PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS MEMBER STATES, OF THE ONE PART, AND THE MEMBERS OF THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC STATES, OF THE OTHER PART

THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM,

THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA,

THE CZECH REPUBLIC,

THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK,

THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY,

THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA,

IRELAND,

THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC,

THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN,

THE FRENCH REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA,

THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS,

THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA,

THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG,

HUNGARY,

THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA,

THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS,

THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND,

THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC,

ROMANIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA,

THE SLOVAK

REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND,

THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN,

Contracting Parties to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, hereinafter referred to as the "Member States of the European Union",

and

THE EUROPEAN UNION,

hereinafter jointly referred to as the "EU Party",

of the one part, and

THE REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA,

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA,

THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS,

BARBADOS,

BELIZE,

THE REPUBLIC OF BENIN,

THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA,

BURKINA FASO,

THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI,

THE REPUBLIC OF CABO VERDE,

THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON,

THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF CHAD,

THE UNION OF THE COMOROS,

THE REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO,

THE COOK ISLANDS,

THE REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE,

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA,

THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO,

THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI,

THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA,

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA,

THE STATE OF ERITREA,

THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI,

THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI,

THE GABONESE REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA,

GRENADA,

THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA,

THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU,

THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA,

THE REPUBLIC OF HAITI,

JAMAICA,

THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA,

THE REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI,

THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO,

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR,

THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI,

THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES,

THE REPUBLIC OF MALI,

THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS,

THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS,

THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE,

THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF NAURU,

THE REPUBLIC OF NIGER,

THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA,

NIUE,

THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU,

THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA,

THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA,

THE FEDERATION OF SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS,

SAINT LUCIA,

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES,

THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF SAMOA,

THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE,

THE REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL,

THE REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES,

THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE,

SOLOMON ISLANDS,

THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN,

THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME,

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA,

THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE,

THE TOGOLESE REPUBLIC,

THE KINGDOM OF TONGA,

THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,

TUVALU,

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA,

THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU,

THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE,

Members of the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), hereinafter referred to as the "OACPS Members", of the other part,

hereinafter jointly referred to as the "Parties",

HAVING REGARD to the Revised Georgetown Agreement establishing the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, on the one hand, and the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, on the other;

CONSIDERING their strong links and the close political, economic and cultural ties that unite them;

REAFFIRMING their attachment to the rules-based global order, with multilateralism as its key principle and the United Nations at its core;

CONFIRMING their commitment to sustainable development in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

STRESSING the importance of regular dialogue on issues of mutual interest at all relevant levels;

REAFFIRMING their commitment to consolidating their partnership by coordinating actions in international forums based on common interests, shared values and mutual respect, and cognisant of their ability to shape global outcomes when acting jointly;

CONFIRMING their commitment to democratic principles and human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant international human rights instruments, as well as to the principles of the rule of law and good governance;

RECALLING their strong will to promote peace and security and their international obligations on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as their determination to prevent and prosecute the most serious crimes of concern to the international community;

REAFFIRMING their commitment to foster multi-stakeholder cooperation in support of the achievement of sustainable development, taking account of the different roles played by different stakeholders, while ensuring that they all operate within the rule of law;

STRESSING the urgency to tackle global environmental challenges, the importance of the Paris Agreement on climate change, the urgent need to build stable and sustainable low-carbon economies and societies resilient to climate change, and to move forward to achieve common environmental, climate change and renewable energy goals;

RECOGNISING the importance of structural economic transformation in achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development;

RECALLING their commitment to the principles and rules that govern international trade, in particular those agreed in the World Trade Organization;

RECALLING their commitment to respect labour rights, taking into account the principles laid down in conventions of the International Labour Organization;

RECOGNISING the important role of science, technology, research and innovation in accelerating the transition to knowledge-based societies, facilitated through the use of digital tools in pursuit of sustainable development;

RECALLING their commitment to fostering human and social development, eradicating poverty, and fighting discrimination and inequality, leaving no one behind;

ACKNOWLEDGING that changing demographic dynamics, combined with economic, social and environmental changes offer opportunities for, and pose challenges to, sustainable development;

REAFFIRMING that gender equality and empowerment of women and girls are essential to achieving inclusive and sustainable development;

RECOGNISING the importance of youth for shaping the future and contributing to sustainable development;

REAFFIRMING their commitment to promoting a people-centred partnership and to enhancing people-to-people contacts, including through cooperation and exchanges in the field of science, technology, innovation, education and culture;

REAFFIRMING their commitment to enhancing cooperation and dialogue on migration and mobility;

RECOGNISING the increasing risks caused by natural disasters, economic and other exogenous shocks including pandemics;

CONFIRMING their willingness to collaborate in support of regional and continental integration, particularly with a view to achieving the objectives set out in Agenda 2063 of the African Union and in the integration and cooperation frameworks of the Caribbean and Pacific;

RECALLING the principles of policy coherence for development and aid effectiveness, as well as the principles of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA);

HAVING REGARD to the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, as last amended (the "Cotonou Agreement"),

Part I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1. Objectives

1. The European Union and its Member States, hereinafter referred to as the "EU Party", of the one part, and the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) Members, of the other part, hereinafter jointly referred to as the "Parties", hereby agree to conclude this Agreement, establishing a strengthened political partnership to generate mutually beneficial outcomes on common and intersecting interests and in accordance with their shared values.

2. This Agreement shall contribute to achieving the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015 (the "2030 Agenda"), and the Paris Agreement adopted under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, done at Paris on 12 December 2015 (the "Paris Agreement"), as overarching frameworks guiding the partnership under this Agreement.

3. The objectives of this Agreement are to:

(a) promote, protect and fulfil human rights, democratic principles, the rule of law and good governance, paying particular attention to gender equality;

(b) build peaceful and resilient states and societies, tackling ongoing and emerging threats to peace and security;

(c) foster human and social development, and in particular to eradicate poverty and address inequalities, ensuring that everyone enjoys a life of dignity and that no one is left behind, with special attention paid to women and girls;

(d) mobilise investment, support trade and foster private-sector development, with a view to achieving sustainable and inclusive growth and creating decent jobs for all;

(e) combat climate change, protect the environment and ensure the sustainable management of natural resources; and

(f) implement a comprehensive and balanced approach to migration, so as to reap the benefits of safe, orderly and regular migration and mobility, stem irregular migration while addressing its root causes, in full respect of international law and in accordance with the Parties! respective competences.

4. Partnership dialogue and action tailored to the specificities of the Parties shall constitute the main tools to achieve the objectives of this Agreement.

5. This Agreement shall facilitate the Parties' adoption of common positions on the world stage, reinforcing partnerships to promote multilateralism and the rules-based international order, with a view to driving global action forward.

Article 2. Principles

1. The Parties shall pursue the objectives of this Agreement in a spirit of shared responsibility, solidarity, reciprocity, mutual respect and accountability.

2. The Parties reaffirm their commitment to developing friendly relations among nations, based on respect for the principle of sovereign equality among all states, and to refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations (the "UN Charter").

3. The Parties agree to implement each Regional Protocol in accordance with the broad principles agreed in the General Part, while taking account of the specificities of the regions. They also agree to tailor actions to the different needs of least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked countries, small island developing states (SIDS) and low-lying coastal states, taking into consideration the diverse challenges they face.

4. The Parties shall make decisions and undertake actions at the most appropriate domestic, regional or multi-country level.

5. The Parties shall systematically promote a gender perspective and ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed across all policies.

6. The Parties shall take an integrated approach to their cooperation that incorporates political, economic, social, environmental and cultural elements.

7. The Parties shall intensify efforts to further regional integration and cooperation to best manage security concerns, reap the economic gains of globalisation and address transnational challenges and opportunities as appropriate.

8. The Parties shall promote a multi-stakeholder approach, enabling the active engagement ofa wide variety of actors in partnership dialogue and cooperation processes, including parliaments, local authorities, civil society and the private sector.

9. Cooperation within formal and ad hoc regional formats may be pursued in order to meet the objectives of the partnership under this Agreement more effectively and efficiently. The Parties may also agree on provisions and flexible procedures that enable interested Parties to deepen dialogue and cooperation on specific thematic and cross-regional issues.

Article 3. Partnership Dialogue

1. The Parties shall engage in regular, balanced, comprehensive and substantive partnership dialogue on all areas of this Agreement, leading to commitments and, where appropriate, actions on both sides, for the effective implementation of this Agreement.

2. The Parties agree that the objective of the partnership dialogue shall be to exchange information, foster mutual understanding and facilitate the establishment of agreed priorities and shared agendas at national, regional and international levels. They shall cooperate and coordinate on issues of common interest and new challenges in international settings.

3. The Parties agree that the partnership dialogue shall be conducted in a flexible and tailor made manner, shall take place

at regular intervals in the appropriate format and at the most appropriate domestic, regional or multi-country level, and shall take full advantage of all possible channels, including in regional and international settings. They agree to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership dialogue and to adapt its scope, as appropriate.

4. The Parties agree that parliaments, and, where appropriate, representatives of civil society organisations and the private sector, shall be duly informed, consulted and enabled to feed into the partnership dialogue. Regional and continental organisations shall be associated with the partnership dialogue, as appropriate.

Article 4. Policy Coherence

1. The Parties shall work towards coherent policies at national, regional and international levels with a view to attaining the objectives of this Agreement, through a targeted, strategic and partnership-oriented approach.

2. The Parties shall individually and collectively foster synergies between policies with a view to avoiding or minimising negative impacts that their policies may have on the other Parties. The Parties shall undertake to inform and, where appropriate, consult with the other Parties on initiatives and measures that may significantly affect them.

3. The Parties reaffirm their commitment to policy coherence for development as a crucial element of achieving the SDGs.

Article 5. Actors

1. The Parties acknowledge that governments play a central role in defining and implementing priorities and strategies for their countries. They recognise the crucial role of parliaments in shaping and adopting legislation, agreeing budgets and holding governments to account. They acknowledge the role and contribution of local authorities in enhancing democratic accountability and complementing governmental action.

2. The Parties recognise the important role of sub-regional, regional, continental and intercontinental organisations in achieving the objectives of this Agreement, in particular those of the Regional Protocols.

3. The Parties acknowledge the important role and contribution of stakeholders, in all forms and national characteristics, namely civil society, economic and social partners, including trade union organisations, and the private sector, and agree to promote and strengthen their effective participation with a view to fostering more inclusive and multi-stakeholder policy processes. For those purposes, the Parties shall ensure that all those stakeholders, where appropriate, are informed and consulted on strategies and sectoral policies, provide input into the broad process of dialogue, receive capacity building in critical areas and participate in the implementation of cooperation programmes in the areas that concern them. Such participation in cooperation programmes shall be based on the extent to which they address the needs of the population and on their specific competencies, and have accountable and transparent governance structures.

Article 6. Structure

1. This Agreement consists of the General Part (Parts I to VI), three Regional Protocols ("the Regional Protocols") and Annexes.

2. The General Part and the Annexes shall be legally binding on the Parties.

3. The Regional Protocols shall be legally binding on the EU Party and on the African, the Caribbean and the Pacific OACPS Members, respectively. Nothing in the Regional Protocols and their interpretation and implementation can affect or deviate from the provisions under the General Part and the decisions of the OACPS-EU Council of Ministers.

Article 7. Cross-cutting Themes

1. The Parties agree that systematic account shall be taken of the following cross-cutting themes to inform action in all areas of cooperation: human rights, democracy, gender equality, peace and security, environmental protection, the fight against climate change, culture and youth.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to support capacity building to effectively address challenges and achieve the objectives set out in this Agreement. They shall aim to foster the strengthening of institutions, promote the exchange of best practices and facilitate knowledge transfer and sharing.

3. The Parties shall strengthen the resilience of countries, communities and individuals, and particularly that of vulnerable populations, in the face of environmental and climate change-related challenges, economic shocks, conflicts and political

crises and epidemics and pandemics.

Part II. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Title I. HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE IN PEOPLE-CENTRED AND RIGHTS-BASED SOCIETIES

Article 8.

The Parties reaffirm their determination to promote, protect and fulfil human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic principles, and to strengthen the rule of law and good governance, in compliance with the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international law, in particular international human rights law and, where relevant, international humanitarian law.

The Parties shall promote people-centred and rights-based policies, encompassing all human rights and ensuring equal access to opportunities for all members of society, directed towards sustainable development centred on the human being. The Parties recognise that respect for democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and good governance is an integral part of sustainable development.

Article 9. Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law

1. The Parties, recognising that human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, shall promote, protect and fulfil all human rights, be they civil, political, economic, social or cultural. They shall protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all fundamental freedoms, such as the freedom of opinion and expression, the freedom of assembly and association, and the freedom of thought, religion and belief.

2. The Parties shall commit to the promotion of universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without discrimination based on any ground including sex, ethnic or social origin, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, disability, age, or other status. They commit to fighting all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and all forms of violence and discrimination, including all instances of advocacy of hatred. They commit to the recognition and advancement of the rights of indigenous peoples, as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

3. The Parties shall have partnership dialogue at bilateral level on the death penalty. Where the death penalty is provided for in national legislation and is still applied, the Parties shall adhere to due process and internationally agreed minimum standards.

4. The Parties reaffirm that the universally recognised democratic principles underpinning the organisation of the State ensure the legitimacy of its authority, the legality of its actions reflected in its constitutional, legislative and regulatory system, and the existence of participatory mechanisms. They shall preserve and strengthen the application of those principles by ensuring inclusive, transparent and credible elections with due respect for sovereignty, as well as by allowing and supporting participatory decision-making processes. The Parties shall promote the upholding of electoral best practices and cooperation between them, including on electoral observation within the EU Party and OACPS Members, as appropriate.

5. The Parties shall actively support the consolidation of the rule of law at national, regional and international levels, acknowledging its crucial importance for the protection of human rights and for the effective functioning of democratic institutions. That includes ensuring the existence of an independent, impartial and well-functioning judicial system, equality before the law, the right to a fair trial and due process and access to effective mechanisms of legal redress.

6. The Parties recognise the right to development based on the indivisibility, interdependence, universality and inalienability of all human rights, by virtue of which every human being and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realised. They shall support measures for the enhancement of the right to development and shall ensure, inter alia, equality of opportunity for all to access, and benefit from, basic resources and essential services such as education, health services, food, housing, employment and the fair distribution of income.

7. The Parties agree that respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law shall underpin their domestic and international policies and constitute an essential element of this Agreement.

Article 10. Gender Equality

1. The Parties reaffirm their strong commitment to achieving gender equality, the full enjoyment of all human rights by all, as well as everyone's empowerment as a driver for sustainable development. They shall embody the principle of gender equality in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation.

2. The Parties acknowledge that gender inequality deprives women of their basic human rights and opportunities. They shall adopt and strengthen enforceable legislation, legal frameworks and sound policies, programmes and mechanisms to ensure women's and girls' equal access to, equal opportunities in, equal control over, and full and equal participation in, all spheres of life, on an equal footing with men and boys.

3. The Parties shall focus, in particular, on improving the access of women, and where appropriate girls, to all resources they need throughout life for the realisation of their full potential and the full exercise of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as in respect of quality education, health, employment opportunities, access to and control over economic resources, political decision-making, governance structures and private undertakings, with a special emphasis on women in vulnerable situations. They shall promote women's full and effective participation in, and equal opportunities for, leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life.

4. The Parties undertake to prevent, combat and prosecute all forms of sexual and gender based violence and discrimination in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual exploitation and abuse. They shall take all necessary measures to tackle deeply rooted gender bias and eliminate all harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation and cutting.

Article 11. Inclusive and Pluralistic Societies

1. The Parties undertake to ensure equal opportunities for all members of society in all spheres of life. They shall prevent, prohibit and eradicate discriminatory practices and shall adopt effective measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights.

2. The Parties shall protect and promote freedom of expression, freedom of opinion, freedom of assembly, and media independence and pluralism as pillars of democracy, noting that these are not only human rights but also prerequisites for democracy, development and dialogue.

3. The Parties shall foster inclusive and pluralistic societies, including multi-party democracy. They shall promote the key role of effective, transparent and accountable national and local assemblies and political parties. They shall also promote the active and genuine participation of all stakeholders and citizens, including women and youth, in responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative political processes and decision-making at all levels.

4. The Parties shall preserve and broaden an enabling space for an active, organised, transparent civil society, acknowledging its role in promoting and monitoring democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms, social justice and inclusion, and as defender of rights holders and of the rule of law, thus strengthening domestic transparency and accountability.

5. The Parties, acknowledging that the internet offers a platform to share knowledge and ideas, shall endeavour to make full use of the potential of digital solutions to promote equal public access to information at all levels and participatory decision-making, and to enhance digital competence, while addressing the risks of abuse and promoting open attitudes towards, and respect for, diversity.

Article 12. Good Governance

1. The Parties reaffirm that good governance rests on transparent, responsible, accountable and participatory governments, and appropriate oversight mechanisms. The Parties agree that good governance is critical to the respect of all human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law. They commit to universal access to public services without any discrimination. They further commit to transparency and accountability as integral elements of good governance and institution building.

2. The Parties commit to the transparent and accountable management of human, natural, economic and financial resources for the purposes of equitable benefit sharing and sustainable development.

3. The Parties commit to the creation of an enabling environment for transparency and accountability to thrive in public administration, including enhancing integrity and independence of governance institutions. The Parties shall develop and implement sound public finance management systems compatible with the fundamental principles of effectiveness, transparency and accountability, with a view to protecting public finances and improving the delivery of public services by eliminating administrative bottlenecks and tackling regulatory deficiencies.

4. The Parties shall ensure transparency and accountability in public funding, including financial assistance, and in the delivery of public services. They shall improve revenue collection and tackle tax evasion and avoidance and illicit financial flows. They agree to cooperate in the fight against money laundering and terrorism financing and engage in timely partnership dialogue at bilateral and international levels on matters related to anti-money laundering and terrorism financing.

5. The Parties shall combat corruption at all levels and in all its forms, developing and implementing or maintaining effective, coordinated anti-corruption policies that reflect the principles of the rule of law, proper management of public affairs and public property, integrity, transparency and accountability. They shall adopt legislative and other measures to prevent and prosecute bribery and embezzlement, misappropriation or other diversion of resources by public officials for their direct or indirect benefit, and to recover and return assets obtained through corruption.

6. The Parties recognise and commit themselves to implementing the principles of good governance in the tax area, including the global standards on transparency and exchange of information, fair taxation and the minimum standards against Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS). They shall promote good governance in tax matters, improve international cooperation in the tax area and facilitate the collection of tax revenues. They shall cooperate to enhance capacity to comply with those principles and standards and reap the benefits of a thriving rules-based financial sector. They agree to engage in timely partnership dialogue at bilateral and international levels on tax matters.

7. The Parties agree that good governance shall underpin their domestic and international policies and constitutes a fundamental element of this Agreement. They also agree that serious cases of corruption, including acts of bribery leading to such corruption, constitute a violation of that element.

Article 13. Public Administration

The Parties, recognising the importance of well-resourced, efficient and effective civil service systems and processes with a strong human resource base, commit to fostering collaboration in this area. They also agree to cooperate with a view to modernising their public administrations and developing an accountable, efficient, transparent and professional civil service. In that regard, efforts shall aim at, inter alia, improving organisational efficiency, increasing institutions' effectiveness in service delivery, accelerating the deployment of e-governance and digital services and the digitalisation of public registries, and reinforcing the processes of decentralisation, in accordance with their respective economic and social development strategies.

Article 14. Statistics

1. The Parties, acknowledging that statistics are crucial for the achievement of sustainable development, shall develop and strengthen their statistical systems, including gathering, processing, quality control and dissemination of statistics, with a view to contributing to the long-term objective of quality, internationally comparable, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data, as those are key to inform decision-making in support of their respective social and economic development priorities, as well as to support and monitor progress.

2. The Parties commit to increasing statistical literacy and to promoting the use of data for decision-making by engaging with users in and out of government, and through the use of new technologies and data sources. They shall collaborate in the use of technology for data collection and protection and promote the dissemination of comparable statistics at national and regional levels.

3. The Parties shall ensure the professional independence of their statistical offices.

Article 15. Personal Data

1. The Parties recognise their common interest in protecting every individual's right to privacy with respect to the processing of personal data, as well as the importance of maintaining strong data protection regimes and ensuring their effective enforcement. They shall ensure, inter alia, that personal data are processed fairly and in a transparent manner and collected for explicit, specified and legitimate purposes and not processed in a way incompatible with those purposes.

For the purpose of this Article, "processing" means any operation or set of operations which is performed on personal data or on sets of personal data, whether or not by automated means, such as collection, recording, organisation, structuring, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, alignment or combination, restriction, erasure or destruction.

2. The Parties shall ensure a high level of protection of every individual's personal data in accordance with existing

multilateral standards and international legal instruments and practices. To that end, they shall establish appropriate legal and regulatory regimes and policies, as well as appropriate administrative capacity to implement them, including independent supervisory authorities.

Title II. PEACE AND SECURITY

Article 16.

The Parties acknowledge that peace, stability and security, including human security and resilience, are critical for sustainable development and prosperity. There cannot be sustainable development without peace and security, and without inclusive development there cannot be sustainable peace and security. The Parties shall pursue a comprehensive and integrated approach to conflict and crises including situations of fragility, counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and address all serious crimes of concern to the international community. The Parties shall address new or increasing security threats, including terrorism and its financing, violent extremism, organised crime, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, piracy and trafficking in persons, drugs, arms and other illicit goods, and cybercrime and threats to cybersecurity.

Article 17. Conflicts and Crises

1. The Parties shall apply an integrated approach to conflict and crises, including prevention, mediation, resolution and reconciliation efforts as well as crisis management, peacekeeping and peace support. They shall support transitional justice through context-specific measures promoting truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence. They shall contribute to institution- and state-building and human security, paying particular attention to situations of fragility.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to prevent and address the root causes of conflict and instability holistically. They shall pay special attention to the effective governance of natural resources, notably in relation to raw materials, so as to sustainably benefit society as a whole and ensure that illegal exploitation and trade do not contribute to causing and sustaining conflict.

3. The Parties recognise the importance of mutually respectful dialogue and consultation as a means of conflict resolution, involving local authorities and communities, as well as civil society organisations. In that context, they shall act in close cooperation with continental and regional organisations.

4. The Parties shall take all suitable action in a coordinated way to prevent an intensification of violence, to limit its territorial spread, and to facilitate the peaceful settlement of disputes. They shall pay particular attention to ensuring that financial resources are used in accordance with the principles and objectives of this Agreement, and to preventing the diversion of funds for belligerent purposes. The Parties shall also take measures to prevent mercenary activities and to address the problem of child soldiers and shall endeavour to set responsible limits on military expenditure.

5. The Parties shall take all suitable action in post-conflict situations to stabilise the situation during the transition in order to facilitate the return to a non-violent, stable and democratic situation. This may include supporting disarmament and demobilisation as well as the return and sustainable reintegration of former combatants into society. The Parties shall ensure the creation of the necessary links between emergency measures, rehabilitation and longer-term development goals.

6. The Parties shall promote the effective participation of all citizens, including women and young people, in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, mediation, resolution and humanitarian response, as well as in crisis management, peacekeeping and peace support. The Parties consider it important to address the situation of women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence in conflicts, and to address the distinct problem of crime and violence against vulnerable people and persons with disabilities.

Article 18. Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

1. The Parties acknowledge that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery, both to state and non-state actors, represents one of the most serious threats to international stability and security. The Parties therefore agree to cooperate in, and contribute to, countering the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery, in full compliance with, and domestic implementation of, their existing obligations under international disarmament and non proliferation treaties and agreements, as well as other relevant international obligations. The Parties agree that this provision constitutes an essential element of this Agreement.

2. The Parties furthermore agree to cooperate in countering the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery: first through taking steps to sign, ratify or accede to, as appropriate, and fully implement and comply with all relevant

international instruments; second through establishing and maintaining an effective system of export controls, controlling the export as well as the transit of WMD-telated goods, including a WMD end-use control on dual-use technologies and containing effective sanctions for breaches of export controls; and third through cooperating in multilateral fora and export control regimes.

3. The Parties agree to establish regular partnership dialogue that will complement and consolidate their cooperation in countering the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery.

4. The Parties, considering that chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risks may have a highly disruptive effect on societies and recognising that they may stem from criminal activities, including illicit proliferation, trafficking, terrorism, accidents or natural hazards, such as pandemics, shall cooperate in order to reinforce institutional capacity to mitigate those risks.

Article 19. Serious Crimes of Concern to the International Community

1. The Parties agree to act together to prevent genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes by making use of appropriate bilateral and multilateral frameworks, in line with the principle of responsibility to protect.

2. The Parties, reaffirming that the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole must not go unpunished, shall ensure the fair and effective investigation and prosecution thereof by taking measures at national, regional and international levels, as appropriate.

3. The Parties consider that the establishment and effective functioning of the International Criminal Court (ICC) constitutes an important development for international peace and justice. They reiterate their commitment to fully cooperate with national, regional and international criminal justice mechanisms, including the ICC, consistent with the principle of complementarity. They are encouraged to ratify and implement the Rome Statute of the ICC and related instruments, and to further enhance the effectiveness of the ICC. Efforts shall be made to strengthen criminal justice mechanisms at all levels.

Article 20. Terrorism and Violent Extremism

1. The Parties, reiterating their firm condemnation of all acts of terrorism and violent extremism and radicalisation, undertake to combat those acts through international cooperation, in accordance with the UN Charter and international law, relevant conventions and instruments. The Parties, recognising that the fight against terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations is a shared priority, shall work together at all levels to prevent and combat terrorism, violent extremism and radicalisation. The Parties, recognising the importance of tackling all factors contributing to violent extremism in all its forms, including religious intolerance, hate speech, xenophobia, racism as well as other forms of intolerance, commit to opposing violent extremism and foster religious tolerance and inter-religious dialogue.

2. The Parties agree that it is essential that the fight against terrorism be conducted with full respect for the rule of law and in full conformity with international law, including international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, the principles of the UN Charter, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and statements and relevant international counter-terrorism-related instruments.

3. The Parties shall cooperate in protecting critical infrastructure, addressing terrorism-related challenges affecting borders, as well as strengthening civil aviation security.

Article 21. Organised Crime

1. The Parties, acknowledging the negative political, economic, cultural and social implications of organised criminal activities, shall strengthen cooperation to prevent and combat those activities more effectively. They shall work together under an integrated approach to address root causes and provide alternatives to crime. In that regard, they shall address the links between organised crime and human trafficking and migrant smuggling, the illicit trafficking of weapons, hazardous materials, narcotics and their precursors, wildlife, timber and cultural goods, and other illegal economic and financial activities.

2. The Parties commit to increasing efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons and to supporting in the drafting and implementation of appropriate legislative and institutional frameworks and strategies, with particular attention to persons in vulnerable situations, including women, children and unaccompanied minors, and to their specific needs. The Parties continue to uphold the standards of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, done at New York on 15 November 2000, and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.

3. The Parties shall enhance efforts to recover and return stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime. In that regard, they shall strengthen legal and administrative frameworks to fight money laundering and illicit financial flows, including fiscal fraud and public procurement fraud, and active and passive corruption in both the private and public sector, which can have a debilitating effect on domestic resource mobilisation.

4. The Parties shall promote citizen security, with a particular focus on strengthening institutions and the rule of law, protecting human rights, and fostering justice and security sector reforms. They shall promote multi-disciplinary programmes aimed at addressing vulnerable groups and supporting victims of violence, including gun violence, as well as mediation and other community-based prevention and reconciliation solutions.

Article 22. Maritime Security

1. The Parties agree to the strengthening of maritime security, in particular addressing different forms of crime committed at sea and illegal trafficking, countering piracy and armed robbery at sea, protecting critical maritime infrastructures, and promoting freedom of navigation and the rule of law at sea, in line with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, done at Montego Bay on 10 December 1982 (UNCLOS).

2. The Parties agree to strengthen efforts in the area of maritime law enforcement to tackle maritime threats in countries most affected by crimes committed at sea. They agree to reinforce investigation and prosecution processes as a way of countering crimes committed at sea. They also agree to promote the implementation of piracy prosecution models within the national jurisdiction as a regional criminal justice response and deterrent mechanism against crimes committed at sea such as piracy, armed robbery, marine and water pollution, smuggling of migrants, drugs and arms trafficking and shipping of nuclear waste. The Parties agree to promote regional initiatives in the areas of maritime security, the fight against piracy and protection against marine pollution.

Article 23. Small Arms and Light Weapons and other Conventional Weapons

1. The Parties acknowledge that the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons poses a grave threat to international peace and security.

2. The Parties agree to reinforce the fight against the illicit trade, excessive accumulation, and uncontrolled spread of small arms, light weapons and other conventional weapons and their ammunitions, including as a consequence of inadequately secured and improperly managed stocks and stockpiles, in line with the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The Parties agree to promote intelligence-led tracking of trafficking networks to counter more effectively the risk that the large-scale outflows of state stocks continue to pose to regional stability. They shall work towards enhancing national capacities of competent law enforcement units and focal points to collect, seize, trace and analyse illicit firearms and related criminal justice data, to enhance understanding of and monitor illicit trafficking flows, and to support information exchange and international cooperation.

3. The Parties recognise the importance of putting in place controls on the international trade in conventional arms, including their import and export, in line with existing international standards, including the Arms Trade Treaty, done at New York on 2 April 2013, and relevant UN resolutions. They shall endeavour to apply those controls in a responsible manner, as a contribution to international and regional peace, security and stability and to the reduction of human suffering, as well as to the prevention of the diversion of conventional arms to unauthorised actors. The Parties also recognise the importance of domestic regulation of, and controls over, the legal acquisition and possession of firearms, with a view to reducing armed violence.

4. The Parties shall cooperate with a view to clearing mines and explosive remnants of war, including improvised explosive devices.

Article 24. Illicit Drugs

1. The Parties shall endeavour to ensure a comprehensive, balanced, integrated and evidence based approach towards preventing and addressing the illicit trade in drugs and new psychoactive substances, as well as promoting drug demand reduction. To that end, they shall address risk factors affecting individuals, communities and society, which may include a lack of services, infrastructure needs, drug-related violence, exclusion, marginalisation and social disintegration, in order to contribute to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies.

2. The Parties agree that drug policies and actions, including through the involvement of civil society, the scientific community and academia, shall be aimed at reinforcing structures for preventing and effectively addressing illicit drugs, reducing measurably the supply of, trafficking in, and demand for illicit drugs.

3. The Parties shall aim to reduce the adverse consequences of drug use for individuals and society as a whole, as well as to effectively reduce the diversion of and illicit trafficking in scheduled and non-scheduled precursors, including designer precursors.

4. The Parties shall cooperate closely with each other and with relevant international organisations with a view to maintaining coordinated efforts and actions against the illicit drug trade.

Article 25. Cybersecurity and Cybercrime

1. The Parties recognise the importance of an open, secure and stable, accessible and peaceful information and communication technologies (ICT) environment based on the norms, rules and principles for responsible state behaviour and the application of existing international law. To that end, the Parties commit to strengthening cooperation to promote cyber security, to prevent and combat high-technology cyber and electronic crime and social media abuse, and to improve network security through the exchange of best practices that increase cyber resilience, including as regards the protection of critical infrastructure.

2. The Parties acknowledge the need to prevent and tackle cybercrime, including online child sexual exploitation and abuse, by cooperating and exchanging best practices to fight cybercrime offences, building on existing international norms and standards, including those of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, done at Budapest on 23 November 2001, and the African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection, done at Malabo on 27 June 2014.

Article 26. Law Enforcement Cooperation

1. The Parties shall facilitate cooperation among regional and international law enforcement authorities, agencies and services with a view to disrupting and dismantling transnational crime and terrorist threats common to them. Such cooperation shall contribute to crime prevention and shall comprise, inter alia, exchanges of views on legislative frameworks, as well as administrative and technical assistance aimed at strengthening the institutional and operational capabilities of law enforcement authorities and the exchange of information and measures related to investigations.

2. The Parties, recognising the importance of secure borders, shall strive to manage existing and future challenges affecting borders, pursuing an integrated border management approach. They shall promote legitimate cross-sectoral responses aiming at preventing, detecting and, where appropriate, repressing cross-border crime and other risks.

Title III. HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Article 27.

The Parties reaffirm their determination to work together towards sustainable development and poverty eradication in all its forms, to tackle inequalities and to promote social cohesion. They also agree to cooperate to ensure that everyone has the necessary means to enjoy a life of dignity with an adequate standard of living, including through appropriate social protection systems and social services. They shall pay special attention to women and girls, youth, children and the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people, in line with the principles of leaving no one behind, and of reaching the furthest behind first. They also agree to work together to address the challenges and opportunities presented by rapid population growth.

Chapter 1. ACCESS TO SOCIAL SERVICES

Article 28. Education

1. The Parties shall support inclusive lifelong learning and equitable quality education at all levels. They shall work to ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education and have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre primary education, with due regard to gender gaps. They shall work to ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university. Special attention shall be given to investing in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and to promoting digital and arts education for all.

2. The Parties shall intensify efforts to ensure that everyone has the knowledge, skills and capabilities to enjoy improved quality of life, to be fully engaged in society, to contribute to the social and economic well-being of their communities, and to participate actively and equitably in democratic and cultural life.

3. The Parties shall promote safe schools and well-functioning education systems, with adequate resources for planning, managing and ensuring the effectiveness of education and training provision, including through online and other non-conventional means. They shall cooperate to establish and strengthen quality assurance systems and the mutual recognition of qualifications. They shall facilitate the mobility of students, staff and academics between and among the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and the European Union.

Article 29. Health

1. The Parties recognise that health is central to people's lives and a key indicator of sustainable development. They reaffirm their commitment to protecting and promoting the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health for all.

2. The Parties shall strengthen national health systems with sustainable health financing mechanisms and resources, operational infrastructures, skilled health workforces, including as regards recruitment and retention, and appropriate technologies, such as digital tools, in support of mobile health development.

3. The Parties shall promote universal health coverage, equitable and universal access to comprehensive and quality healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines.

4. The Parties shall cooperate to prevent and address communicable diseases and other major transboundary health threats such as anti-microbial resistance, and to reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases through better prevention and control. They shall cooperate to address global health crises and prevent them from escalating, inter alia by supporting early warning systems for a swift exchange of information, preparedness and early action in life-saving humanitarian assistance, and the development of coherent and multi-sectoral plans to enhance the capacity of health systems. They shall support research and development, and the deployment of vaccines, diagnostics and medicines.

5. The Parties shall support universal access to sexual and reproductive health commodities and healthcare services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.

Article 30. Food Security and Improved Nutrition

1. The Parties recognise that achieving food security and improved nutrition constitutes a major global challenge in the fight against poverty and growing inequality and therefore agree to address the structural causes thereof, which include conflicts, crises, natural resource degradation and climate change.

2. The Parties shall promote resilient livelihoods, secure access to land, water and other resources, and promote inclusive and sustainable growth in agricultural production and productivity, and efficient value chains.

3. The Parties shall promote actions on adaptation to climate change and variability throughout the food production value chains.

4. The Parties shall aim to provide access for all to affordable, safe, sufficient and nutritious food, to increase the capacity for diversified food production, and to develop food security and nutrition policies and social protection mechanisms for food security and improved nutrition that enhance the resilience of the most vulnerable, particularly in countries facing recurrent crises.

5. The Parties shall strengthen coordinated, accelerated and cross-sectoral efforts to end hunger, address all forms of malnutrition and ensure that famine be avoided in all circumstances.

Article 31. Water, Sanitation Services and Housing

1. The Parties shall promote universal access to adequate and safe drinking water, including through sustainable and integrated water resources and systems management, as well as through more efficient use of water and water recycling.

2. The Parties shall aim to ensure adequate and equitable access to sanitation services, including waste management and hygiene promotion for all, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.

3. The Parties acknowledge that adequate, safe and affordable housing has a transformative impact on vulnerable and marginalised communities, and has significant impacts on people's health and their communitiesâ socio-economic development. The Parties shall work towards ensuring access to adequate, safe and affordable housing for all through the development of policies, strategies, planning and building codes and towards upgrading slums.

4. The Parties shall promote access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, and well-established energy systems that support, inter alia, the water, sanitation services and housing sectors.

Chapter 2. INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL COHESION

Article 32. Social Cohesion and Protection

1. The Parties shall aim to enhance social cohesion by progressively achieving greater equality and social inclusiveness and by ensuring that human and social development advances in parallel with economic development, leaving no one behind. Special attention shall be paid to those who are in disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalised situations, including the elderly and orphans, in line with the principles of solidarity and non-discrimination. In particular, they shall promote:

(a) economic policies oriented to a more inclusive society, allowing for better distribution of income and value created;

(b) equitable and sound fiscal and wage policies, allowing for better redistribution of wealth, ensuring adequate levels of social expenditure and reducing the informal economy;

(c) effective social policies and equitable access to social services, social assistance and security, and justice; and

(d) employment policies designed to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and to achieve equal pay for equal work.

2. The Parties shall promote the development and implementation of policies and systems of social protection and security in order to eradicate poverty and enhance social cohesion. They acknowledge the transformative role in societies of social protection policies and systems, fostering equity, promoting social inclusion and dialogue with social partners, and strengthening inclusive and equitable economic growth. They commit to building progressively universal, nationally owned

social protection systems, including the adoption of minimum social protection floors.

3. The Parties shall promote the rights of persons with disabilities to ensure their full inclusion in society and their equal participation in the labour market, taking into account their specific needs. They shall take concrete steps to sign, ratify and fully implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, done at New York on 13 December 2006.

Article 33. Decent Work

1. The Parties reaffirm their commitment to achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities. To that end, they shall promote the Decent Work Agenda as set out in the 2008 International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

2. The Parties reaffirm their obligations as members of the ILO and their commitments under the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up. They reaffirm their commitment to social dialogue and to the promotion and effective implementation of the internationally recognised core labour standards, as defined by the relevant ILO conventions and protocols on the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, the abolition of forced labour and ending of modern slavery and human trafficking, the elimination of child labour with priority given to the worst forms, minimum age at work, equal remuneration and non-discrimination in respect of employment. They shall make sustained and continuous efforts to ratify or accede to, as appropriate, those conventions and protocols if they have not yet done so.

3. The Parties shall promote safe and secure working environments for all workers. They shall adopt and implement measures and policies regarding occupational safety and health, both in the formal and informal economy, and shall work towards establishing and maintaining an effective labour inspection system, in line with international labour standards as defined by the ILO.

Chapter 3. POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Article 34. Demography

1. The Parties acknowledge that demographic growth and demographic shifts can have a significant impact on development gains and economic progress, and shall work together towards an integrated approach that minimises the challenges and maximises the benefits of the demographic dividend. To that end, they shall aim to establish, support, maintain and sustain structural reforms and transformations in economic and social systems to create decent education, employment and

livelihood opportunities for an emerging young population.

2. The Parties shall support inclusive policy dialogue processes and incorporate demographic trends and projections into all policies in order to empower and promote the full and active participation of children and young people in society, and to empower and safeguard the needs of the elderly and enable their active engagement.

3. The Parties shall enhance urbanisation that is inclusive and sustainable, through effective urban governance and planning, with a view to minimising any adverse impact on the environment and addressing any other negative social and economic consequences caused by rapid population growth in urban areas. They shall work to effectively address the challenges and opportunities presented by rapid urbanisation, including through national urban policies, participatory integrated urban planning, delivery of municipal services including waste management, and financing of urban development and infrastructures, in order to create resilient and liveable cities and towns.

Article 35. Youth

1. The Parties agree to promote the active participation of young people in society, including in the development, implementation, and follow-up of policies affecting them. This shall include:

(a) support in acquiring knowledge, skills and capabilities to engage fully in society, including skills relevant to the labour market, through education, vocational and technical training, and access to digital technologies;

(b) the creation of decent employment opportunities, including through support for youth entrepreneurship; and

(c) the promotion of youth empowerment and responsible citizenship, by opening spaces for active youth participation in political and cultural life, and in building and sustaining peace, including with a view to countering radicalisation and violent extremism.

2. The Parties agree that the provision of a safe and nurturing environment for children is a vital element in fostering a healthy young population, able to reach its full potential, including physical, psychological, social and economic dimensions. They shall work to ensure that girls' and boys' rights and needs are recognised and realised from birth and early childhood to adolescence and their transition into adulthood. They shall work to improve the protection of children and their participation in decisions that concern them.

Article 36. Gender Equality and Women and Girls' Empowerment

1. The Parties acknowledge that gender equality and women's economic empowerment are essential to achieving equitable sustainable development and inclusive growth. They shall undertake reforms, including through the creation and consolidation of legal frameworks, to give women equal rights to economic and financial resources, as well as access to, ownership of and control over land and natural resources, inheritance, and other forms of property. They shall undertake actions to increase the full and effective participation of women in political life.

The Parties shall, in addition to equal access to employment and decent work conditions, promote the recognition of unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibilities within the household and the family at large.

2. The Parties commit to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the outcomes of their review conferences and commit to sexual and reproductive health and rights, in that context.

3. The Parties acknowledge that menstrual health management is important for women's and girls' health, as well as for their dignity, mobility and well-being, and they therefore agree to promote adequate and appropriate supporting measures.

Chapter 4. CULTURE

Article 37. Culture and Sustainable Development

1. The Parties reaffirm that culture is a key element of sustainable development and an integral component of its social, economic and environmental dimensions. They commit to the integration of a cultural perspective in their development policies and strategies, by taking into consideration cultural specificities, and local and indigenous knowledge systems.

2. The Parties shall strengthen the contribution of cultural actors to sustainable development through their participation in enhanced dialogue, professional networks and multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Article 38. Cultural Diversity and Mutual Understanding

1. The Parties recognise that all human beings have the right to participate freely in the cultural life of the community, in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and commit to protecting and conserving cultural rights and freedom of artistic expression.

2. The Parties agree to promote a vision of human and social development that incorporates dialogue among cultures and the recognition of cultural diversity as common heritage of humanity. They commit to strengthening mutual understanding and knowledge of their respective cultures, with due respect for diversity, universal values and human rights, by fostering the cultural dimension in education, as well as cultural exchanges and joint initiatives geared towards encouraging intercultural dialogue.

3. The Parties recognise the role that culture plays in the preservation of peace and national cohesion. They affirm that respect for the diversity of cultures, tolerance, dialogue and cooperation, in a climate of mutual trust and understanding, are key to establishing and maintaining peace and security and in reconciliation processes, as well as restoring the collective memory and the social linkages among communities. They shall strengthen the role of culture in building resilience, as well as achieving sustainable post-crisis recovery and reconstruction, particularly in urban development.

Article 39. Cultural Heritage and Creative Sectors

1. The Parties shall promote the recognition of heritage as a unifying factor, which may reflect diverse identities and legacies, while nurturing the creation of shared values. They shall work to safeguard, preserve, conserve and develop both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, in accordance with international standards and conventions as a vehicle for social cohesion, creativity and innovation.

2. The Parties agree that the cultural and creative sectors, including contemporary arts, are central to inclusive economic growth, diversification and the creation of job opportunities. To that end, they shall support cultural entrepreneurship and the long-term development of the cultural and creative sectors.

3. The Parties shall take measures, in accordance with existing international law, to prevent and combat the illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property. They shall promote conservation, capacity building and collaboration among cultural heritage professionals, source communities and cultural institutions, and shall pursue international cooperation and continuous dialogue to promote access to cultural heritage.

Title IV. INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Article 40.

1. The Parties recognise the importance of strengthening their economic relations in their mutual interest and for mutual benefit, with a view to achieving structural economic transformation through inclusive, sustainable economic growth and development in line with the SDGs, taking into account their respective levels of development. They shall pursue integrated strategies that incorporate the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. They shall take appropriate measures to generate decent jobs for all and support the transition to low emission, resource-efficient economies. They shall support the socio-economic empowerment of marginalised groups, women and youth.

2. The Parties shall support private sector development, and shall attract and retain domestic and foreign investment, including investments from their diaspora. They shall bolster trade and cooperate on science, technology, innovation and research with a view to establishing strong, competitive and diversified economies, deepening regional integration, and fostering the integration of OACPS Members' economies into regional and global value chains. They shall work towards improved macroeconomic and financial stability to generate increased investment and strengthen sustainable economic growth. They agree to enhance productive and regulatory capacities, strengthen entrepreneurship and promote manufacturing and industrialisation, focusing on innovation and value addition in the productive and services sectors. The Parties shall cooperate to strengthen capacities to facilitate structural economic transformation and to enhance sustainable trade.

3. The Parties shall promote public-private dialogue focusing on issues that positively impact their efforts on economic transformation and sustainable economic growth, and shall engage with all relevant stakeholders and ensure respect for, and protection of, human rights and core labour standards.

Chapter 1. INVESTMENT

Article 41. Mobilisation of Sustainable and Responsible Investment

1. The Parties undertake to mobilise sustainable and responsible investment with a view to enhancing inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development. To that end, they shall establish a conducive investment climate, which attracts domestic and foreign investment, including investment from their diaspora, and maintains the right to regulate through transparent, predictable and efficient regulatory, administrative and policy frameworks.

2. The Parties agree to support the necessary economic and institutional reforms and policies that are grounded in a country's overall development strategy and that are coherent and synergistic at national, regional and international levels with a view to creating a conducive environment for sustainable investment and facilitating the development of a dynamic, viable and competitive private sector.

3. The Parties shall cooperate to establish sound financial systems to mobilise investment for sustainable projects. They shall take measures to support investment by increasing access to financing through technical assistance, grants, guarantees and innovative financial instruments to mitigate risk, boost investor confidence and leverage private and public sources of finance. In doing so, they shall also take account of the need to address market failures or sub-optimal investment situations while ensuring additionality of investment that would not have taken place without those support measures. They shall pay special attention to the priority sectors set out in Article 44(6).

4. The Parties agree to improve the regulatory environment as well as the quality, availability and accessibility of financial and non-financial services, to support the development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the context of domestic investment mobilisation.

5. The Parties understand and recognise the importance of responsible investment by the relevant actors as a means to achieving long-term sustainable economic, social and environmental value. In support of that objective, they shall promote corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices and responsible business conduct (RBC), including internationally recognised implementation guidelines, standards and applicable instruments that provide guidance to investors, governments and other actors on implementation of CSR and RBC as a complement to national laws and other applicable legislation.

Article 42. Investment Facilitation and Protection

1. The Parties agree to facilitate investment through legislation, regulations and policies aimed at reducing regulatory and administrative barriers, enhancing transparency and avoiding harmful competition for investment. They agree that such measures shall be developed in a transparent manner, and made publicly available to encourage public-private dialogue and provide the opportunity for all stakeholders to participate.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to promote the effective utilisation of digital tools to facilitate investment.

3. The Parties, in line with their respective strategies, agree on the importance of providing legal certainty and adequate protection to established investments, the treatment of which shall be non-discriminatory in nature and shall include effective dispute prevention and resolution mechanisms. In that regard, they reaffirm the importance of concluding international investment agreements that fully preserve their sovereign right to regulate investment for legitimate public policy purposes.

4. The Parties shall strengthen the capacity of relevant public and private institutions to effectively promote and facilitate investment, and to prevent and handle investment-related disputes.

Chapter 2. ECONOMIC GROWTH, DIVERSIFICATION AND INDUSTRIALISATION

Article 43. Inclusive and Sustainable Growth

1. The Parties agree on the importance of economic transformation, private sector development and industrial advancement for inclusive and sustainable growth. They shall promote full and productive employment and decent work for all through enhanced competitiveness, diversification, digitalisation, innovation, access to finance, value addition in the manufacturing and services sectors, and linkages among sectors and industries. They shall pay particular attention to local MSMEs and to the formalisation of informal economic activities.

2. The Parties shall promote the transition to a low-emission and resource-efficient economy. They shall support sustainable consumption and production approaches, environmentally sound waste- and chemicals-management and measures

reducing all forms of pollution. The Parties agree that well-managed urbanisation is a critical element in advancing sustainable economic development. They shall therefore cooperate on effectively addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by rapid urbanisation, and shall support urban development and infrastructures and effective rural-urban linkages.

3. The Parties agree to cooperate in the area of employment and social affairs, in particular to support the economic and social inclusion and empowerment of women, youth and the poorest and most vulnerable. They further agree to ensure respect for labour and social standards enshrined in the conventions and protocols of the ILO and to ensure access to justice under due process, including appropriate and effective remedies.

Article 44. Economic Transformation and Industrialisation

1. The Parties shall strengthen cooperation in the area of economic transformation, including industrialisation. They shall promote the transition from commodity dependence to diversified economies and promote beneficiation of natural resources, value addition and integration into regional and global value chains. They agree on the important role that the services sector plays in economic transformation and industrialisation.

2. The Parties shall cooperate to support the development of productive capacities, improved productivity, diversification and competitiveness. They shall endeavour to overcome supply-side constraints through, inter-alia, promoting technological innovation and enhancement and its dissemination, improved business and investment climates, strengthened regulatory capacities, macroeconomic stability as well as the development of efficient capital markets and sound financial systems for improved access to finance, particularly for the private sector. To that end, they affirm the importance of the digitalisation of the economy in accelerating productive capacity development. The focus shall be on sectors and industries with high value addition and high potential for decent job creation.

3. The Parties commit to improving macroeconomic and financial stability by pursuing sound and transparent fiscal and monetary policies and to promoting economic and structural reforms so as to create a conducive environment for increased investments and to foster private sector development. The Parties further recognise the importance of the independence of central banks in the setting of their policy objectives and in the conduct of monetary policies. They further agree to maintain dialogue and exchange information between their authorities, as appropriate, to improve the understanding of the fundamentals of the Parties' respective economies.

4. The Parties shall intensify efforts in technical and vocational education and training as well as in research and innovation, and link such measures more effectively to the opportunities and skills needs of the labour market. They shall cooperate to leverage each other's experiences, including in the development of productive capacities through skills development and promotion of technology transfer, fostering linkages between firms of OACPS Members and of the EU Party, with an emphasis on MSMEs.

5. The Parties reaffirm the significant role of infrastructure in addressing supply-side constraints and in the development of competitive regional and sub-regional value chains through the facilitation of the efficient movement of goods, services and capital. They shall cooperate to develop efficient and sustainable infrastructure, including air, land and sea transport, energy, water, and digital connectivity with due regard to the diverse needs of the least developed, landlocked and island economies. Accordingly, they shall cooperate to mobilise public and private resources including through investment for infrastructure development.

6. The Parties, with a commitment to pursue shared economic growth, agree to cooperate, inter alia, on the following areas, which shall be regarded as priority sectors: agriculture and agribusiness, livestock and leather, the blue economy, fisheries, mining and extractive industries, cultural and creative industries, sustainable tourism, sustainable energy, ICT and transport. The Parties underscore the significant role of those sectors in value addition, decent job creation, enhancing productive capacities and to the overall efforts on economic transformation. They shall accordingly cooperate to identify the drivers of growth for each sector, to mobilise investment and to address the constraints that undermine the establishment of backward and forward linkages.

7. The Parties shall promote dialogue, stimulate transfer of skills and technology, work to improve value chains, and strengthen cooperation for cross-fertilisation of experiences and dissemination of best practices in the agriculture sector. They shall also cooperate to support mechanisms and frameworks to increase sustainable and quality agricultural production.

Article 45. Private Sector Development

1. The Parties, recognising the importance of private sector development for economic transformation and job creation,

shall aim to promote entrepreneurship and to develop and improve the competitiveness of enterprises. Particular focus shall be given to MSMEs, including start-ups, particularly through the promotion of enabling legal, administrative and institutional frameworks, with a view to their successful integration into sustainable supply and value chains. Attention shall also be paid to the informal sector and to upgrading informal economic activities into formal ones, and to encouraging the integration of sustainability-related objectives in business models. The Parties further agree to support the development of entrepreneurship among women and youth in the context of their economic empowerment and the promotion of inclusive development. They affirm the importance of building regional and national capacities in order to improve competitiveness in medium and high-tech manufacturing.

2. The Parties shall promote public-private sector dialogue and cooperation, including through private-sector business forums. They shall strengthen cooperation for cross-fertilisation of experiences and dissemination of best practices that foster entrepreneurship, promote business-to business dialogue and contacts, and stimulate transfers of skills and technology.

3. The Parties agree on the need to set up strategies and to develop better financial inclusion policies and appropriate legislation, and to improve access to finance and to financial and non financial services, including through innovative financing mechanisms, with particular attention to the provision of affordable credit for family farmers, smallholders, MSMEs, women and youth entrepreneurs.

4. The Parties acknowledge that both public and private sources of finance play a key role in supporting private sector development, particularly through tools and mechanisms such as public-private partnerships (PPP) and blended finance, and in stimulating investment across relevant sectors, including infrastructure development. Accordingly, they shall cooperate to develop transparent and predictable frameworks and strategies for the use of PPPs, including strengthening institutional capabilities to negotiate, implement and monitor projects under a PPP arrangement.

Chapter 3. SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND RESEARCH

Article 46. Science, Technology and Innovation

1. The Parties recognise the role of science, technology and innovation (STI) in expanding the frontiers of knowledge, in accelerating transition and leapfrogging towards sustainable development through economic transformation, value-chain addition and inter-firm linkages, in fostering knowledge development and human empowerment, particularly of women and youth, and in supporting decision- and policy-makers in the pursuit of sustainable development.

2. The Parties shall work towards developing knowledge societies. They agree to invest in human capital, promote the adoption of coherent and comprehensive policy and regulatory frameworks, and develop infrastructure connectivity and digital tools.

3. The Parties shall enhance cooperation on the basis of mutual benefit, building on existing mechanisms while exploring new paths in funding STI, subject to appropriate and effective protection of intellectual property rights. They shall promote indigenous, traditional and local knowledge as a tool for bridging knowledge and technology gaps in relevant sectors.

4. The Parties shall encourage investment in the creation, diffusion and transfer of new technologies, with particular attention to clean and innovative technologies that protect the environment. They shall promote renewable energy and cooperate in the development of productive and regulatory capacity.

5. The Parties shall address the potential impact of technologies on society, tackle issues related to cybersecurity and assure protection of personal data, and consider the effects of disruptive technology, including artificial intelligence and robotics.

6. The Parties recognise the role of space as an enabler for social and economic benefits, including in the areas of environment, climate change, ocean governance, transport, energy, agriculture, mining, and forestry. They shall cooperate on matters of common interest in civil space activities such as space research, Global Navigation Satellite Systems applications and services, development of satellite augmentation systems, use of Earth Observation applications and services and Earth Science.

Article 47. Research and Development

1. The Parties agree that research and development is critical in the creation of economic prosperity and opportunities for decent work, and can make a pivotal contribution to achieving the objectives of this Agreement.

2. The Parties shall encourage the generation and dissemination of new knowledge, taking account of its potential impacts, including harmful effects, on the environment and society. They shall support skills enhancement to keep pace with

technological advances and innovation, and shall support mobility and training of researchers. They shall promote partnerships between industry, academia and the public sector as well as activities of the private sector aimed at gathering knowledge and testing ideas in order to generate new products with real commercial potential, paying special attention to women and youth as innovators.

3. The Parties shall promote investments in research and development especially in high added-value segments of value chains, and shall endeavour to address societal challenges especially in the areas of environment, climate change, energy, food safety and security, and health.

Article 48. ICT and the Digital Economy

1. The Parties shall cooperate to reduce the digital divide by promoting cooperation with regard to the development of the digital society to benefit citizens and businesses through accessibility to digital technologies, including ICT adapted to local circumstances. The Parties shall support measures that enable easy access to ICT through, among others, the use of affordable and renewable energy sources and the development and redeployment of low-cost wireless networks. They shall also work towards greater complementarity and harmonisation of communication systems and their adaptation to new technologies.

2. The Parties agree on the central role of the digital economy as an amplifier and accelerator for change that can drive significant economic diversification, create jobs and enable leapfrog growth. They agree to advance digitalisation with a view to reducing transaction costs and lessening information asymmetries, with the overarching aims of improving productivity and sustainability.

3. The Parties shall promote and support digital entrepreneurship, particularly by women and youth, and the digital transformation of MSMEs. They shall encourage the development of e-commerce to revamp supply chains and expand markets, and encourage the expansion of e-banking, including to reduce costs of remittances, and the deployment of e-governance solutions.

4. The Parties shall cooperate on developing and managing privacy and data protection policies, promoting measures to facilitate data flows, and supporting the regulatory framework to promote the production, sale and delivery of digital products and services.