

BACKGROUND NOTE FOR JOURNALISTS

Background note 27th ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly session 17 - 19 March 2014 Strasbourg

European Parliament Press Service officer
Václav LEBEDA
vaclav.lebeda@europarl.europa.eu
+32 498 983 327
#ACPEU

TWO PARLIAMENTARY MEETINGS

From 17-19 March the 27th plenary session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly takes place. This session will be formally opened by its co-presidents Louis Michel for the European Parliament and Fitz A. Jackson (Jamaica) for the ACP. The Speaker of the Hellenic Parliament Evangelos Meimarakis will be present at the opening.

The plenary session is preceded and prepared by meetings of the three standing committees on 15 March. These are the Committee on Political Affairs, the Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade, and the Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment.

Separately and prior to the joint ACP-EU meeting, on 14 March, there has been the 35th plenary session of the ACP parliamentary assembly (only ACP parliamentarians attend).

Why is there any need for an ACP JPA meeting? What tangible results can be achieved?

The EU has a special partnership with the ACP countries, due to historic ties between them and many EU member states. This partnership is laid down in the Cotonou agreement. It is vital that this partnership should have a parliamentary dimension, allowing for the scrutiny of the governmental and executive dimension.

See also:

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/20_01/default_en.htm

What tangible results have been achieved during previous meetings?

The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly has no decision-making powers as such; its importance is due to the fact that it is the only forum where ACP parliamentary representatives can voice their needs and worries to the EU and vice versa. It also allows elected representatives of ACP countries to address their concerns directly to the EU Commission and inform themselves on the state of negotiations on trade agreements with

their countries. The resolutions adopted by the ACP-EU JPA have fed into current ACP-EU agreement and will continue to do so

Some examples

- upgrading of the role of women in the development process
- integration of environment policy in development projects;
- promotion of trade as a tool for development, particularly through the Economic Partnership Agreements provided for in the Cotonou Agreement;
- rural development programmes and micro-projects tailored to the needs of specific communities;
- improvement of measures to combat epidemics and reinforce health and hygiene services;
- creation of decentralized development policies;
- annual meetings between economic and social partners;
- promotion of regional, political and commercial cooperation;
- closer cooperation with non-governmental organisations engaged in development;
- aid for indebted countries pursuing structural adjustment policies to allow them to maintain essential services;
- measures to enhance the cultural dimension in North-South cooperation;
- acceleration of aid procedures and increase in funds for refugees and for displaced persons;
- measures to reinforce the commitment to respect and defend human rights and human dignity.

How is the choice of venues made?

The JPA meets twice a year, once in the EU, traditionally in the country holding the presidency of the Council of the EU and once in an ACP country, determined by the group of ACP countries.

Previous JPAs:

- Wiesbaden, Germany, 23-28 June 2007
- Ruanda 17-22 November 2007
- Ljubjana, Slovenia, 17-20 March 2008
- Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 29 November / 1 December 2008
- Prague, Czech Republic, 4-9 April 2009
- Luanda, Angola, 30 November - 3 December 2009
- Tenerife, Spain, 29 March - 1 April 2010
- Kinshasa, RDCongo, 2-4 December 2010
- Budapest, Hungary, 16-18 May 2011
- Lomé, Togo, 21-23 November 2011
- Horsens, Denmark, 28-30 May 2012
- Paramaribo, Suriname, 27-29 November 2012
- Brussels, Belgium, 17-19 June 2013
- Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 25-27 November 2013

Who chairs the ACP-EU JPA?

Two co-presidents, one from the EU (currently Louis Michel, ALDE, BE) and one from an ACP country (currently Mr Fitz A. Jackson from Jamaica).

How is the ACP-EU JPA organized?

78 MEPs + 78 MPs from the ACP countries.

Two co-presidents, one from the EU (currently Louis Michel, ALDE, BE) and one from an ACP country (currently Mr Fitz A. Jackson from Jamaica).

24 vice-presidents (12 MEPs + 12 from the ACP countries). They constitute the Bureau (the presidium) together with the two co-presidents

There are meetings of the three standing committees (Political affairs; Economic development, Finance and Trade; Social Affairs and Environment) and a plenary session.

What is the composition of the EP delegation?

78 members

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dacp/home.html>

Unofficial: 33 MEPs have registered for the meeting in Strasbourg so far (**provisional** list, 14/03/2014)

MEMBERS Name	First name	Group	Language
BEARDER	CATHERINE	ALDE	EN
GRIESBECK	NATHALIE	ALDE	FR
HALL	FIONA	ALDE	EN
MICHEL	LOUIS	ALDE	FR
SCHMIDT	Olle	ALDE	SV
BINEV	Slavi	EFD	BG
BAUER	Edit	EPP	SK/EN
GABRIEL	Mariya	EPP	BG
GAHLER	Michael	EPP	DE
KLASS	Christa	EPP	DE
MAYER	Hans-Peter	EPP	DE
MITCHELL	Gay	EPP	EN
PAPANIKOLAOU	GIORGOS	EPP	EL/EN
SCHNELLHARDT	Horst	EPP	DE
STASTNY	Peter	EPP	SK/EN
STRIFFLER	Michèle	EPP	FR
THEOCHAROUS	ELENI	EPP	EL/EN
ZABORSKA	Anna	EPP	FR
ALFONSI	François	Greens/EFA	FR
BICEP	Jean Jacob	Greens/EFA	FR
CHRYSOGELOS	Nikos	Greens/EFA	EL
DURANT	Isabelle	Greens/EFA	FR
LOVIN	Isabella	Greens/EFA	SV
RIVASI	Michèle	Greens/EFA	FR
TOUSSAS	Giorgios	GUE/NGL	EL

CASHMAN	Michael	S&D	EN
GUERRERO SALOM	Enrique	S&D	ES
GURMAI	Zita	S&D	HU
HAUG	Jutta	S&D	DE
LEINEN	Jo	S&D	DE
MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ	Miguel Ángel	S&D	ES
NEUSER	Norbert	S&D	DE
VAUGHAN	Derek	S&D	EN

Which ACP countries are represented?

78 countries

Angola - Antigua and Barbuda - Bahamas - Barbados - Belize - Benin - Botswana - Burkina Faso - Burundi - Cabo Verde - Cameroun - Central African Republic - Comores - Congo - Cook Islands - Côte d'Ivoire - Cuba - Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) - Djibouti - Dominica - Dominican Republic - Eritrea - Ethiopia - Fiji - Gabon - The Gambia - Ghana - Grenada - Guinea - Guinea Ecuatorial - Guiné - Bissau - Guyana - Haiti - Jamaica - Kenya - Kiribati - Lesotho - Liberia - Madagascar - Malawi - Mali - Marshall Islands - Mauritania - Mauritius - Micronesia - Mozambique - Namibia - Nauru - Niger - Nigeria - Niue - Palau - Papua New Guinea - Republic - Rwanda - St Kitts and Nevis - St Lucia - St Vincent and the Grenadines - Samoa - Sao Tome et Principe - Senegal - Seychelles - Sierra Leone - Solomon - Somalia - South Africa - Sudan - Suriname - Swaziland - Tanzania - Tchad - Togo - Tonga - Trinidad and Tobago - Tuvalu - Uganda - Vanuatu - Zambia - Zimbabwe.

Note: **Cuba** belongs to the ACP countries but did not sign the Cotonou agreement - hence it is not represented in the JPA.

What will be discussed in Strasbourg?

There will be three debates wound-up by resolutions prepared by the standing committees

- Regional integration and modernisation of customs for sustainable development in
- ACP Countries, in cooperation with the EU (debate Monday, vote Wednesday)
- The global spread of terrorism: the role of the internet and social media (debate Tuesday, vote Wednesday)
- Mining for oil and minerals on the seabed in the context of sustainable development (debate Tuesday, vote Wednesday)

There will also be three debates without resolutions

- The fight against AIDS (Tuesday) with Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS
- Challenges and opportunities in attaining goals in education and vocational training in ACP countries (Wednesday)
- The state of play of WTO negotiations (Wednesday) with Fred Agah, WTO Deputy Director-General

There are debates with EU Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs, Greece Deputy Foreign affairs Minister Kzriakos Gerontopoulos, Tanzania's Deputy Minister of Finance Mwigulu Lameck Nchemba.

Two urgent topics will be debated and concluded with resolutions

- The human, economic and social rights of migrants in ACP and EU countries (debate Monday, vote Wednesday)
- The crisis in the Central African Republic (debate Monday, vote Wednesday)

On Sunday a Workshop will be held on "Supporting private sector development and promoting investments in renewable energy sources in ACP countries".

And on Saturday the Womens' Forum will meet to discuss "Sexual and reproductive health and rights in ACP and EU countries".

Press Contact:

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vaclav.lebeda@ep.europa.eu
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