

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

## BETWEEN

### THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

## AND

### THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE

### ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is entered into between the European Commission and the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, jointly referred to hereafter as the “Sides”.

#### WHEREAS

1. The European Commission (the “EC”) and the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (“GS/OAS”), as stated, respectively, in a recently adopted Communication<sup>1</sup> and in the OAS Charter, pay special attention to the evolution of the Latin American and the Caribbean Region, and continuously work to contribute to the strengthening of democracy, defense of human rights and fostering sustainable development in the area.
2. The EC and the GS/OAS have been collaborating for more than twenty years in domains of common interest, as shows the fact that the OAS granted the European Community Status of Permanent Observer through the General Assembly Resolution AG/RES. 996 (XIX-0/89), and the common work in fields such as development, protection and promotion of human rights or democracy strengthening.
3. The EC and the GS/OAS want to enhance their dialogue and the effectiveness of their efforts to achieve their common goals and objectives in sectors of mutual interest, especially concerning Latin America and the Caribbean.

#### BOTH SIDES HAVE DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

##### A. PURPOSE

4. Through this Memorandum, the EC and the GS/OAS express their wish to mutually benefit from and develop their dialogue and cooperation in areas of common concern in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) Region.

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<sup>1</sup> Communication “The European Union and Latin America: Global Players in Partnership” COMM (2009) 495

## **B. AREAS FOR DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION**

5. Particular attention should be paid to the priorities established by both sides, such as the following:
  - a) Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (including, i.a., freedom of expression, promoting ethnic and racial equality and rights or protection of most vulnerable groups).
  - b) Integral Development (in areas such as education, environment, trade and integration support for LAC, economic and social development, taxation, employment and poverty reduction).
  - c) Strengthening of Democracy (including good governance, strengthening democratic institutions and genuine elections notably in the context of ad hoc cooperation between EU and OAS Election Observation Missions).
  - d) Other issues of Transnational Relevance (i.a. drugs, money laundering and organized crime).

## **C. WORKING PRINCIPLES**

6. This Memorandum will provide a framework for inter-institutional dialogue and cooperation between the EC and the GS/OAS and will include the following working principles:
  - a) Develop formal, regular (at least once a year) bilateral consultative meetings, where discussions will take place on policy matters of common interest.
  - b) Engage in ongoing consultation and reciprocal sharing of information, particularly regarding EU-LAC Summit meetings and the OAS General Assembly.
  - c) Exchange experiences and best practices.
7. Each side will define its own point of contact responsible for coordinating the activities under this Understanding and will promptly communicate it to the other side. Any changes concerning the point of contact will be indicated.

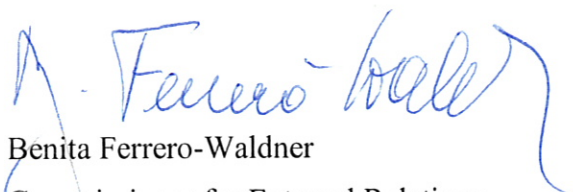
## **D. FINAL PROVISIONS**

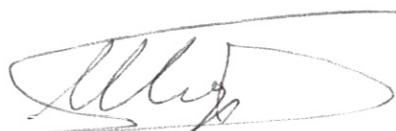
8. The above mentioned dialogue could lead to identify opportunities of cooperation between both sides, according to each side's internal rules and practices. Modalities for this cooperation will be further established by the EC and the GS/OAS through further MoUs or exchange of letters, and could include specific arrangements, such as a framework for financial contractual relations between both sides.
9. This Memorandum of Understanding does not contain obligations regarding international law.

Done at AS, this 17<sup>th</sup> day of DECEMBER 2009  
WASHINGTON DC.

Signed for and on behalf of  
EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Signed for and on behalf of  
THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE  
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN  
STATES

  
Benita Ferrero-Waldner  
Commissioner for External Relations  
and European Neighbourhood Policy

  
José Miguel Insulza  
Secretary General