

**DECISION ON THE AFRICAN COMMON POSITION FOR NEGOTIATIONS
FOR A NEW COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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The Executive Council,

1. **TAKES NOTE** the Draft African Common Position for the negotiation of a new Cooperation Agreement with the European Union in the context of Post-Cotonou 2020;
2. **COMMENDS** the PRC, the Task Force and the Commission, for the excellent work accomplished, which highlights all the avenues that could be explored;
3. **WELCOMES** the fact that the Draft proposed clearly sets out the framework for real and frank negotiations with the European Union outside the ACP context;
4. **APPRECIATES** that the draft African Common Position calls for:
 - i) A united and interdependent Africa which speaks with a single voice;
 - ii) A single framework for cooperation from Union to Union/continent to continent, independently of the ACP - EU framework;
 - iii) The preservation and strengthening of the agreements made between States, regions and the European Union, and their extension to all the other States of the Continent.
5. **ADOPTS** the African Common Position on Post-Cotonou 2020, taking into account comments by the Executive Council and **INVITES** the regions that wish to do so, to communicate their contributions to the Commission by 15 April 2018, and in this regard, **MANDATES** the Task Force to finalize the text of the African Common Position and to share it with the Ministers before the 107th Ministerial Meeting scheduled for May 2018 in Lome, Togo;
6. **DECIDES** to initiate negotiations of South-South partnerships with the Caribbean and the Pacific, based on existing partnership models;
7. **REQUESTS** the PRC, in consultation with the Commission, to set up a Group of Political and Technical Negotiators representing Africa;
8. **MANDATES** the PRC, with the assistance of the Commission, to oversee the work of the Group of Negotiators and report thereon regularly;
9. **REQUESTS** the Commission to submit an appropriate draft supplementary budget to the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Executive Council for consideration and adoption for financing the negotiation process.