

ACP-EU MP's: "mineral revenues" must stay in Southern Africa

There are tremendous opportunities on all socio-economic fields for mineral driven transformation in Africa if revenues generated by trade in that sector would stay in the region, not be drained outside, stressed MEPs and their counterparts from Africa in their 7th regional meeting in Lusaka (Zambia).

In 7th regional meeting of ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly that took place from 22 to 24 February MP's shared ideas on how to exploit mineral resources in a way that would contribute to the development of Southern Africa. Among other possibilities members discussed the establishment of an African investment fund based on revenues from natural resources as a complement to foreign investment, which should be enabled locally and provided with legal security.

MEP's and their African counterparts also made a point that ACP countries must put in place measures for effective internal revenue collection to compensate for loss of customs revenues generated by Free Trade Agreements.

Parliaments should have more say

Among other concerns that were raised in the meeting MP's discussed the process of regional integration and cooperation in Southern Africa by concluding that those processes do not involve parliaments sufficiently and that there is also need to strengthen parliaments' capacities to oversee corruption, especially via the parliamentary budgetary scrutiny.

Gender gap hampers development

MP's stressed the need for gender mainstreaming in African development processes, as development would not be sustainable without the full participation of women. According to ACP-EU MP's, gender equality requires institutional change along with changes in traditions and social practices. Gender sensitive laws should be adopted in order to tackle HIV/AIDS tide issues and protect people suffering from the disease.

Background

The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly brings together the Members of the European Parliament and the elected representatives of the African, Caribbean and Pacific states. Representatives of the 78 ACP states meet their 78 European Parliament counterparts in plenary session for one week twice a year. Up to three regional meetings a year are organised.

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