

Groupe des Etats d'Afrique
des Caraïbes et du Pacifique
(Groupe ACP)



African, Caribbean and
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(ACP Group)

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South-South Cooperation Symposium Series

***ACP Group of States and the United Nations Office for South-South
Cooperation: Building Alliances to Strengthen Multilateralism through
South-South & Triangular Cooperation***

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Brussels, Belgium

I. Background and Context

1. In its policy document “Towards the ACP We Want”, the ACP Group of States has clearly established its vision *to become the leading transcontinental organisation working in solidarity to improve the living standards of our peoples through South-South and North-South Cooperation. The Group’s mission is to accelerate the political, economic and social advancement of our peoples through good governance, poverty eradication, promotion of trade, sustainable development and equitable integration into the world d economy.*
2. The 9th Summit of Heads of States and Governments, held on 9 and 10 December 2019, in Nairobi, Kenya, reinforced the stated vision and mission by way of becoming an effective Global Player and a Transformed ACP Committed to Multilateralism. These are fundamental points of departure for strategic policy, institutional and organisational transformations required to address the challenges of the 21st Century and, particularly, the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related Intra-ACP, regional and national development policies.
3. The ACP Group of States shares and supports the understanding that these challenges can only be achieved through collective action which is needed today more than ever before. Collective action requires partnerships understood as “voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both public and non-public, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and, as mutually agreed, to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits” (General Assembly resolution 62/211).
4. The ACP Group sees its relations and diversified partnerships of a transformed ACP with the remit envisaged by the Heads of States and Governments as strengthening and broadening its cooperation, in addition to the longstanding partnership with the European Union, to the Global South, global institutions, international organisations and individual organisations and countries on bilateral bases.
5. Therefore, diversification of partnerships and improved dialogue with international partners is necessary to assure development effectiveness, tangible results and positive impacts on the lives of citizens in ACP countries. New and non-traditional partners that do not have significant direct engagement with ACP countries could be approached (*“Towards the ACP we want”*) through South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

6. Currently, the ACP Group is partnering with several organisations including UN Agencies and Programs (UNDP, UNOSSC, FAO, IFAD, UNIDO), the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), the Commonwealth Secretariat (COMSEC), the Organisation de la Francophonie (OIF), GIZ and Brazil among others. Prospects for new partnerships with Peru, India and as well as with the Office of UNDP in Malabo are underway.
7. In 2016, the ACP Secretariat engaged with the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) one of the leading think tanks in India that works on global economic issues, including development partnership to share its experience and approach to South-South cooperation globally.
8. The envisaged Memorandum of Understanding with India is intended to leverage on the potential of the ACP Information Centre for South-South and Triangular Cooperation by contributing to the ACP Group's capacity to share and disseminate information amongst the ACP countries and between them and other developing countries of the Global South.
9. The Symposium on *ACP Group of States and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation: Building Alliances to Strengthen Multilateralism* is being organised at a crucial time (i) following the revision of the ACP's constitutive act, the Georgetown Agreement in view of a reinvigorated ACP Group to be fit for purpose, (ii) the negotiations of a new ACP-EU Partnership Agreement as a successor to the present ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement and (iii) the new international context where multilateralism is under threat.
10. Discussions in the post-Cotonou agreement have indicated the following prospective, thematic areas for potential Global Alliances:
 - **Peace and Security specifically** addressing security threats, terrorism, violent extremism, cyber security and crimes;
 - **Human rights** to achieve **gender equality** and enhance democracy and rule of law
 - Attainment of SDGs through these cross cutting issues education, **health**, water, sanitation, **women and youth empowerment**;
 - Inclusive sustainable economic growth - structural economic growth, creation of decent jobs for all, **harnessing the development potential of trade**;
 - Climate change – the need for a strong and **decisive collective action on environmental sustainability** and on climate change;
 - **Migration and mobility**;

11. These thematic areas can guide the operationalisation of the vision and mission of the ACP Group that the symposium will attempt to address.

II. Objectives

12. The objective of this symposium is:

- 12.1. to share experience and take stock of the progress made by the ACP Group and its partners in addressing challenges in implementation of the SDGs of Agenda 2030;
- 12.2. identify ways in which existing and new partnerships can contribute as building blocks for a comprehensive approach by the ACP Group of States to more effectively engage in strengthening multilateralism;
- 12.3. explore ways to promote partnerships that enhance ACP's capacity and institutional mechanisms to scale up best practices and technology transfer for the benefit of ACP countries and regions.

III. Participants

13. The symposium will bring together representatives of ACP Member States, Secretariat Experts, CPLP/PALOP, EU Parliament, European Commission and Council, Belgian Government, international, regional and other organizations, financial institutions, emerging economies' countries, officials from UN Agencies, and leaders from the private sector, philanthropy as well as representatives from civil society and academia.

IV. Organisation of the Conference

14. The format of the one-day Symposium will consist of panel presentations made by ACP Group Representatives and its partners followed by interactive discussions with the audience conducted by a Moderator of each session.

V. Expected Outcomes

15. The conference is expected to achieve the following:

- 15.1. **Provide key messages** that will form the basis for an action-oriented draft work plan for SS & TrC to support initiatives at national, regional, intra-ACP and international levels to accelerate achievement of the SDGs;
- 15.2. Identify areas of support for a Plan of Work of the ACP Information Centre for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea;
- 15.3. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of India and the Secretariat of the ACP Group of States