approach and put development first and integral to the EPA negotiations, and allow each ACP State and Region to make its own decisions on the timing, pace, sequencing, and product coverage of market opening in line with individual countries’ national development plans and poverty reduction strategies;
19. **EMPHASIZES** that the current multilateral trade liberalization cannot make an effective contribution to poverty reduction in sub-Saharan Africa if such liberalization is not compatible to the development objectives of these countries;

20. **STRESSES** that the EU should maintain coherence in its policy-making and to comply with its obligations to ACP States when undertaking its internal policy development;

21. **SUPPORTS** the proposal for a concerted approach to address the volatility of commodity prices and put into place public and private instruments to facilitate stabilization of export incomes of these countries and strengthening their export sectors and export corridors;

**On implementation**

22. **EMPHASIZES** that the recommendations of the Commission for Africa cover areas of interest to all ACP States and, therefore, **CALLS** for their application to be extended to the entire ACP Group of States;

23. **STRESSES** that the proposed new financing commitments (scaling-up of ODA, debt relief and new sources of finance) and commitments on development-based global trade governance should be made part and parcel of the outcome of the G-8 Summit in July 2005, and an integral part of the consensus document that will be adopted by the September Global Summit in New York;

24. **REAFFIRMS** our primary responsibility to the development of our countries and to enhancing national ownership of development programmes with the view to achieving each of the MDGs;

25. **COMMITS OURSELVES** to closely monitor the implementation of measures to achieve the MDGs by 2015;

26. **REQUESTS** the President of the Council of Ministers to forward this Resolution to the Chairman of the G-8 Countries, the G-8 Members States, European Commission, the European Council, EU Member States, the European Parliament, the United Nations (New York), the World Bank, the IMF and the African Development Bank.
The ACP Council of Ministers,

- Meeting in Brussels, on 21st to 22nd June 2005,

A. **RECALLING** the objectives contained in the Georgetown Agreement and the Cotonou Partnership Agreement;

B. **RECALLING** the Declaration of the 4th Summit of ACP Heads of State and Government held on 23 and 24 June 2004 in Maputo, Mozambique, with regard to economic dimension of development; and Decision No. 5 of that Summit on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs);

C. **HAVING REGARD** to the Resolution of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly held in Cape Town (South Africa) and Rome (Italy) in March 2002 and September 2004, respectively, with regard to the negotiations of the economic partnership agreements;

D. **WHEREAS** the negotiations on ACP-EC Economic Partnership Agreements were launched on 27 September 2002 at the all ACP-EC level;

E. **WHEREAS** the ACP and the EU adopted a Ministerial Declaration and conclusions of the first phase of the EPA negotiations on 2 October 2003, which serve as a point of reference and provides guidelines for the negotiations being conducted at regional level;

F. **WHEREAS** regional negotiations were launched since October 2003 with six regional groupings of ACP countries - Central Africa (CEMAC and São Tomé and Príncipe), West Africa (ECOWAS and Mauritania), East and Southern Africa (ESA), Caribbean (CARIFORUM), SADC EPA Negotiating Group and the Pacific countries;
G. **WHEREAS** parties to the regional negotiations have launched the negotiations, in good faith, pursuant to their commitment under the Cotonou Agreement and have thus adopted road-maps outlining joint work plans, structures and indicative negotiating schedules as well as a provisional list of priority issues;

H. **WHEREAS** the ACP and the EU have agreed that EPAs must be instruments for development; EPAs must promote sustainable development of ACP countries; EPAs must enable ACP States to integrate in a smooth and gradual manner into the global economy; and thus EPAs must contribute to the eradication of poverty in ACP States;

I. **WHEREAS** the ACP and the EU have agreed that EPAs will take account of the specific economic, social, environmental and structural constraints of the ACP countries and regions;

J. **HAVING REGARD** to the assurances given repeatedly by the new Commissioners of Trade and Development Cooperation and their commitment to deliver on development in the context of the EPA Negotiations and the decision of the Commission to set up a monitoring mechanism to ensure delivery on development related issues;

K. **HAVING REGARD** to the reports of EPA negotiations at the regional level;

L. **HAVING REGARD** to the report of the Commission for Africa of March 2005 entitled “Our common interest”;

M. **HAVING REGARD** to the decision of the EU Council of 24 May 2005;

Hereby declare:

**PROGRESS ON EPA NEGOTIATIONS**

1. **Expresses grave concern** that the negotiations have not proceeded in a satisfactory manner having failed to start addressing most issues of interest and concern to the ACP regions, in particular the development dimension and regional integration priorities;

2. **Welcomes** the adoption, by the EU General Affairs and External Relations (GAER) Council held on 24 May 2005, of the decision on the MDGs, Aid Effectiveness and Coherence in the EU Policies;
3. **Welcomes** the decision of the GAER Council requesting the European Commission to submit a report on the state of play in the EPA Negotiations;

4. **Stresses** the need for WTO rules to be modified to incorporate legally binding operational S&D provisions in order to create flexibilities for developing countries engaged in Regional Trade Arrangements with developed countries. The revised RTA rules should take into account the specificities and development needs of the least developed, landlocked and small, weak and vulnerable ACP States so as to facilitate the conclusion of EPAs which will be economically, socially and politically sustainable;

5. **Calls** on the EU to support the proposal of the ACP Group submitted to the WTO on the modification of the RTA rules, including Article XXIV of GATT 1994;

6. **Regrets** the disconnect between the public statements of the Commissioners of Trade and Development on the development aspect of EPAs and the actual position adopted during EPA negotiating sessions; **calls on** the Commission to ensure consistency and coherence in their trade and development policies;

7. **Emphasizes** that there is urgent need to clearly define the development dimensions of EPAs; indicating the amount of resources that could be available to the ACP States and regions to address supply side constraints and consider how anticipated revenue losses incurred as a result of liberalization will be addressed;

II **DEVELOPMENT DIMENSION OF EPAs**

8. **Stresses** that economic partnership agreements (EPAs) must be designed to achieve long-term development, economic growth and poverty reduction in ACP countries. In this regard, **calls on** the EU to adopt a non-mercantilist approach and put development first and make it integral to the EPA negotiations;

9. **Stresses** that regional integration is of crucial importance as a step towards the development of the ACP countries. EPAs should therefore support, and be based on the existing regional integration agenda initiatives and objectives within the ACP. In this regard, **calls on** Parties to the negotiations to ensure that future EPAs facilitate regional integration;
10. **Stresses** that the EPA negotiation process should proceed in a manner that ensures the adoption of measures and the provision of resources for implementing Article 37.3 of the Cotonou Agreement. In this regard, **urges** the EC to support the ACP Group in its quest to implement measures to transform their economies, including by enhancing competitiveness, fostering regional integration, upgrading infrastructure, improving investment and building supply side, human and institutional capacities; 

11. **Emphasizes** that additional resources are required to enable the ACP countries to benefit from trade opportunities by building their supply side capacities, including the building of infrastructure, transport and communication systems and measures to enhance their export competitiveness and therefore **welcomes and supports** the EU Council Decision with regard to providing (i) additional support for trade adjustment and integration in view of the expected high integration costs faced by developing countries; and (ii) substantive financing of trade related assistance; 

12. **Emphasizes** that each ACP State and Region should be allowed to make its own decisions on the timing, pace, sequencing, and product coverage of market opening in line with individual countries’ national development plans and poverty reduction strategies; 

13. **Calls** for the establishment of development benchmarks, on the basis of the Cotonou Agreement and the eight MDGs and 18 targets established in the Millennium Declaration on MDGs, against which to assess the conduct and outcome of the EPA negotiations in order to ensure that trade liberalization works in favour of sustainable human development; 

14. **Calls** on the EU to seriously consider the numerous concerns expressed by the ACP Group and in this regard request the EU to adjust its negotiating directives as appropriate.
III. REVIEW AND MONITORING

15. **Stresses** that the ACP-EC Technical Monitoring Committee should meet as soon as possible and regularly to consider progress in the EPA negotiations at the regional level and make recommendations to the ACP-EC Ministerial Trade Committee, which should meet at the earliest opportunity to give political guidance to the negotiators;

16. **Recalls** that there is need to agree as soon as possible on the modalities for the comprehensive review of EPAs in 2006 foreseen in Article 37.4 of the Cotonou Agreement;

17. **Calls** on the Commission to agree jointly with the ACP on the modalities for the Monitoring Mechanism it has proposed to ensure that the EPAs deliver on development.
Mr. Co-President,

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to make a statement on the celebrations of this important anniversary for the ACP Group of States, and for ACP-EU cooperation.

In fact, on 6 June this year, the ACP Group of States celebrated its 30th anniversary at the ACP Secretariat in Brussels. On 6 June 1975, 46 ACP countries signed the Georgetown Agreement in Guyana, thereby affirming their common identity founded on solidarity and the desire for economic and social development, in cooperation with the European Union. They decided to confer a truly legal status on their Group by creating a permanent structure, i.e. the ACP Secretariat (then the ACP General Secretariat) which is located in Brussels. Since then, the Group has grown larger and now comprises 79 Member States spread out across three (3) continents. At the beginning of this 21st century, the ACP Group is the largest regional grouping on the international scene, and a force to be reckoned with in institutions such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Mr. Co-President,

It is true that over time, the Group has expanded its range of activities and fields of action beyond the framework of development cooperation with the European Union, in partnership with international agencies and organisations such as the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), the Commonwealth, the G-90 Alliance (comprising the African Union and the Movement for Least Developed Countries), and the United Nations agencies.

Nevertheless, the ACP Group's specific feature remains the unique model of partnership enjoyed since 1975 through special cooperation relations with the European Union. From the Lomé Conventions to the Cotonou Agreement, whose revision will be formalized by signature during this 30th Joint Council session, these successive agreements have evolved in accordance with international geopolitical and economic developments in diverse sectors including trade, the environment, agriculture, political dialogue, education, health and culture.
Mr. Co-President,

It is my pleasure to announce that the ACP Council of Ministers has decided to officially proclaim the date of 6 June as “ACP Day”, and to organize a year of celebrations for the Group’s 30th anniversary. A number of events will be organised in Brussels as well as in other European capitals, but especially in ACP countries and Regions. These celebrations are meant, not only to enhance the visibility of the ACP on the international stage, but also to deepen awareness within ACP and EU member States of the advantages attendant on this special relationship.

Natural, the diverse and rich cultural heritage of the ACP will be exhibited. I take this opportunity to remind you of how much importance the ACP Group of States attaches to culture as a vehicle for the development of its peoples, and that it is committed to giving that sector its rightful place in the fight against poverty. This commitment will be reflected throughout the anniversary celebrations.

Mr. Co-President,

Allow me also to extend sincere thanks to our partners, especially the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and the European Investment Bank (EIB), who have supported us financially.

Happy Anniversary to the ACP Group of States!