

ACP Summit Endorses Revised Georgetown Agreement

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Brussels, 19 December 2019/ACP: The ACP Group of States has taken a decisive step towards being the “ACP We Want” with the endorsement of the revised Georgetown Agreement at the recently concluded 9th Summit of ACP Heads of State and Government. The revised Agreement includes significant changes to the organization including a name change from the ACP Group of States to the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (OACPS).

The Georgetown Agreement, created in 1975, is the Constitutive Act of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States which aims to ensure sustainable development and poverty reduction within the ACP’s Member States. At the 7th Summit of ACP Heads of State in Sipopo, Equatorial Guinea and at the 8th Summit in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, Heads of State re-affirmed their aspirations and political will by calling for the transformation of the ACP Group of States into an international organization, taking into account the changing global geopolitical context. In this spirit, the process to revise the Georgetown Agreement was initiated.

In calling for a revision of the Georgetown Agreement, ACP States ascertained their desire to strengthen their cooperation, particularly in the economic field, to take full advantage of the global economy. The revision of the Agreement also puts into evidence the Group’s determination to tackle the challenges to development in all its dimensions, including with respect to environment and climate change, peace and security, gender and private sector development. In addition, ACP States also recognize the international impact they could have as a group and as a major multilateral actor.

Upon receiving the mandate from the Council of Ministers, the Committee of Ambassadors established an Ambassadorial Editing Committee consisting of representatives from all six ACP regions to align and reflect the diverse proposals emanating from the ACP regions. The recommendations were approved by the Council of Ministers and endorsed by the Heads of State and Government at the 9th Summit.

Apart from the change of name, the most significant changes resulting from the revision of the Agreement are as follows:

- The 2019 Agreement now includes 13 chapters, 44 articles and 2 annexes, while the previous Agreement contained 5 chapters and 32 articles.
- The Preamble has been adjusted to reflect the spirit of the revised Georgetown Agreement.
- Each chapter of the Agreement now contains a set of articles on a specific theme.
- The number of themes addressed has been expanded to address global challenges and issues such as the environment and climate change, peace and security.
- The Organisation will have a dispute resolution mechanism.
- The Summit of Heads of State and Government is now charged with the appointment and discharge of the Secretary General.
- Financial provisions will include the establishment of an endowment and trust fund and an audit and budget committee.

To date, 17 Member States have signed the revised Agreement. All Member States who have not yet signed are encouraged to do so. In accordance with article 7 (1)(A) of the Vienna Convention on the law of Treaties, ambassadors based in Brussels may sign on behalf of their countries once they obtain full powers from their governments to sign on their behalf.

Photo: ACP Legal Counsel Dr. Emmanuel Opoku Awuku (standing) looks on as Amb. Olivier J.P. Nduhungirehe signs the revised Georgetown Agreement during the 9th Summit of the ACP Heads of State and Government in Nairobi, Kenya.

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