

# **The Jamaica Coalition for a Healthy Society**

*Ministry ▪ Advocacy ▪ Education*



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## *BACKGROUND and SPEAKING POINTS*

### **Selling off Jamaica's sovereignty? SAMOA Agreement – the new ACP-EU Partnership Agreement** *A-African C-Caribbean P-Pacific EU-European Union.*

#### **WHAT IS IT?**

The new ACP-EU Partnership Agreement is a 20-year, binding treaty between the European Union and the 79 ACP countries (48 African, 16 Caribbean, and 15 Pacific countries). The Agreement builds on previous treaties negotiated between these regions since the 1970s (the previous treaties were the Lomé and Cotonou Agreements).

Historically, the Agreements focused on trade and economic development relations. This new Agreement, however, is unprecedented in its extensive coverage from trade and development, to public administration, statistical systems, data protection, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, war crimes, terrorism and violent extremism, illicit trade in drugs, cybersecurity and cybercrime, law enforcement, education, health, food security, water, social inclusiveness, youth, culture, investment and financial systems, environmental protection, climate change, marine resources, tax, human rights, democracy, gender equality, peace and security, migration, remittances, human trafficking, *among other subject-areas*.

#### **WHY IS IT A PROBLEM?**

There may be useful benefits to the ACP under this new Partnership Agreement, however, its extensive reach appears to be a power grab by the EU over Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific nations.

1. The Agreement references **undefined “human rights”** over 100 times in various clauses which are expected to be implemented, but without defining what constitutes ‘human rights.’ The **EU is well-known** for expanding its concept of human rights that has the effect of undermining the fundamental freedoms of speech, conscience, religion, and parental rights and right to life. (e.g. Art 1(3) and Art.8, General Pact).

2. The Agreement allows for **trade sanctions** to be exercised, without consultation, if a party deems that its ‘human rights’, though undefined have been breached. (Art.101(7), General Pact)
3. The Agreement seeks to **bind Jamaica to unknown future outcomes** of the implementation of certain international instruments that have been controversially interpreted to promote abortion. (Art.36(2), General Pact)
4. The Agreement recommends the **reintroduction of the objectionable curriculum**, Comprehensive Sexuality Education ((CSE), (Art.48(7) Caribbean Protocol) which was the subject of public outrage and revision by the Ministry of Education in 2012 when modules advancing CSE were discovered in the Grades 7-9 of the Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) curriculum;
5. The Agreement anticipates a restriction on Jamaica’s participation and decision-making in international fora as the Agreement is expected to take pre-eminence over all other agreements between any EU member and any ACP state. (e.g. Art. 97 of the General Pact).

For the above stated reasons, we urge the Government of Jamaica not to sign to the Agreement as currently worded. At a minimum, we recommend entering a reservation to the Agreement to protect the people of Jamaica from what appears to be neo-colonialism.

**RESERVATION PROPOSED TO GoJ on June 27,2022:**

“Nothing in the present Agreement shall be interpreted to create any rights or obligations in relation to abortion, sexual orientation, gender identity, comprehensive sexuality education or “sexual” rights, or any other ideological issue which removes or threatens the exercise of fundamental freedoms which Jamaican citizens currently enjoy.”

In the 61<sup>st</sup> year of our Independence, why would the Jamaican government cede to the EU, an authority and influence that is reminiscent of the controls previously held by the Colonial Office in London.

***Is it normal for anyone, let alone a nation, to enter into a binding contract with a more powerful party when the meaning of key terms attached to sanctions, are undefined?***

**WHAT CAN THE CONSCIENTIOUS CITIZEN DO?**

- Write or call the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, (876) 926-2220 or email [psadminassistant@mfaft.gov.jm](mailto:psadminassistant@mfaft.gov.jm) and [ps@mfaft.gov.jm](mailto:ps@mfaft.gov.jm) and recommend that Jamaica NOT sign the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement in its current state, or at a minimum, enter the above proposed reservation.
- Tell your friends, neighbors and fellow citizens to get informed and take action.