

## **MISSION REPORT ON THE ACP/EU FORUM ON RESEARCH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The ACP/EU Forum on Research for Sustainable Development took place at Cape Town on 29 to 30 July. Senior officials from the ACP Group of States, the European Commission and EU Member States attended the meeting. The South African Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Dr Ben Ngubane hosted the meeting.

The meeting was preceded, at the same venue, by two consecutive ACP preparatory meetings, first at technical level and the second involving ACP Ministers responsible for science and technology. These events represent an important political follow-up of the ACP Vision for Sustainable Development.

At its opening session Dr Rob Adam, Director-General of the South African Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Dr P. Luteru, Assistant Secretary- General of the ACP General Secretariat and Dr Louis Bellemin, leader of the European Commission Delegation, addressed the meeting. Chairpersons and General Rapporteurs for the four working groups were appointed.

The ACP-EU Forum targeted two main outcomes: first a more in-depth discussion on the content of the thematic priorities identified in the Shared Vision; and secondly, advancing the preparation of key policy documents such as the Shared Vision and the Plan of Action and considering the contents of a draft future Ministerial Declaration which would emanate from an ACP-EU Ministerial meeting was deemed critical to mobilise in a synergistic and complementary way, national resources in both ACP and EU Member states as well as bilateral and bi-regional instruments.

Discussions were held in plenary sessions as well as in four working groups, covering the priorities identified in the Shared Vision and allowing for ample discussion on both technical content and its implications for policy. Draft documents were consequently amended for transmission to the capitals in the two regions and to the European Commission. These discussions were subsequently considered in Plenary. The salient conclusions from these deliberations were adopted as the Cape Town Consensus.

Of particular importance, in carrying forward the ACP-EU Science and Technology dialogue are the following recommendations:

- To ask the ACP-EU Informal Taskforce to accelerate preparations for the Ministerial Meeting, scheduled for December 2002 in Brussels;
- To request the European Commission to make the necessary and timely arrangements leading to the full use of funding instruments in the FP6 and in the 9<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund, in support of the Science and Technology Co-operation and Research Capacity Building, respectively;

- To prepare a detailed road-map of activities to be implemented in the run-up to the Ministerial Meeting and beyond – this road map should be incorporated in the Plan of Action; and
- To further refine, on the basis of the Cape Town Consensus, the draft Shared Vision, Plan of Action and Ministerial Declaration for final approval by the forthcoming ACP-EU Ministerial Meeting. A preparatory meeting of senior officials should immediately precede this meeting.

**COMPILED BY: N SEPTEMBER**