

**JOINT POSITION PAPER OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF  
THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK, THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, THE KINGDOM OF THE  
NETHERLANDS, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, AND  
THE OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES  
ON  
THE FUTURE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES AND  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

- The Kingdom of Denmark, the French Republic, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, hereinafter referred to as the Member States (MS)

- The Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)<sup>1</sup>

Acknowledge:

- That the current relationship between the EU and OCTs is governed by the provisions of Part IV of the TFEU and the 2001/822/CE Overseas Association Decision (OAD) and its extension in Decision 2007/249/CE
- That a Joint Position Paper was adopted in 2003 by the OCTs and the MS to which they are linked, identifying possible improvements in the EU-OCT partnership
- That the number of OCTs has increased to twenty five following the constitutional reform of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Other changes will occur in future due to the change in status of Saint Barthelemy<sup>2</sup> and foreseen for Mayotte. In addition, the Act on Greenland Self Governance was adopted in 2009
- That the Association of OCTs (OCTA) has evolved considerably in accordance with its strategic objectives and the imminent establishment of long term technical assistance
- That the last ten years have brought about significant economic, environmental<sup>3</sup> and social challenges at local and global levels, reinforcing the need to modernize the OCT-EU partnership which is supported by the interim recommendations made in the 2011 evaluation on the past ten years of EU-OCT cooperation
- That several EU policies and strategies may have direct or indirect consequences for OCTs, notably the EU 2020 strategy, and that the OCTs' renewed strategy should be closely associated with these<sup>4</sup>
- That preparations for the review of the partnership are ongoing since the publication of the Green Paper in 2008, the publication in 2009 of the Commission Communication "Elements for a new partnership between the EU and OCTs"<sup>5</sup>, the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2009 Council Conclusions
- That the future EU-OCT relationship should be based on the principle of solidarity, mutual interest over the long term and should recognize and respect the OCTs' diversity and vulnerabilities

<sup>1</sup>The UK Overseas Territories of Bermuda, Gibraltar and the Sovereign Base Areas of Cyprus, as well as the Crown Dependencies are not covered by the 2001 Overseas Association Decision. Consequently, the terms of this Position Paper do not apply to these Territories.

<sup>2</sup> Decision of the European Council 28/10/2010

<sup>3</sup> Message from Reunion island: message from the Conference "The European Union and its overseas entities: strategies to counter climate change and biodiversity loss", Reunion Island, 7-11 July 2008

<sup>4</sup> For the Arctic region specifically e.g. Commission Communication on "EU and the Arctic Region" COM (2008) 763, Council Conclusions on Arctic Issues, 8/12-2009 and EP Report on sustainable EU policy for the High North, January 2011

<sup>5</sup> COM(2009)623

And agree to:

- Adopt this document as a “Joint Position Paper” by the Governments of the Kingdom of Denmark, the French Republic, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Overseas Countries and Territories on the future of relations between the OCTs and the European Union;
- Present this paper collectively to the EU institutions at the OCT-European Union Partnership Forum in New Caledonia on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011.

## **1. Towards a mutually beneficial partnership**

- *Consolidating OCTs position in the EU family*

OCTs are members of the EU family. The strong EU-OCT relationship offers a unique opportunity to promote EU values and standards in the regions where they are situated. This relationship has equally contributed to the sustainable development of the OCTs whose inhabitants are European citizens.

The revised partnership between the EU and OCTs offers the opportunity to build on this mutually beneficial relationship. OCTs are present in all parts of the world and should be seen as assets for the EU.

However the OCTs are diverse islands, with some common characteristics such as small size, small population<sup>6</sup>, a narrow economic base and high transportation costs. Some have additional issues related to their geographical isolation, changes in their constitutional status and/or new economic challenges.

The partnership framework should build on the benefits of the current OAD and should be at least as beneficial in order to further improve the quality and standard of living in the OCTs.

A higher degree of flexibility to address modern-day challenges is required. In this regard, the future approach has to acknowledge the need to differentiate between OCTs and recognize the special need for development assistance in some OCTs. The new OAD should be flexible enough to allow the adoption of decisions dealing with specific cases (such as current Decision 2006/526/EC on relations between the European Community on the one hand, and Greenland and Denmark on the other).

- *Matching the objectives of the partnership with global challenges and opportunities*

The EU and OCTs have a shared interest in addressing jointly the challenges and opportunities raised by globalization and the need to support sustainable development and cooperation strategies.

In that context, efforts to ensure an inclusive and sustainable growth and to enhance OCTs competitiveness are necessary. OCTs’ assets should be promoted whilst taking regional contexts and constraints into account. OCTs are taking steps with the assistance of the Commission to improve their economic and social development and/or competitiveness by proposing and implementing projects such as the Caribbean Regional Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SME) and the Territorial Strategies for Innovation<sup>7</sup> (TSI). However this is a long-term challenge and needs to be targeted, as proposed by the Commission as one of the objectives of the EU-OCT partnership.

Economic, environmental and social vulnerabilities, unique to each OCT, can be a significant impediment to sustainable development. There is a need to prevent and mitigate these vulnerabilities in order to avoid deterioration in economic and social development as well as strengthening overall resilience. Potential for the development of green economic growth should be explored in this context.

<sup>6</sup> As an exception, Greenland is the world’s largest island and has the lowest population density in all OCTs

<sup>7</sup> developed in the frame of the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF

The focus on the promotion of cooperation and regional integration, where possible, is important for OCTs. Some OCTs are strategically located and could function as a hub in the further development of the EU regional or bi regional strategies and partnerships.

We support the focus of the Commission on values on good governance especially with regards to cross border challenges, such as the fight against crime and organized crime, and illegal immigration. Human trafficking is also a challenge for some OCTs.

The EU's internal policies towards the Outermost Regions (OR) could serve as a model for future EU-OCT cooperation, where appropriate, whilst respecting the different constitutional relationships with the MS to which they are linked.

We agree with the Commission that efforts relating to **competitiveness, vulnerability and regional cooperation** should be the main focus of the new partnership. The renewed OAD should take into account the changes and developments in challenges and opportunities for OCTs since the 2001 OAD.

Funding over the period after 2013 should match the ambition of the renewed OAD.

## **2. A forward looking partnership**

### **2.1 Trade, economic and regional integration issues**

The trade preferences granted to the OCTs have proven to be beneficial under the current OAD.

We acknowledge the benefits of outward growth strategies for OCTs, but we also recognize that some OCTs have developed strategies to strengthen their domestic markets and that these efforts should be acknowledged and supported.

We agree with the Commission that regional economic integration can reduce the economic vulnerability of the OCTs.

Progress towards full implementation of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) is essential for OCTs to improve their access to EU market.

OCTs connectivity is a major challenge to building competitive economies and should continue to receive support from the EU.

However, the general trend towards trade liberalization and the simplification of rules of origin, which has led to the erosion of the trade preference margin for the OCTs, makes it necessary to go beyond the actual regime to promote OCTs exports through improved treatment and support.

- *Towards better coherence between EU trade policy and the objectives of the partnership*

Trade negotiations between the EU, third countries and regional blocks have eroded the preferences the OCTs enjoy and as a consequence their competitive position in their regions.

We urge the EU to take adequately into account OCTs' interests through the appropriate tools and consultation mechanisms when trade agreements are negotiated.

In order to support OCTs to adapt to these additional challenges, these interests should be addressed in the impact assessments of the agreements, in accordance with the partnership objectives and in respect of the principle of coherence applied to EU policies.

The current arrangements in the Economic Partnership Agreements offer OCTs the option to join. We

would welcome OCTs being provided with further information and access to the relevant fora in which such arrangements are discussed.

- *Towards improved market access to promote OCTs exports*

Rules of Origin and cumulation issues are of the utmost importance to a number of OCTs currently, and are likely to become more important as export levels increase globally. The new OAD should provide a modern set of rules of origin that contributes to their regional integration and sustainable development. Improved flexibility is paramount. We thus invite the Commission to investigate the possibility of replicating policies such as 'global sourcing' (Pacific countries) and 'automatic derogation' (African countries) so that OCTs access the EU market on equivalent conditions. Rules of origin should take into account appropriately the necessary investment timescales for export-focused industries in OCTs (10 years and more). In addition, the new OAD should take into consideration areas identified by the OCTs in which cumulation will be most beneficial to economic development and cooperation in their regions. Last, exemption and derogation procedures should be made more accessible, through simple procedures and technical assistance.

The procedure to establish and/or maintain a competent authority to determine the adherence to EU SPS and process to obtain the certificates for exportation are relatively complex and require OCTs to develop a range of skills, legal and technical knowledge and laboratory capacity. Measures that would help OCTs in this area are access to information and technical assistance. We call on the Commission to more systematically invite relevant OCTs to SPS-related seminars and events. In addition technical assistance could be supplied through access to programs such as the “Strengthening Fishery Products Health Conditions in ACP/OCT Countries Program” or support for the maintenance of a sanitary program and laboratory equipment.

The OAD should allow for technical assistance to improve the legislative framework and standards relevant for exports if an OCT requires this. Some support could also be provided to improve the exchange of trade and economic information on OCTs to EU exporters and vice versa (in particular, as an outpost of the EU).

- *Supporting OCTs in the reinforcement of their competitiveness*

To make full use of the trade preferences granted to OCTs, policies to overcome specific competitive disadvantages should be developed. As OCTs' competitiveness cannot be based on low costs, innovation and entrepreneurship are key to address their challenges. The EU could support, within the frame of their innovation strategies, the development of niche markets and added value products and services, and enhance branding of unique OCT products through support for promotion and labelling. EU policies could also encourage the development of models of economic clusters and centres of excellence adapted to OCT's economic and territorial potentials. Clusters and similar tools are or have been developed in some OCTs, on issues related to environment, sustainable development, natural resources, eco-innovation (e.g. Aruba, Montserrat, New Caledonia, French Polynesia...).

- *Complying with the highest international standards in financial services*

Most OCTs with a financial services industry have surpassed the internationally agreed standard on tax transparency. OCTs and MS agree that all parties, whether they are offshore or onshore financial centres should comply with the highest international standards on tax transparency, financial regulation and anti money laundering/counter terrorism financing and that these should apply without discrimination. A number of OCTs are acknowledged by global standard-setting bodies as meeting the highest standards of regulation.

## **2.2 Environmental assets and challenges in the OCTs**

The OCTs are home to a greater biodiversity than mainland Europe. French Polynesia for example

accounts for 20% of all the atolls on earth and New Caledonia has more endemic species than the whole EU, Saint Helena is home to over 400 endemic plants and invertebrates, whilst more than thirty protected areas have been designated in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

However, the OCTs biodiversity is particularly vulnerable. They are also more affected by climate change and lack the capacity to adapt to this global challenge. As an example, the global sea level rise precipitated by the melting of Greenland Ice sheet is generating severe challenges to low lying islands and coastal regions around the world. Climate change will trigger a complex chain of physical, biological, economic, migratory and social effects.

In order to adequately protect the OCT's environmental assets, including those pertaining to their built and cultural heritage, European, regional, and international support is necessary.

Cooperation should pay special attention to the immediate and future environmental challenges faced by the OCTs while recognizing sustainable natural resources management is a foundation for wider economic growth and development.

In partnership with OCTs, and while respecting their inalienable rights to use their natural resources in sustainable way, EU-OCT cooperation should support policies to protect the environment and build capacity:

- **Adapting to the effects of climate change** is a key priority for the OCTs. The OCTs welcome research into this and strongly encourage efforts to ensure that these means are incorporated into the development planning process and projects are implemented early. The inclusion of OCTs in research efforts to understand, quantify, monitor and predict climate change would enhance research results and be of mutual benefit. Research on carbon dioxide capture and storage, for some OCTs, must be encouraged.

The EU-OCT partnership should seek to incorporate climate change considerations into development and cooperation programs, including the fight against deforestation and the protection of the marine biological habitat (including coral reefs), while also associating OCTs with the EU regional programs and initiatives regarding climate change. We welcome the Memorandum of Understanding concerning the "joint EU-Pacific Initiative on Climate change" signed the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2010 to which the OCTs in the Pacific will participate through the action plan.

We also welcome the text in the Communication on OCTs' potential to serve as "laboratories" for market introduction of sustainable energy solutions. The EU should assist the OCTs in investing in renewable energy sources. OCTs such as Greenland, Aruba, French Polynesia and the Falkland Islands have already met high targets in the use of renewable energy sources (20-60%).

- **Biodiversity in the OCTs** faces pressure from many sources. The main threats include invasive species, habitat loss and climate change. OCTs encourage the EU to support them in generating knowledge regarding the species and ecosystems, threats and means of protection of species as well as habitat and then means of restoration when the ecosystems have been damaged or destroyed. In addition the OCTs welcome assistance in the protection and maintenance of ecosystems and the restoration of critical habitats. OCTs can use their ecosystems to enhance economic innovation.
- **Waste management** poses difficult problems in all countries, but small island states face particular problems in this regard. Cooperation should focus on improving the economic viability of modern waste management techniques. Recycling and composting must be developed into feasible alternatives, public awareness needs to be raised and facilities should be established for dealing with all forms of waste.
- **Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)**: Call for projects on DRR for the OCTs and their regions are encouraged. For the prevention of risks, a regional specific program such as a pilot project and

the development of regional cooperation on identified themes such as a tsunami earthquake or tropical storms or hurricanes could be planned, but there should be no duplication of current initiatives. Regarding emergency funds for crisis management, dedicated rapid support should be available to OCTs.

- **Water management**, water sanitation and access to water are also crucial but expensive issue for OCTs and continued support is required. If not managed, these can have an important impact on health and environment.

OCTs should be more closely involved in the definition of EU strategies relating to the environment, taking into account their expertise, experiences, interests and assets, and the possibility they offer to promote EU values whilst retaining their natural and cultural diversity.

OCTs call for support with the implementation of international agreements, where applicable.

### **2.3 Strengthening OCTs as regional outposts of Europe**

The location of OCTs allows the EU to be present in regions of strategic importance for the EU, where the influence of its major partners is constantly growing.

OCTs offer a unique opportunity for promoting EU values and standards at the international level.

The potential of OCTs to act as hubs or centres of excellence in their regions should be highlighted by the future OAD, particularly related to climate change, renewable energy, environment, fisheries and tourism (capable of creating and disseminating knowledge through increased cooperation within their regions to improve policy making).

Their comparative advantages, not always present in mainland Europe, could notably provide the EU with unique bases around the world for technological and scientific research. The EU could therefore benefit from market opportunities for new technologies relating to sustainability in the fields of transport, energy and housing.

European standards in academic research and teaching provide a conducive environment for Research and Development in these fields. As such, accreditation of universities and institutes of higher learning or research and adequate facilities in OCTs are essential, and support should be made possible in those fields under the next OCT financial envelope.

We invite the Commission to carefully analyse, in the frame of an enlarged consultation and political dialogue, the mutual interests that can be exploited in EU relationships with ACP countries and other regional third countries. In this regard we acknowledge the support provided in the framework of 10<sup>th</sup> EDF programming to identify synergies in regional projects developed in the Pacific area. We encourage, where appropriate, the association of OCTs to utilise the tools and strategies implemented at regional levels.

The EU should also take OCT's interests into account when determining integrated political and cooperation strategies with the regions in which they are situated.

The EU should consider OCTs more as key stakeholders in regional programs rather than as third countries.

### 3. Differentiated and preferential support and dialogue

#### 3.1 Adapted technical and financial assistance

We acknowledge the ongoing discussions on the multiannual financial framework, and the various consultations as on budget support, external financial instruments and EU development policy which may lead to an important revision of the current provisions and strategies on these issues. The future OCTs strategy should feed into this process.

During the previous programming periods, OCTs have obtained interesting and constructive results through EU funds and interventions, as underlined in the evaluation of the past 10 years of EU-OCT cooperation undertaken in 2010. However, difficulty has been encountered in fulfilling European criteria, and measures to simplify and facilitate access to this essential source of support for OCTs have been identified.

In order to attain a fruitful EU-OCTs partnership, European assistance should be seen as an investment in the sustainable development of all the OCTs in their diversity and various stages of development without discrimination.

Budget support should remain among the methods offered to OCTs to receive EU assistance. In addition, an investment facility should be continued and mechanisms such as blending should be explored.

We also urge the Commission to create a dedicated instrument for OCTs. As a minimum, the future instrument should seek a drastic adaptation and profound simplification of procedures for OCTs.

- *Consolidation of the level of financial support and definition of a dedicated instrument*

The renewed partnership demonstrates the need for a continued financial support. Without prejudice to the final outcome of the discussions over the future financial perspectives, the level of available funding should not be less than during the former decision whilst striving to reduce the difference between the OCTs and the ORs.

On the issue of possible co-financing, it should be recognized that for some OCTs and Member States this could present difficulties. Any proposals would need to be differentiated according to OCTs level of development, the EU added value and the type of actions and/or beneficiaries.

Funding under the new decision should allow support for the new overall cooperation objectives and emerging OCT priorities. For instance the funding could enable OCTs to address their environmental and infrastructure needs, mitigate and adapt to climate change and respond to energy challenges

It should also enable OCTs that decide, on a voluntary basis to “implement part of the Acquis”, to opt for technical support to do so, including where the adoption of the “acquis” is part of a longer term path towards a change in status from OCT to OR.

- *Significantly simplify the new instrument and procedures*

Recognizing that OCTs are part of the European family, there is a need for a differentiated but preferential treatment. Support should be more simple and flexible, appropriate to the volume of the allocations, and taking into account the extremely limited capacities of some OCTs, their institutional links with Member States, and their development priorities and needs.

Efforts to simplify processes within the current programming period should be maintained and reinforced bearing in mind the need for transparency and accountability. We recommend the following:

- **Special relationships between the MS and OCTs to be taken into account in public financial management controls.** Given the special relationship of the OCTs with the Member States to which

they are linked, requests directed to the OCTs must be differentiated from requests made to third countries, and the Commission should recognize the standards imposed by the MS on their OCTs

**- Simplified and streamlined documentary requirements and procedures with stable reporting and binding response times.**

**- The role of the EC headquarters and the regional European Delegations:** equal treatment for OCTs in the programming of funds and greater clarity of their respective roles, so that there is no duplication, and as OCTs which are required to work through regional delegations often experience more difficulties than those OCTs that enjoy a direct working relationship with the Commission.

(1) Proposal to increase the role of EU delegations within the framework of regional cooperation projects (delegations in ACP and third countries in our regions). It would be appropriate to designate a referent OCT in each delegation concerned.

(2) Proposal to strengthen human resources in the Commission in Brussels, with entire and direct responsibility for the **territorial programming** in OCTs (dedicated human resources for OCTs, and in particular services in charge of programming and implementing).

These proposals should improve direct dialogue with the European Commission in Brussels during the preparation of the programming documents (maximize tele and video conferences, planning meetings) and minimize delays, misunderstandings and accelerate the disbursement of funds.

Regarding administrative capacity in OCTs, technical assistance and trainings needs to be reinforced in the management of EU funds . This could include secondment of specialists to the OCTs. Participation of the most isolated and vulnerable OCTs in workshops and seminars, and visit of key consultants/ EU officials should be pursued.

**- Take into account OCTs circumstances in EC requests for statistics and help OCTs develop appropriate statistical tools to provide homogeneous and comparable data.**

- *Coordination of financial instruments with other regional partners*

Articulation and adaptation of financial instruments utilized by OCTs and ACP/OR/third countries instruments would be most beneficial to reinforce regional, national or international cooperation. Different fields could be identified such as Disaster Risk Reduction, climate change, and economic development reinforcing existing networks for a stronger regional partnership.

### **3.2 Institutional relations between OCTs and the EU**

- *Strengthening management resources devoted to OCTs*

The OCTs and Member States appreciate the work done by the dedicated OCT Task Force within the Commission. We stress the importance of sufficient capacity, institutional memory and appropriate location within the Commission structure for OCT affairs to shape the ambitious future relationship. Better awareness of the OCT's within relevant Directorates General (DGs) would help to promote the interests of OCTs in EU policies. We welcome the establishment of an interservice group on OCTs, and OCT contact points within relevant Commission DGs. These contacts points must be made known to the OCTs.

The OCTs will endeavour to have the necessary resources in the Territories to handle EU affairs. We welcome the creation of the OCTA long term technical assistance which will increase capacity and facilitate the changing relationship to the mutual benefit of OCTs and the Commission.



- *Reinforced dialogue and visibility*

The MSs and OCTs recognise the importance of the annual EU – OCT Forum and look to all stakeholders to ensure that it contributes to the reinforcement of the EU – OCT relationship, provides added value, and helps to improve awareness of the OCTs within the Commission.

We invite the Commission to open the annual EU-OCT forum to all Member States and institutions of the EU.

We encourage the EC to invite OCTs to the annual meeting organized on outermost regions issues in order to share experiences, encourage cooperation among EU overseas entities and reinforce network.

Political and technical dialogue between EU policy makers and the OCTs contribute to the EU-OCT relationship. We encourage the Commission to explore possibilities for the increased use of tele, web and video conferencing to improve the quality of dialogue with experts in the field in the frame of the partnership working parties. In addition we would welcome the establishment of meetings at a political level on specific areas of particular interest (such as the environment, trade,...).

An increasing number of European policies affect the interests of the OCTs. For those OCTs that want to implement parts of the EU Acquis, it is important to have the opportunity to discuss the effects of upcoming decisions.

We also invite the Commission to present a list of the envisaged proposals to be submitted to the Council and/or the European Parliament that may have an impact on OCTs at the annual OCT forum. OCTs should be invited to meetings where affairs of interest to the OCTs are discussed where possible.

The visibility of the EU and the EU-OCT partnership deserves the attention of all parties involved. OCTA will continue its information campaign in Europe to increase the knowledge of the OCTs among EU Member States. We call on the Commission to work out a plan to improve the availability of information relating to the EU in the OCTs and to support OCTs initiatives to improve awareness on the EU at a territorial level. The new OAD should include provisions to facilitate OCT's institutions and citizen access to knowledge about the EU in general and about policies and programmes in particular.

The new OAD should clarify where potential liabilities lie between the OCTs and the MS with which they are associated.

#### **4. Reinforced support through EU horizontal programs and other types of programs and initiatives**

The EU horizontal programs represent an essential channel to reinforce EU visibility in OCTs, and vice versa, in particular as young people, students, local organizations or the private sector are among the targeted public/beneficiaries of those programs.

Participation in the EU horizontal programs gives visibility to the membership of OCTs in the EU family. We would like to highlight in particular the benefit offered within the lifelong learning program (Comenius, Erasmus, Grundtvig, Leonardo). We ask the Commission to ensure that OCTs 'eligibility in EU horizontal programs over the next period will be proposed and maintained.

Eligibility will also need to result in better accessibility over the next periods, as the number of obstacles faced by OCTs in obtaining funding is currently too high. We invite the Commission, with our support in line with responsibilities and duties defined in the functioning of those programs, to take into account the following needs that have been identified:

- Improve visibility of OCTs' eligibility in the framework of information/communication/awareness raising campaigns on the programs and related calls for proposals in Brussels and at regional level.

Third countries and other eligible partners, according to the programs, should be better informed by the Commission's services of the possibility to work with OCTs in the development of proposals.

- Adapted support to OCTs to strengthen their capacities to develop and manage EU projects through targeted trainings, technical assistance, and experience sharing.
- Encourage potential partners to integrate OCTs in the consortia developed, where appropriate, through specific incentives, as for example in the frame of programs supporting clusters (FP7, "regions of knowledge"). Due to the lack of critical capacity in OCTs, their access to all relevant EU networks should be facilitated.

A specific approach is also encouraged in areas of high interest within those programs, in accordance with the objectives of the new EU-OCT partnership. For example within the program dedicated to research and technological development, subprograms have targeted regions facing specific challenges. OCTs should not be excluded from the possibility of receiving similar tailored attention. Outermost regions and OCTs share common assets and circumstances that could add considerable value to the projects developed with the support of the EU. Taking into account the high level of mutual interest between the EU and OCTs on environmental issues, we would also welcome the opportunity for OCTs to benefit from the EU program dedicated to environment.

We acknowledge the support provided by the Commission in the Development Cooperation Instrument thematic program for environment and sustainable management of natural resources (including energy), through a targeted call for SIDS and OCTs, which has resulted in the presentations and selection of proposals including ACP countries and OCTs in our regions.

The EU has also developed specific programs of cooperation, in determined areas, with third countries which are situated in OCT regions (such as the current instrument for industrialized countries "ICI+"). We invite the Commission to examine the possibilities for OCTs to be included in those programs, in coherence with the new partnership and their potentials as "outposts of the EU".

## Conclusion

This position paper prepared jointly by Overseas Countries and Territories and the Member States aims to contribute to the renewal of our partnership with the European Union.

We expect that the proposals and positions will feed into the reflection conducted by the institutions of the European Union.

We invite the European Union to take into account the following key messages:

- The renewal of the partnership offers the opportunity to build on the mutually beneficial EU-OCTs relationship. OCTs are located in all regions of the world, and the EU should celebrate their culture and diversity, and support their potential.
- The OCTs are eager to play a strengthened role in the promotion of EU values in their regional environment. The EC should consider OCTs as key stakeholders in regional programs and strategies.
- The renewed partnership calls for a continued financial support, aimed at addressing the needs of OCTs and taking into account the overall objectives related to competitiveness, vulnerability and regional cooperation.
- The new partnership framework should be at least as beneficial as it is under the current OAD and should further improve the quality and standard of living in the OCTs whilst striving to reduce the difference between the OCTs and the ORs. Funding over the period after 2013 should match the ambition of the renewed OAD.

- A dedicated instrument for OCTs should be created. As a minimum, the future instrument should seek a significant adaptation and simplification of procedures for OCTs.
- The interests of the OCTs should be better addressed in trade agreements, in accordance with the partnership objectives and in respect of the principle of coherence applied to EU policies.
- The new framework should provide for effective OCT access to EU programs and to allocation from thematic budget lines, including environment.

We welcome all EC initiatives to include and closely associate OCTs and the MS in the works carried out by DG DEVCO that will lead to a proposal for the future EU-OCT partnership. A mutually beneficial partnership should be built in collaboration with all stakeholders.

**REFERENCE**

Signed in Noumea, this 28 of February 2011

For the Kingdom of **Denmark**

Mr Ole SAMSING, Special Advisor Ministry for Foreign Affairs



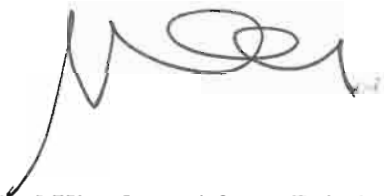
For the **French Republic**

Madame Marie-Luce PENCHARD, Ministre chargée de l'outre-mer



For the **Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Mr Willem ANDREAE, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands



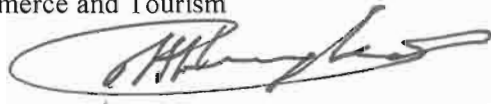
For the **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**

Mrs Helen NELLTHORP, Deputy Director Overseas Territories Directorate, Foreign and Commonwealth Office

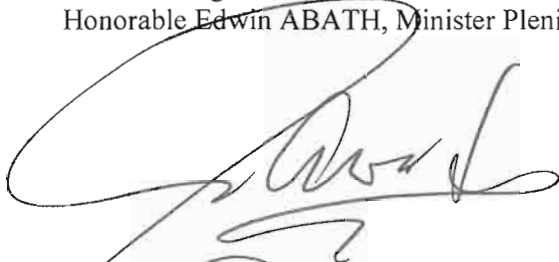


For the Delegation of **Anguilla**

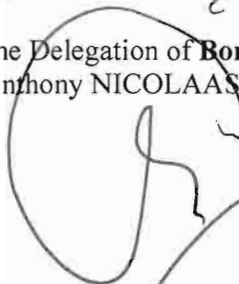
Honorable Hubert B HUGHES, Chief Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic Development, Investment, Commerce and Tourism



For the Delegation of **Aruba**  
Honorable Edwin ABATH, Minister Plenipotentiary



For the Delegation of **Bonaire**  
Mr Anthony NICOLAAS, Commissioner



For the Delegation of **British Virgin Islands**  
Honorable Julian FRASER, Minister for Communications & Works



For the Delegation of **Curaçao**  
Honorable Sheldry OSEPA, Minister Plenipotentiary



For the Delegation of **Falkland Islands**  
Honorable Roger Edwards, Member of the Legislative Assembly



For the Delegation of **Greenland**  
Honorable Vice Premier Jens B. FREDERIKSEN



For the Delegation of **Mayotte**

Monsieur Mirhane OUSSENI, 4ème Vice-Président du Conseil Général de Mayotte



For the Delegation of **Montserrat**

Honorable Reuben T. Meade, Chief Minister of the Government of Montserrat, and Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Trade



For the Delegation of **New Caledonia**

Monsieur Philippe GOMES, Président du Gouvernement de la Nouvelle-Calédonie, Chairman of OCTA



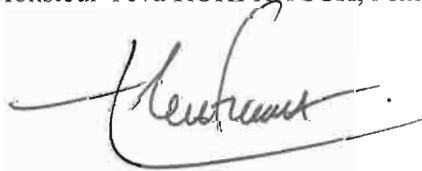
For the Delegation of **Pitcairn, Henderson Ducie & Oeno Islands**

Mr Simon YOUNG, Deputy Mayor



For the Delegation of **French Polynesia**

Monsieur Téva ROHFRITSCH, Ministre de la reconversion économique



For the Delegation of **St. Eustatius**

Mr Maldwyn TIMBER, Director of the Planning & Project Bureau and representative of the Executive Council





# The Executive Council of the Public Entity Saba

Power St. 1, The Bottom, Saba Dutch Caribbean  
Tel: (599) 416-3311/3312/3313 Fax: (599) 416-3274

545/2011

## To Whom it May Concern

The Executive Council of the Public Entity of Saba hereby makes it known that she is in agreement with the

### JOINT POSITION PAPER OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF

THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK, THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, AND THE OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

ON

THE FUTURE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Sincerely,

The Executive Council of the Public Entity of Saba,

Islandsecretary

Drs. M. van der Velde



Island Governor

J.G.A. Johnson, M. Ed

c.c. EC members, Planningbureau, Filing Department

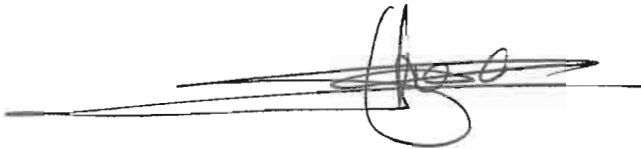
For the Delegation of **Saint Helena, Ascension, Tristan da Cunha**  
Honorable Mervyn R. Yon, Elected Member of the Executive Council



For the Delegation of **Sint Maarten**  
Honorable Sarah WESCOT-WILLIAMS, Prime Minister



For the Delegation of **Saint-Pierre-and-Miquelon**  
Monsieur Stéphane ARTANO, Président du Conseil Territorial



For the Delegation of **Territory of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands**  
Monsieur Emmanuel REUILLARD, Directeur des Affaires Internationales de la mer et de l'Antarctique



For the Delegation of **Wallis and Futuna**  
Monsieur Robert LAUFOAULU, Sénateur





For the Delegation of **Turks and Caicos Islands**  
Mrs Charlene ASTWOOD, Economist

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Astwood', with a stylized, cursive script.