

# ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

ACP-EU/101.082/11/fin/rev.

## RESOLUTION<sup>1</sup>

### **on the impact of the Treaty of Lisbon on the ACP-EU Partnership**

*The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly,*

- meeting in Lomé (Togo) from 21 to 23 November 2011,
  - having regard to Article 17(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement (‘Cotonou Partnership Agreement’),
  - having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
  - having regard to the Georgetown Agreement, which formally established the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific States,
  - having regard to Article 208 of the TFEU,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Political Affairs (ACP-EU/101.082/11/fin.),
- A. whereas the ACP-EU Cotonou Partnership Agreement is still the best example of a comprehensive approach to cooperation, whose added value must be safeguarded, and whereas this partnership should be strengthened, rather than weakened, by increasing its value as a mutual political commitment;
- B. whereas the ACP countries have long been privileged partners of the European Union and whereas, in the Treaty of Lisbon, solidarity with, and support for, the countries of the South are for the first time treated as an essential aspect of the identity of the European Union;
- C. whereas the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon gives the European Parliament greater powers, with shared responsibility with the European Council, in forty essential new areas of the European Union’s policies and actions;

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on 23 November in Lomé (Togo).

- D. whereas the removal of the explicit reference to the ACP countries in the Treaty of Lisbon means that both parties must redefine their common interests so as to ensure that the value of the partnership that has existed since 1975 is strengthened;
- E. whereas the Treaty of Lisbon provides for greater coordination of the EU's external action;
- F. whereas the Treaty of Lisbon has brought changes in the operational manner in which the EU, through its European External Action Service (EEAS), now interacts with the ACP group; whereas those changes, in particular the absence of an ACP unit within the EEAS and the internal structure of the Commission's new Directorate-General for EuropeAid Development and Cooperation, will have an impact on the special partnership with the ACP countries;
- G. whereas ACP-EU relations are founded on a whole range of elements, from development to conflict prevention, from security and stability to the defence of human rights;
- H. whereas the rise of the emerging economies, the shift in the balance of power within the international system and the increasing number of policy frameworks such as the G77 and the G24 have revealed the need to analyse how the ACP Group could best achieve its political and economic objectives in parallel with the policy framework provided by EU-ACP relations;
- I. whereas the JPA's influence on political decisions and strategic choices relating to development at national, regional and international level continues to be very limited, despite its unique role in the North-South dialogue;
- J. whereas the ACP Group represents almost half the world's states but does not have a voice in global governance fora such as the G20, which exclude the poorest countries;
- K. whereas although the support received from the EU has been vital, the ACP countries must also embrace the opportunities offered by South-South cooperation and partnerships with the emerging economies of China, India and Brazil in order to capitalise on their huge markets as a means of trading out of poverty;
- L. whereas, as far as the ACP countries are concerned, the diversity of partners is irreversible and generally beneficial, but whereas the export of raw materials without value added, even to a range of partners, slows down the diversification and real development of the ACP economies;
- M. whereas the EU has developed regional strategies with each region of the ACP Group which are at different stages of development, two of which, continuing in the Cotonou tradition, have evolved into joint strategies; whereas these strategies could become three separately managed relationships when the Cotonou Partnership Agreement expires in 2020;
- N. whereas the future of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement will also be determined by the negotiations contributing to the forthcoming Multiannual Financing

Framework for 2014-2020, through which the European Union must provide the funding for its external policy;

1. Recalls that the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, which has just been revised for the second time, has as its primary objectives the eradication of poverty, the promotion of sustainable development and the gradual integration of the ACP countries into the global economy;
2. Calls on the ACP Group and the European Union to take the opportunity offered by the removal of the explicit reference to the ACP in the Treaty of Lisbon to revitalise their partnership; calls, therefore, for the definition of areas of common interest, such as energy, climate change and migration;
3. Recognises the Treaty of Lisbon as a positive step forward in the democratic process, which allows the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly to be more effective in bringing about positive changes for both parties;
4. Hopes that the EU's external policy, of which poverty eradication, and thus development policy, are an integral part, combines all the instruments it has available to promote a policy of peace;
5. Takes the view that the ACP Group needs to strengthen itself politically, while the EU must be prepared to review and renew its partnership with the ACP countries, taking it beyond the donor-recipient relationship and into a partner-partner relationship;
6. Welcomes the appointment of an Ambassadorial Working Group on the Future Perspectives of the ACP Group after 2020;
7. Welcomes the creation of an informal working group between the EEAS and DG DEVCO with the aim of strengthening the ACP-EU partnership; calls for this group to keep the members of the JPA regularly informed of its work;
8. Calls on the EU to help strengthen intra-ACP cooperation among the different regions in areas such as food security, technology transfer, infrastructure, climate change, migration, trade, science, peace, security and democratisation;
9. Believes that monitoring the reports adopted is an important work tool for strengthening the JPA as regards the implementation of decisions; suggests in this regard that the two co-rapporteurs monitor the resolutions and regularly inform their respective committees of the progress made and any difficulties encountered;
10. Believes that, ultimately, the ACP countries need to enter into international partnerships that are in tune with their development aspirations and capacities;
11. Recalls that the group of ACP countries represents 40 % of the members of the United Nations; stresses, therefore, the need for the ACP Group to strengthen its identity in order to make its presence felt on the international stage;

12. Shares the view that both the ACP and the EU are far from reaching the full potential their privileged partnership offers in order to exert influence on issues such as the reform of the UN, the World Bank and the IMF, the G20, and the UNFCCC negotiations, and they should make every effort to move forward in that direction;
13. Invites the ACP Group countries to make extensive use of Article 12 of the Cotonou Agreement to make the most of the possibility of influencing those Community policies that have an impact on their development; to that end, invites the ACP parliamentarians to establish closer links with their EP counterparts;
14. Calls for a central and strategic role to be given to the Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) and Regional Strategy Papers (RSPs) in the work of the JPA committees so that they can participate in the preparation and achievement of the goals laid down in those documents;
15. Takes the view that, as with the reinforced role of Europe's national parliaments provided for by the Treaty of Lisbon, the national parliaments of the ACP countries should assert themselves more in order to strengthen their influence in the national decision-making processes;
16. Believes the ACP would be strengthened as a bloc by promoting its members' common interests in the World Trade Organisation, since a stronger bloc could influence commodity and food prices, secure the protection of important markets and demand measures against European and US subsidies;
17. Recalls that the three EU regional strategies for the African, Caribbean and Pacific Regions and that for South Africa should aim at strengthening the key pillars of the ACP-EU Partnership as defined in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement;
18. Calls on the European Union to provide its delegations in the ACP countries with the human and financial resources needed for the exercise of their new competencies;
19. Recalls that when it comes to trade, the European Parliament's approval is now needed for the adoption of trade agreements; suggests, therefore, that serious consideration be given to the possibility of including in the JPA agenda debates on the trade agreements under negotiation;
20. Recalls that the ACP group should assert itself as a global player on the basis of its collective human and natural resources, its historical links with the EU and its proximity to emerging economies;
21. Stresses that the new competences conferred on the European Parliament by the Treaty of Lisbon must be used to strengthen the parliamentary dimension of ACP-EU relations, of which the Joint Parliamentary Assembly is the cornerstone; hopes that this parliamentary dimension will be reflected in the EDF budget and in better information for ACP parliamentarians on the national and regional strategies implemented by the European Union and on the use of the EU's other financial instruments in ACP countries;

22. Instructs its Co-Presidents to forward this resolution to the ACP-EU Council, the European Commission, the Commission of the African Union, and the Pan-African Parliament.