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on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2007
(2008/2180(INI))

Committee on Development

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2007 (2008/2180(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the partnership agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of states (ACP) of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000 (Cotonou Agreement)¹,
- having regard to the Rules of Procedure of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA), adopted on 3 April 2003², as recently amended in Wiesbaden (Germany) on 28 June 2007,
- having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation³,
- having regard to the Kigali Declaration on development-friendly Economic Partnership Agreements⁴ (EPAs), adopted by the JPA in 2007 in Kigali,
- having regard to the resolutions adopted by the JPA in 2007:
 - on good governance, transparency and accountability in relation to the exploitation of natural resources in ACP countries⁵
 - on poverty reduction for small farmers in ACP countries — in particular in the fruit, vegetable and flowers sectors⁶
 - on migration of skilled workers and its effect on national development⁷
 - on the situation in Darfur⁸
 - on elections and electoral processes in ACP and EU countries⁹
 - on the impact of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the ACP States¹⁰

¹ OJ L 317, 15.12.2000, p. 3. Agreement as amended most recently by Decision No 1/2006 of the ACP-EC Council of Ministers (OJ L 247, 9.9.2006, p.22).

² OJ C 231, 26.9.2003, p. 68.

³ OJ L 378, 27.12.2006, p.41.

⁴ OJ C 254, 1.3.2008, p.44.

⁵ OJ C 254, 26.10.2007, p.17.

⁶ OJ C 254, 26.10.2007, p.25.

⁷ OJ C 254, 26.10.2007, p.31.

⁸ OJ C 254, 26.10.2007, p.39.

⁹ OJ C 58, 1.3.2008, p. 18.

¹⁰ OJ C 58, 1.3.2008, p. 26.

- on access to healthcare and medicines, with a particular focus on neglected diseases¹
 - on natural disasters in ACP States: EU funding for preparedness (EDF funds) and relief (ECHO funds)²
 - on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, particularly in the East of the country, and its impact on the region³
- having regard to Rules 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Development (A6-0000/2008),
- A. having regard to the debates held in Wiesbaden and Kigali on the latest developments in the EPA negotiations, leading to the adoption of the Kigali Declaration on EPAs,
 - B. whereas Parliament and the Council have adopted the aforementioned regulation establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation, which provides for thematic programmes also applicable to ACP countries together with a programme of accompanying measures for Sugar Protocol countries,
 - C. whereas the Commissioner responsible for Development and Humanitarian Aid made a commitment during the above-mentioned JPA session in Wiesbaden to subject Country and Regional Strategy Papers for the ACP countries (period 2008-2013) to democratic scrutiny by parliaments, and this commitment is fortunately beginning to be fulfilled,
 - D. whereas the revised Cotonou Agreement has just laid the foundations for enhanced, more efficient cooperation between the European Union and ACP countries, though the ratification procedure for that agreement has not been finalised,
 - E. having regard to the growing importance in the JPA of issues of common interest concerning human rights, democracy, delicate situations, political consistency and the effectiveness of aid,
 - F. whereas the situation in Zimbabwe deteriorated still further in 2007 and, regretfully, it was not possible to adopt a resolution on the matter during the JPA session in Wiesbaden, to wind up a very constructive debate; whereas the Zimbabwe delegation's failure to participate in this session is of a very specific nature,
 - G. having regard to the ongoing conflict in Darfur (Sudan) and the grave, repeated infringements of human rights, and stressing the need for effective humanitarian aid,
 - H. having regard to the work of the Pan-African Parliament and the formalisation of relations between the European Parliament and the Pan-African Parliament; having regard, in

¹ OJ C 58, 1.3.2008, p. 29.

² OJ C 58, 1.3.2008, p. 35.

³ OJ C 58, 1.3.2008, p. 40.

particular, to the joint declaration of the PAP and the EP with a view to the EU-Africa summit, held in December 2007 in Lisbon,

- I. having regard to the increasing participation of non-governmental stakeholders in JPA sessions and the financial difficulties encountered by civil society in ACP countries in attending meetings,
- J. having regard to the excellent contribution of the German EU Presidency and the Rwandan Government to the 13th and 14th JPA sessions,
- K. having regard to the fact-finding and study missions carried out by the JPA's Bureau in 2007:
 - to Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana
 - to Madagascar,
1. Welcomes the fact that in 2007 the JPA provided a framework for an open, democratic, in-depth dialogue on the negotiation of EPAs between the European Union and the ACP countries, as shown by the adoption of the Kigali Declaration on development-friendly EPAs;
2. Stresses the concerns expressed by the JPA over several aspects of the negotiations, with regard to both form and substance; points out that the debate is continuing since the adoption of EPAs with the Caribbean and interim agreements with certain countries and regions;
3. Regrets that Parliament did not secure a majority in order to ratify this declaration through its resolution of 12 December 2007 on EPAs¹;
4. Is concerned about the establishment of a new body in the context of EPAs, i.e. the parliamentary committee, without the relationship between this body and the JPA being made clear; calls for any kind of conflict of competence or pointless friction in this area to be avoided;
5. Welcomes the commitment made by the Commissioner responsible for Development and Humanitarian Aid during the above-mentioned JPA session in Kigali to subject Country and Regional Strategy Papers for the ACP countries (period 2008-2013) to democratic scrutiny by parliaments and welcomes the work already done by certain ACP parliaments in examining these papers;
6. Points out, in this regard, the need to closely involve parliaments in the democratic process and in the national development strategies; stresses their vital role in establishing, following up and monitoring development policies;
7. Calls on the parliaments of the ACP countries to demand from their governments and the Commission to be involved in the process relating to the preparation and implementation of the Country Strategy Papers concerning cooperation between the European Union and

¹ Texts adopted on this date, P6_TA-PROV(2007)0614.

their country (period 2008-2013);

8. Calls on the Commission to supply all available information to the parliaments of the ACP countries and provide them with assistance in this work of democratic control, in particular by supporting their capacities;
9. Calls on the parliaments to exercise close parliamentary scrutiny in respect of the European Development Fund (EDF); highlights the privileged position of the JPA in this debate and calls on it to continue insisting that those parliaments which have not yet done so should ratify the revised Cotonou Agreement in order to benefit from EDF 10;
10. Calls on the Commission to provide for measures to fill the funding gap between the implementation of EDF 9 and EDF 10;
11. Reaffirms that it supports the JPA's request, as expressed at its 9th session in April 2005, for a suitable percentage of EDF appropriations to be assigned to education and to the political training of parliamentarians and political, economic and social leaders, in the interest of a sustainable consolidation of good governance, the rule of law, democratic structures and interaction between government and opposition in pluralistic democracies based on free elections;
12. Welcomes the increasingly parliamentary, and hence political, nature of the JPA, together with the increased commitment of its members and the quality of its debates, which contributes decisively to the ACP-EU partnership;
13. Considers that the adoption of a resolution on the situation in Darfur in the Wiesbaden JPA session and that of a resolution on the situation in Congo in the Kigali session are significant examples of this enhanced dialogue;
14. Considers that the JPA, a forum for debate between European and ACP parliamentarians, plays a positive role in political dialogue and in the quest for a global, inclusive agreement for peace and development for the people of Darfur;
15. Calls on the JPA to contribute to the international community's awareness-raising effort with regard to the conflicts affecting North Kivu and several regions in the east of the DRC, to promote a negotiated political solution to the crisis and to support any action which might put an end to it once and for all;
16. Calls on the JPA to pursue and deepen dialogue with the Pan-African Parliament and parliaments of regional organisations, owing to the importance of regional integration for the peace and development of ACP countries;
17. Welcomes the fact that the regional meetings provided for in the Cotonou Agreement and the JPA Rules of Procedure may at last be held as from 2008; hopes that these meetings will give rise to a genuine exchange of views on regional issues and that European policies will help to strengthen regional cohesion; stresses that these meetings should focus in particular on regional cooperation in the context of the prevention and settlement of conflicts and on the conclusion and implementation of EPAs; supports the organisation of the first meeting in April 2008 in Windhoek, Namibia;

18. Encourages the JPA to strengthen the role of its Committee on Political Affairs in order to make it a true forum for conflict prevention and settlement in the context of the ACP-EU partnership and to that end to make the debates on urgent situations in given countries more general; welcomes the work done in the area of good governance and the elections and electoral processes in the ACP and EU countries and encourages the sending of joint ACP-EU missions to observe future elections in all JPA countries – missions which should be included amongst the European Union's Election Observation Missions;
19. Notes with satisfaction the desire expressed by the Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade to deal with issues in relation to food security, especially at a time when the World Food Programme (WFP) is sounding the alarm due to the rise in prices, the consequences of climate change and the decline in world food stocks;
20. Highlights the importance of the report on the effectiveness of aid decided on in the Kigali JPA session and urges the JPA to hold an in-depth debate on the concept of official development aid, budgeting issues and forms of alternative funding in development cooperation;
21. Stresses the role played by the Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment with regard to the migration of skilled workers and neglected diseases and supports its decision to study the impact of the structural adjustment programmes;
22. Notes with satisfaction the growing participation of non-governmental stakeholders in JPA sessions and the fact that events taking place on the sidelines of these sessions are now making a positive contribution; calls on the JPA, the European Union and the ACP countries to encourage, from a financial and technical point of view, the participation of the civil society of ACP countries in this work; considers the request and proposals to that end, to be put to the JPA Bureau in September 2008, to be a constructive development;
23. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission, the ACP Council and the governments and parliaments of Germany and Rwanda.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Introduction

In 2007 the Assembly met twice. The 13th session was held in Wiesbaden (Germany) from 25 to 28 June and the 14th session was held in Kigali (Rwanda) from 19 to 22 November. Nine resolutions and the Kigali Declaration on EPAs were adopted. Two joint delegation meetings were held in 2007. In the course of its work, in addition to the successive co-presidencies of the ACP-EU Council, the Assembly also welcomed the Member of the Commission responsible for development and humanitarian aid.

The following took part in the work of the Assembly: Mr Horst Kohler, President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr Hans-Gert Poettering, President of the European Parliament, Mrs Gertrude Mongella, President of the Pan-African Parliament and Mr Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda.

Standing committees

The standing committees met **four times**, twice on the sidelines of the sessions (in Wiesbaden and Kigali) and twice (in Brussels) in between those sessions. The main role of the committees is to draw up reports which are then adopted by the plenary sessions (a total of six reports per year).

Moreover, the committees are responsible for **following up the resolutions** by hearing the Commission officials responsible for the relevant areas. That provides an opportunity – and sufficient time – for in-depth dialogue on the action taken. Previously, this follow-up had been done in plenary session and was a mere formality.

Lastly, the committees have taken responsibility for **issues of common interest** as part of the implementation of the partnership agreement. They therefore provide a forum for dialogue between MEPs and the ACP countries. The Political Affairs Committee has been able to discuss urgent matters, such as the situation in Haïti, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia. The Economic Committee, together with the regional negotiators, held a highly successful hearing on EPAs.

13th session in Wiesbaden (Germany)

The 13th session of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly was held from 25 to 28 June 2007 in Wiesbaden (Germany), the country holding the EU Council Presidency.

In addition to the reports by the standing committees, the session adopted **a resolution on the situation in Darfur**. There was a very constructive urgent debate on the situation in Zimbabwe, but no resolution was either negotiated or adopted. The **workshops** on immigration, climate change and medicines for neglected diseases all attracted a great number of participants and great interest. The fact that the President of the Pan-African Parliament, Mrs Mongella, attended the session highlighted the importance of the relationship between the two assemblies and the need for the EU to give greater support to the JPA.

14th session in Kigali (Rwanda)

The 14th session of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly was held from 19 to 22 November in Kigali (Rwanda).

The Assembly adopted the **three resolutions** contained in the reports by the Standing Committees and two **urgent resolutions on natural disasters in the ACP countries and the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo**. Further to the 2002 Cape Town declaration on EPAs, the JPA also adopted the **Kigali Declaration on development-friendly EPAs**.

The **workshops** provided an opportunity to hold discussions on a variety of subjects, such as the Gacaca courts and reconciliation, health and vaccination, and tourism in Rwanda. The Rwandan authorities and the social and economic partners actively contributed to the success of the workshops.

Fact-finding and study missions (Article 27 of the Rules of Procedure)

The JPA carried out two fact-finding and study missions in 2007. The first, between 10 and 15 April was to West Africa, where the delegation visited Senegal, the Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. The second was to Madagascar, from 28 October to 2 November.

Outlook for development

The Joint Parliamentary Assembly, through the quality of its work, has managed to establish itself as a key player in north-south cooperation.

It is essential to **strengthen the parliamentary dimension** of cooperation to ensure that the funds are used properly and that they are used to meet people's needs and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals on health and education. To fulfil the Assembly's insistent and repeated requests, Mr Louis Michel, Member of the Commission responsible for development and humanitarian aid, undertook to subject the Country and Regional Strategy Papers to parliamentary scrutiny, of both the European Parliament and the national parliaments of ACP countries. These papers began to be submitted to ACP parliaments at the end of 2007 and it is important for the Committee on Development and the JPA to monitor the situation to ensure that this instrument of parliamentary control works effectively.

The Assembly has played and continues to play a key role in **monitoring the negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)**. Hearings of the head negotiators on both sides, meetings with economic and social players (in both formal and parallel meetings) and interaction between European and southern parliamentarians have fostered the transparency of the process and made it easier to take grass-roots issues into account. Whatever the outcome of the negotiations might be, there is no doubt that the Assembly's work has influenced the process.

The establishment of the African Union and the increasing power of the PAP undoubtedly pose a challenge for ACP-EU cooperation and, as a result, for the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. Cooperation between the European Parliament and the PAP began in 2007 and it is important for these relations to be taken into account in the JPA's work.

Lastly, the first **regional meeting** of the JPA will be held in Namibia in April 2008 with the SADC members of the JPA. The success of this meeting will be important for the future of such meetings, especially with a view to the potential establishment of regional parliamentary assemblies in the context of the EPAs. The JPA will have to monitor these developments very closely.