



ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE PARITAIRE ACP-UE

13 April 2018

**15th REGIONAL MEETING (EAST AFRICA) OF THE
ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**

**Nairobi, Kenya
13 April 2018**

Nairobi Communiqué

Website of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp>

Introduction

In accordance with Article 17 of the Cotonou Agreement and Article 6 of the Rules of Procedure of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA), Members of the Assembly from the East Africa Region of the ACP Group and their European Parliament counterparts held a regional meeting in Nairobi, Republic of Kenya, from 11 to 13 April 2018. Members expressed gratitude to the Government and Parliament of the Republic of Kenya for hosting the meeting and the facilities put in place to ensure its successful outcome.

Their discussions focused on the following subjects:

Regional integration and cooperation

State of play of regional and inter-regional cooperation

Members highlighted the fact that East African countries were cooperating through a number of regional organizations, and had recorded some progress in the movement of goods, services, capital and labour, and generating economic benefits. Further regional integration was envisaged to align trade policies and provide budgetary provisions for structural adjustments, involvement of the private sector, addressing capacity constraints, and for creating coordination mechanisms to boost trade. The challenges of the multiplicity of overlapping organisations should gradually be addressed through overarching Agreements such as the Tripartite Free Trade Agreement signed by the East African Community, COMESA and SADC as well as the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Members also felt that too much emphasis was given to markets and too little to other areas such as sustainability, climate change and agricultural development.

Regional cooperation with regard to security and its consequences on migration

The field experiences of the UNICEF Head of Office in Juba on the humanitarian consequences of the conflict in South Sudan generated the following reflections by Members.

They expressed gratitude to African countries such as Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia for hosting millions of refugees not only from South Sudan, but also from other conflict situations in the region. It was noted that Uganda alone hosts more refugees than the whole of the EU. In addition to conflict and political instability, other root causes such as food insecurity, unemployment, poor governance and poor economic perspectives aggravated migratory movements. Members emphasized the importance of reinforcing integration and long-term solutions to create resilience.

Members agreed that, while more cooperation and international help was needed, political dialogue was the only long-term solution to the causes of conflict. They also called for stricter rules and control on arms trade and trafficking. Some Members called for facilitation of legal migration to counter illegal migration.

Trade, investment promotion and private sector development

Members noted that public investments, stability as well as conducive national and regional policies were the drivers for the development of the private sector. In East Africa, the private sector benefitted from the EAC Common Market Protocols. Public Private Partnerships could leverage bigger investment projects, but more need to be done to simplify the establishment and sustainability of small businesses, in particular in the agricultural sector. Members emphasised that foreign investments should be subject to social and environmental requirements.

Members encouraged deeper regional integration which would contribute to strengthening partnerships with the private sector and civil society in order to achieve sustainable socio-economic and political development.

Energy and infrastructure needs

Members welcomed progress with regard to electrification in East Africa, in particular the increasing exploitation of its renewable energy potential, which has facilitated access to electricity to remote rural populations. They also looked forward to the planned development of cross-border regional corridors involving the construction of roads, railways, ports, pipelines, airports and dams, power inter-connectivity lines and optic fiber network, which were key to intra-African trade and development and provision of sustainable connectivity and socio-economic benefits. Some Members expressed concern on the high financing requirements of such projects, the sequencing of projects, the risks involved as well as policies and procedures for governance for dispute resolution.

Members insisted on the need for linkages between corridors as well as between cross-border grids to create win-win situations, and expressed concerns about the economic sustainability of the projects and the management of the infrastructures once finalized.

Tourism and wildlife management – progress, prospects and challenges

Members noted that the conservation of wildlife was critical to ensuring a more sustainable future for Africa's growing populations. Tourism had improved the livelihoods of the people and made significant contributions to national budgets. While they highlighted the fact that the specific flora and fauna of Africa constitutes its main comparative touristic advantage, they also noted that the quality of tourism can compensate for the lack of high numbers of tourists which would be at the expense of ecological balance. They also suggested that wildlife conservation should be included in Post-Cotonou discussions.

Members called on regional cooperation and harmonisation of policies to secure conservation and cross-border movements of wildlife. Members also underlined that poaching is demand driven and could therefore be stopped through enhanced international cooperation. Good

governance, security and good infrastructure was important for East African countries to increase the number of tourists who came to the region.

Members acknowledged that it was important to raise awareness through civil society and local communities on the importance of preserving natural resources for the services they provided to local communities as well as to address competition between human needs and conservation of wildlife flora and fauna. Well managed wildlife conservation can also create jobs and development.

Agriculture and food security

Members noted that the main drivers of food insecurity in the region were climate change and variability, urbanisation, as well as conflict and political factors. They called for countries to be assisted with coping mechanisms to climate change impacts in particular on agro-ecology. In this regard, some Members were of the view that the Geneva Convention on Refugees needed to be revised to take into account of climate refugees. Some Members also highlighted the concept of food sovereignty and resilient value chains, which, among other issues, would allow countries and people to feed themselves and expressed concern at safety issues of genetically modified foods and the inappropriate treatment of food like any other tradeable commodity. Members called for support to small and medium scale farmers, who produce most of the food requirements of the region, in terms of finance, marketing and storage facilities.

Members applauded the work of the Greenbelt Movement's focus on community empowerment and education for women, as well as its efforts in conservation, community mobilisation for tree planting, better land-use, promotion of household food security, permaculture interventions and comprehensive approach to sustainable development.

ACP-EU relations Post-Cotonou

Members agreed that a future agreement should build upon the acquis of Cotonou and integrate new global realities and in particular regional specificities, including for small island developing states. The Post-Cotonou Agreement should aim at stronger South-South and triangular cooperation and maintenance of the ACP Group's unity and solidarity. They noted that a report of the JPA from its Committee on Political Affairs will be voted on in June 2018, which left room for amendments to take into account specific concerns of Members and regions.

Members also acknowledged that public in ACP States is not sufficiently aware of the stakes regarding these negotiations and the consequences of their outcomes.

Members called on the Co-Presidents to present the conclusions of the regional meeting to the 35th Session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly to be held in Brussels, Belgium in June 2018, and to forward them to the ACP Parliamentary Assembly, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the European Council; the ACP Council of Ministers, the regional and economic communities in East Africa and the East African ACP States, the Pan-African

Parliament, the African Union Commission, the ACP Group of States, and to the EU Member States.
