

**Question for written answer E-003398/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
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Subject: Future of EU-ACP relations after 2020

The partnership agreement between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states, known as the Cotonou Agreement, expires in 2020. Although the majority of EU countries have yet to adopt an official stance on whether to extend the agreement, a desire for fundamental changes to the rules governing cooperation with the 78 ACP countries is clear, mainly because the current agreement is seen as ineffective and outdated.

EU-ACP cooperation to date has not produced the expected results, especially when compared with other partnership agreements to which the EU is party. Furthermore, the ACP group is extremely diverse, and although it has existed for more than 40 years it has not developed a common identity in international relations. The impression is that the ACP functions only in relations with the EU. The ACP countries, in turn, rather than strengthening cooperation are becoming more divided as their interests grow apart. If this continues, it may be that there is little reason for the group to continue as a single entity.

In addition, it should also be remembered that the Caribbean is a quite specific region, parts of which have the status of EU territory. Consequently, they should be subject to a special approach and relationship with the EU. With regard to the planned revision of the Cotonou Agreement, will cooperation continue with the ACP countries as a whole, or will each region be covered by a separate agreement adapted to its specific situation?