

ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

RULES OF PROCEDURE

*(adopted on 3 April 2003 and revised on 25 November 2004,
23 November 2006, 28 June 2007, 28 November 2008, 18 May 2011, 29 November 2012, 19 June
2013 and 27 November 2013)*

Note to the reader:

This publication is a consolidated version of the Rules of Procedure of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly adopted on 3 April 2003 and revised on 25 November 2004, 23 November 2006, 28 June 2007, 28 November 2008, 18 May 2011, 29 November 2012, 19 June 2013 and 27 November 2013.

This is a text produced for documentary purposes for which the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly cannot be held liable.

Article 1	
Joint Parliamentary Assembly.....	6
Article 2	
Bureau.....	6
Article 3	
Attendance of other institutions	7
Article 4	
Observers and other guests	8
Article 5	
Sessions of the Assembly.....	8
Article 6	
Regional meetings of the Assembly	9
Article 7	
Agenda	9
Article 8	
Quorum.....	10
Article 9	
Presidency of sittings	10
Article 10	
Seating arrangements.....	11
Article 11	
Official languages.....	11
Article 12	
Public nature of proceedings.....	11
Article 13	
Minutes	11
Article 14	
Co-Presidents' statements and press releases	12
Article 15	
Right to speak.....	12
Article 16	
Right to vote and methods of voting	13
Article 17	
Explanations of vote.....	13
Article 18	

Assembly resolutions	14
Article 19	
Amendments	14
Article 20	
Questions for written answer	15
Article 21	
Question Time	15
Article 22	
Report on the implementation of the Partnership Agreement by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers	16
Article 23	
Scrutiny of the implementation of the Partnership Agreement.....	16
Article 24	
Requests from the ACP-EU Council of Ministers for an opinion.....	17
Article 25	
Standing committees.....	17
Article 26	
Temporary follow-up committees	17
Article 27	
Workshops	18
Article 28	
Missions and delegations	18
Article 29	
Consultation with civil society	18
Article 30	
Honorary President	19
Article 31	
Secretariat.....	19
Article 32	
Financial regulation	19
Article 33	
Interpretation of the Rules of Procedure.....	19
Article 34	
Points of order	20
Article 35	

Revision of the Rules of Procedure	20
ANNEX I	
Powers, responsibilities, membership and procedures of standing committees	21
ANNEX II	
Length of texts.....	24
ANNEX III	
Meetings of political groupings.....	25
ANNEX IV	
European Parliament rules regarding interpreting and translation facilities (Article 11 of these Rules of Procedure)	26

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Article 1

Joint Parliamentary Assembly

1. The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (hereinafter ‘the Assembly’) is set up pursuant to Article 17 of the Partnership Agreement between the Members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part.
2. The Assembly shall be composed of two houses containing equal numbers of EU and ACP representatives. The members of the Assembly shall be, on the one hand, members of the European Parliament and, on the other, members of parliament or, failing this, in exceptional cases such as force majeure, notice of which must be communicated in writing in advance to the Bureau of the Assembly as referred to in Article 2 (hereinafter ‘the Bureau’), representatives designated by the parliament of each ACP State. In the absence of a parliament, the attendance without the right to vote of a representative from the ACP State concerned shall be subject to the prior approval of the Assembly.
3. The credentials of the members of the Assembly shall be established by a letter of appointment from the appropriate authorities of the respective States in the case of ACP representatives and from the President of the European Parliament in the case of its representatives.

Article 2

Bureau

1. Each house shall elect its members to the Bureau in accordance with its own practice.
2. The Bureau shall consist of two Co-Presidents of equal status, and 24 Vice-Presidents. Half of the members of the Bureau shall be nominated by the representatives of the ACP States and half by the representatives of the European Parliament, in accordance with a procedure laid down by each of the two houses.
3. The Bureau shall prepare the work of the Assembly, follow up the activities and resolutions of the Assembly and establish all necessary contacts with the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors.
4. The Bureau shall be responsible for the coordination of the work of the Assembly. The Bureau may designate some of its members as Vice-Presidents in charge of specific matters in

accordance with the principle of parity between members of the parliaments of the ACP States and members of the European Parliament.

5. The Bureau shall meet, on the initiative of its Co-Presidents, at least four times a year; two of the meetings shall take place in the days preceding the sessions of the Assembly.

6. The Bureau shall submit to the Assembly the proposed agenda for the debates. It shall be responsible for ensuring that, as far as possible, half the items on the agenda concern matters of common interest.

It may propose a limitation of speaking time for debates.

7. The Bureau shall be responsible for matters relating to the composition and the responsibilities of the standing committees referred to in Article 25 ('the standing committees').

8. The Bureau shall be responsible for authorising the standing committees to draw up reports and motions for resolutions.

9. The Bureau may also refer matters for consideration by the standing committees, which may subsequently request authorisation to draw up a report on a particular topic.

10. The Bureau shall be responsible for monitoring the follow-up to resolutions and decisions of the Assembly. In the case of resolutions tabled by a standing committee, it may delegate responsibility for monitoring the follow-up to the chairman and rapporteur of the standing committee concerned.

11. The Bureau shall be responsible for discussion, in camera, of individual human rights cases.

12. The meetings of the Bureau shall not be public.

Article 3

Attendance of other institutions

1. The ACP-EU Council of Ministers, as provided for in Article 15 of the Partnership Agreement, shall be invited to present to the Assembly its annual report on the implementation of the Partnership Agreement. That presentation shall be followed by a debate.

2. The ACP Council of Ministers and the ACP Committee of Ambassadors, as well as the Council of the European Union, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (hereinafter 'the High Representative') and the European Commission, may attend sessions of the Assembly at the invitation of the Bureau.

3. The ACP Council of Ministers, as well as the Council of the European Union, the High Representative and the European Commission, may, at the invitation of the Bureau, attend meetings of the Bureau in relation to items concerning their respective areas of responsibility.

Article 4

Observers and other guests

1. The following States, as permanent observers, may send a representative to attend sessions of the Assembly:

- (a) States which are in the process of ratification of the Partnership Agreement;
- (b) States which are members of the ACP Group.

The permanent observers may address the Assembly.

2. Other organisations or bodies may attend, as observers, sessions of the Assembly, meetings of the standing committees and regional parliamentary meetings upon the invitation of the Co-Presidents, with the agreement of the Bureau.

They may, on a case-by-case basis, address the session or committee meetings, with the agreement of the Assembly or the Bureau of the committee concerned, respectively.

3. Observers, permanent or not, shall not have the right to vote.

4. The participation, with a consultative status, of other guests, such as representatives of civil society, in the sessions of the Assembly, the meetings of the standing committees and the regional meetings of the Assembly shall be approved by the Bureau on a case-by-case basis.

Article 5

Sessions of the Assembly

1. The Assembly shall meet twice a year for a period of three days; its sessions shall be convened by its Co-Presidents and it shall meet alternately in an ACP State and a Member State of the European Union, if possible the one holding the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union.

2. Consideration shall be given in turn to the regions of the ACP Group of States and the Member States of the European Union when deciding on the venue of the sessions.

3. An extraordinary session of the Assembly may be convened by the Co-Presidents at the request of the Bureau or of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers.

Article 6

Regional meetings of the Assembly

1. In accordance with Article 17(3) of the Partnership Agreement, the Assembly *shall* hold regional parliamentary meetings. Such meetings shall be decided upon the request of the Bureau or of the regions concerned.
2. For the purposes of these Rules of Procedure ‘region’ shall mean entities to be defined by the national parliaments of the ACP States. Any such defined entities shall be presented for the Assembly’s final approval.
3. One member of parliament from each ACP State in the region and an equivalent number of members of the European Parliament shall participate in regional meetings.
4. The Assembly shall hold no more than three regional meetings a year, lasting for up to three days each. If more than two are held, one of them shall take place in the margins of the session held in an ACP State. Those meetings shall adopt conclusions in the form of a communiqué. These Rules of Procedure shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to regional meetings.
5. Regional meetings shall focus on matters of regional and topical interest, in particular the Regional and Country Strategy Papers for the region concerned. A follow-up report relating to each regional meeting shall be presented to the subsequent Assembly session.
6. A report on each ACP region shall be drawn up before each regional meeting, to be debated in the context of that regional meeting.

Article 7

Agenda

1. The Bureau shall prepare the draft agenda of the session. The Co-Presidents shall submit that draft to the Assembly for its approval. Subjects shall relate to development cooperation between the European Union and the ACP States in the framework of the Partnership Agreement.

The draft agenda of each session shall include the following categories of topic:

- (i) reports submitted by the standing committees. These will be limited to three per session. The length of the motions for resolution contained in the reports is laid down in Annex II to these Rules of Procedure;
- (ii) urgent topics, proposed by a standing committee or submitted by the Bureau itself. Urgent topics shall only be included on an exceptional basis and may not exceed two per session. Other topics shall be forwarded to the standing committee responsible;
- (iii) a keynote topic for a high-level debate.

2. On urgent topics, a motion for a resolution may be tabled by a representative of the ACP States, a political group or ten members. Motions for resolutions must be limited to the urgent topics entered on the draft agenda for the session and may not exceed the length laid down in Annex II. Motions for resolutions must be tabled no later than four weeks prior to the opening of the session at which they are to be debated and voted on.

3. In cases of urgency, the Co-Presidents may update the draft agenda between meetings of the Bureau through the written and/or silence procedure.

4. Motions for resolutions on urgent topics shall be submitted to the Bureau. The Bureau shall check that each motion for a resolution that meets the criteria set out in paragraph 2 is entered on the agenda and is available in English and French. The Bureau's proposals shall be submitted to the Assembly for approval.

5. The Bureau shall forward the motions for resolutions on urgent topics to the committee responsible, for information.

Article 8

Quorum

1. A quorum of the Assembly shall be attained when a third of the representatives both of the ACP States and of the European Parliament are present.

2. All votes shall be valid whatever the number of voters unless the President, on a request made by at least ten members before a vote has begun, ascertains that the quorum is not present at the moment of voting. If the quorum is not present, the vote shall be placed on the agenda for the next sitting.

Article 9

Presidency of sittings

1. The Co-Presidents shall jointly decide which of them is to preside at each sitting of the Assembly.

2. The President shall open, adjourn and close the sittings of the Assembly. The President shall ensure the Rules of Procedure are observed, maintain order, call upon speakers, close debates, put matters to the vote and announce the results of the vote.

3. The President may speak in a debate only to sum up or to call speakers to order; should he/she wish to take part in a debate, he/she shall vacate the chair.

4. Either Co-President may elect to be replaced in the chair by a Vice-President.

Article 10

Seating arrangements

Members shall be seated in alphabetical order, by name in the case of representatives of the European Parliament and by country in the case of ACP representatives, the starting letter to change to the next consecutive letter of the alphabet for each session.

Article 11

Official languages

1. The official languages of the Assembly shall be Bulgarian, **Croatian**, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish and Swedish.

For all meetings held at the European Parliament's normal places of work, interpretation facilities shall be provided in all the working languages of the members of the European Parliament actually present. For all meetings held outside the European Parliament's normal places of work, interpretation facilities shall be provided in accordance with the relevant internal rules of the European Parliament, as contained in the Rules governing meetings of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and its Bodies, laid down in the decision of the Bureau of the European Parliament of 10 February 2003¹. Translation services shall be provided during each meeting in English and French.

2. Acts adopted by the Assembly shall be published in the official languages. Preparatory documents and working documents shall be published in at least English and French.

Article 12

Public nature of proceedings

Sessions of the Assembly shall be public unless it decides otherwise.

Article 13

Minutes

1. The minutes of proceedings of each sitting, containing the decisions of the Assembly and the names of speakers, shall be distributed at the next sitting.

¹ See Annex IV.

2. The minutes of proceedings shall be published by the European Parliament in the *Official Journal of the European Union* and by the ACP Secretariat in whatever form it may deem appropriate. The minutes of the last sitting of the session shall be submitted for approval at the start of the next session and any corrections thereto shall be published by the European Parliament in the *Official Journal of the European Union* and by the ACP Secretariat in whatever form it may deem appropriate.

Article 14

Co-Presidents' statements and press releases

1. The Co-Presidents may, wherever possible after consulting the members of the Bureau through the written and/or silence procedure, issue joint urgent statements on any matter concerning the ACP-EU Partnership. Such statements shall be based on any existing resolutions and declarations. Once they have been issued, the Co-Presidents shall first inform the Bureau thereof with a view to their being discussed and, as soon as possible thereafter, all the members of the Assembly.

2. Press releases shall be drawn up in English and French. They shall not rank as official documents.

Article 15

Right to speak

1. A member of the Assembly may speak only if called upon to do so by the President. Representatives of countries named in resolutions or during debates shall have the right to reply within their allocated time-limit.

2. Speaking time in debates in the Assembly shall be divided equally between representatives of the European Parliament and of the ACP States. On a proposal from the President, the Assembly may decide to limit speaking time. Members may present written contributions supplementing their statements, limited to 2 000 characters. Written contributions shall be archived in their original language.

3. For members of the European Parliament, speaking time will be allocated in accordance with the d'Hondt system.

4. Members of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers or their designated representatives and representatives of the bodies and institutions referred to in Article 3(2) shall be heard at their request.

5. The Secretary-General of the European Parliament and the Secretary-General of the ACP Secretariat may speak at meetings of the Bureau and at sessions of the Assembly where duly

mandated by their respective houses and if asked to do so by the Co-President chairing those meetings and sessions.

6. A speaker shall not be interrupted except by the President if he exceeds his allocated speaking time, except in compliance with paragraph 6.

7. If a speaker departs from the subject, the President shall call him to order. If the speaker persists in departing from the subject, the President may forbid him to speak for such time as he thinks fit.

Article 16

Right to vote and methods of voting

1. Each member with a right to vote shall have a single, non-transferable vote.
2. Normally the Assembly shall vote by show of hands. If the result of the show of hands is doubtful, a fresh vote shall be taken using coloured cards, or by an electronic vote.
3. If a request has been submitted in writing by 10 a.m. on the day of the vote by no fewer than ten members, the Assembly shall vote by secret ballot.
4. A decision shall be deemed to have been adopted only if it has secured a majority of the votes cast. If a request has been submitted by 10 a.m. on the day of the vote by no fewer than five members, for a vote by separate houses, a vote shall be taken in which the members of the parliaments of the ACP States and the members of the European Parliament shall vote by separate houses with the order of vote alternating between them. In that case, the text in question shall be deemed to be adopted only if it secures a majority of the votes cast by both the members of the parliaments of the ACP States and the members of the European Parliament participating in the vote.
5. In the event of a tie, the motion shall not be adopted. It may be tabled again at the next session of the Assembly.
6. If a request has been submitted by 10 a.m. on the day of the vote by no fewer than five members, the Assembly shall vote on separate parts of the text of a paragraph or an amendment.
7. Any request tabled in accordance with paragraphs 3, 4 and 6 may be withdrawn by its authors at any time before the vote.

Article 17

Explanations of vote

Any member may give an oral explanation on the final vote for no longer than one minute and a half or give a written explanation of no more than 200 words. Written explanations shall be archived in their original language.

Article 18

Assembly resolutions

1. The Assembly shall vote on motions for resolutions included in reports submitted by the standing committees, in accordance with Article 7.
2. The Assembly shall also vote on any motions for resolutions on urgent topics, in accordance with Article 7.
3. The President shall invite the authors of any motions for resolutions on a similar urgent topic to draw up a compromise motion. At the end of the debate, each compromise motion for a resolution and the amendments thereto shall be put to the vote in the Assembly. Once a compromise motion for a resolution has been adopted, all other motions tabled on the same topic shall fall.
4. Resolutions adopted by the Assembly shall be forwarded to the European Commission and the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and to any other interested parties. The European Commission and the ACP-EU Council of Ministers shall report on follow-up to adopted resolutions at the next session of the Assembly.

Article 19

Amendments

1. An ACP representative with the right to vote, a political group or ten members may table amendments. Amendments shall relate to the text it is sought to alter and shall be submitted in writing. The President shall decide, on the basis of these criteria, whether they are admissible.
2. The deadline for the tabling of amendments shall be announced at the beginning of the session.
3. When a vote is being taken, amendments shall have priority over the text to which they relate.
4. If two or more amendments have been tabled to the same part of a text, the amendment that departs furthest in content from the original text shall be put to the vote first. Only oral amendments which correct factual mistakes or language may be taken. All other oral amendments will be by leave of the Assembly. An oral amendment shall not be taken if it is objected to by ten members standing.

Article 20

Questions for written answer

1. Any member of the Assembly may put questions for written answer to the ACP-EU Council of Ministers or the European Commission.
2. The questions shall be submitted in writing to the Bureau, which shall decide whether they are admissible and, if such is the case, forward them to the ACP-EU Council of Ministers or the European Commission, as applicable. The ACP-EU Council of Ministers or the European Commission shall be invited to give a written answer within a period of two months from the date on which the question was forwarded to it.
3. Questions to which an answer has been given shall be published, together with the answers thereto, by the European Parliament in the *Official Journal of the European Union* and by the ACP States in whatever form each of them may deem appropriate.
4. Questions to which no answer has been given within the set time-limit shall be published, with an indication that no answer has yet been given, in the same manner.

Article 21

Question Time

1. Question Time with the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and the European Commission shall be held at each session at times decided by the Bureau, so as to ensure the presence of both those institutions at the highest level.
2. Each member of the Assembly may put one question to the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and one to the European Commission. On multiple named questions only one member will be called.
3. The questions shall be submitted in writing to the Bureau by the deadline set by the latter.
4. In urgent cases, and with the agreement of the institution to which the questions are addressed, the Co-Presidents or the Bureau may decide to place a question on the agenda even if the deadline set by the Bureau has expired.
5. The Co-Presidents of the Assembly shall rule on the admissibility of questions. This shall be governed by the scope and terms of the Partnership Agreement. Questions relating to subjects which are already included in the agenda for discussion with the institution concerned shall be declared inadmissible. Questions declared admissible shall be forwarded to the ACP-EU Council of Ministers or the European Commission. The Co-Presidents shall decide as to the order in which questions are taken. The author shall be notified immediately of their decision.

6. Questions shall not be more than 100 words long. The question must be in the form of a question and not a statement.
7. The Assembly shall set aside a specific time during each session for dealing with questions to the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and the European Commission. Questions that remain unanswered for lack of time shall be answered in writing unless the author withdraws his question.
8. A question may be answered only if its author is present or has notified the Co-Presidents in writing, before Question Time begins, of the name of his substitute.
9. If neither the author nor his substitute is present, the question shall be answered in writing.
10. The ACP-EU Council of Ministers or the European Commission shall provide answers in writing beforehand. One brief supplementary question may be put by the author of the original question, if he is present, or by his substitute, provided that the author of the original question has notified the Co-Presidents in writing, before Question Time begins, of the name of that substitute. The President may refuse any question which does not relate to the original question. Other questions may then be put to the ACP-EU Council of Ministers or the European Commission on a 'catch-the-eye' basis, if time permits.
11. At the request of ten or more members of the Assembly, the answer given by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers or the European Commission may be followed by a debate. The President shall set a time-limit for that debate.

Article 22

Report on the implementation of the Partnership Agreement by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers

The report on the implementation of the Partnership Agreement by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, which shall deal inter alia with measures taken pursuant to the resolutions and recommendations adopted by the Assembly, shall be printed in the official languages and distributed for an annual debate in the Assembly.

Article 23

Scrutiny of the implementation of the Partnership Agreement

Without prejudice to the regional reports referred to in Article 6, on a proposal from the Bureau, the Assembly may appoint one ACP and one EU co-rapporteur to draw up a report on a specific region, or on any other matter relating to the implementation of the Partnership Agreement.

Article 24

Requests from the ACP-EU Council of Ministers for an opinion

1. If the Assembly is asked to deliver an opinion on a decision or a proposed decision, resolution, recommendation or opinion of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, the request in that regard shall be submitted to the Bureau, which shall place the matter before the Assembly with a recommendation.
2. The Bureau may give a final ruling on a matter declared urgent by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers.

Article 25

Standing committees

1. The Assembly shall set up three standing committees¹ responsible for the following areas in the context of the implementation of the Partnership Agreement:
 - promoting democratic processes through dialogue and consultation;
 - economic, financial and trade matters and implementation of the European Development Fund;
 - social and environmental issues.
2. In line with the general arrangements for the functioning of the Assembly, the standing committees shall be composed of members of the Assembly, in accordance with Article 1, and shall function in a strictly joint manner.
3. The rules of procedure of the standing committees shall be adopted by the Assembly on a proposal from the Bureau.

Article 26

Temporary follow-up committees

1. The Bureau may, on a proposal from the Assembly, set up temporary follow-up committees on specific subjects related to the Partnership Agreement or matters covered by it. Not more than two such committees may be operational at the same time. Follow-up committees must complete their work within one year.
2. The Bureau shall determine their responsibilities, composition and mandate.

¹ For more detailed rules see Annex I.

Article 27

Workshops

1. With a view to facilitating ‘greater understanding between the peoples of the European Union and those of the ACP States and raising public awareness of development issues’, the Assembly shall organise workshops at regular intervals in both the European Union and the ACP States.
2. The workshops shall be organised under the responsibility of the Bureau and shall, in particular, provide an opportunity to invite persons able to give the Assembly first-hand information about political, economic, social and cultural situations that are of concern.
3. Up to three workshops shall be held the day before the opening of each session of the Assembly. A short oral report shall be presented to the session by each rapporteur, followed, possibly, by a debate.

Article 28

Missions and delegations

1. The Bureau may decide to send fact-finding missions to ACP States or EU Member States or to international organisations, subject to budgetary constraints. The Bureau or the Assembly may also decide to send joint delegations for the observation of presidential or parliamentary elections, at the invitation of the country concerned, provided that there are no concerns about security and that, in the case of members of the European Parliament, this is compatible with the internal rules of the European Parliament. Furthermore, in accordance with the principle of close cooperation laid down in Article 29, the Bureau may send delegations to meetings of the European Economic and Social Committee and of the social partners, including those held outside Brussels.

A report shall be submitted to the Bureau and to the subsequent session of the Assembly. There shall be a concrete follow-up at the next Bureau meeting to the recommendations made in the report.

2. The Co-Presidents or their Vice-Presidents may attend high-level meetings or meetings of international parliamentary bodies when invited to participate in their official capacity, either singly or jointly, on behalf of the Assembly. Such missions must represent the Assembly as a whole and the activities entailed must reflect shared ACP-EU interests.

Article 29

Consultation with civil society

The Assembly shall take steps to ensure that the ACP States and the European Union have regular contacts and consultations with representatives of the ACP-EU economic and social partners and other representatives of civil society, in order to obtain their views on the attainment of the objectives of the Partnership Agreement. Those representatives of civil society shall have the opportunity to attend regional meetings and standing committee meetings and to take part in workshops. The Bureau shall examine, in each case, the conditions under which invitations should be addressed to them.

Article 30

Honorary President

On a proposal from the Bureau, and in exceptional cases, the Assembly may confer the title of Honorary President on one of its former Co-Presidents. This honour shall be a mark of recognition by the Assembly of the distinguished service rendered by the person concerned, during his/her membership of the Assembly, to the cause of the Assembly.

Article 31

Secretariat

The Secretary-General of the European Parliament and the Secretary-General of the ACP Secretariat shall take all necessary steps to assist the Assembly and to ensure that it functions smoothly. They may designate a senior official of their respective Secretariats to represent them as Co-Secretary-General of the Assembly. They shall be answerable to the Bureau.

Article 32

Financial regulation

The Assembly shall adopt its financial regulation on the basis of proposals from the Bureau.

Article 33

Interpretation of the Rules of Procedure

The President – or, at his request, the Bureau – shall rule on questions relating to the interpretation of these Rules of Procedure.

Article 34

Points of order

1. A member may raise a point of order or move a procedural motion and shall have a prior right to speak. He may speak on the point of order or procedural motion for not more than two minutes.
2. The President may, on request, give the floor to one speaker against the motion for not more than two minutes.
3. No further speakers shall be heard.
4. The President shall announce his decision on the point of order or procedural motion. He may first consult the Bureau.

Article 35

Revision of the Rules of Procedure

1. Amendments to these Rules of Procedure shall be decided on by the Assembly on the basis of proposals from the Bureau, having consulted the Committee on Political Affairs.
2. Amendments shall be adopted only if they obtain the majority of the votes of each of the two groups of representatives in the Assembly.
3. Unless otherwise specified when the vote is taken, amendments to these Rules shall enter into force on the first day of the session following their adoption.

ANNEX I

Powers, responsibilities, membership and procedures of standing committees

Article 1

There shall be three standing parliamentary committees with the following powers and responsibilities:

I. COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL AFFAIRS

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

1. Political dialogue (Article 8 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement), development and institutional matters;
2. Respect for and the promotion of human rights, democracy and good governance (Article 9 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement);
3. Peace-building policies and conflict prevention and resolution (Article 11 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement);
4. Issues concerning migration (Article 13 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement);
5. Assembly relations with relevant international organisations.

This committee will coordinate the work of fact-finding missions, including those sent to monitor elections, in accordance with Article 28 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly.

II. COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, FINANCE AND TRADE

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

1. Economic development and trade cooperation, as well as capacity-building for development and partnership;
2. Macroeconomic and structural reforms, economic sector development and tourism (Articles 22 to 24 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement);
3. New ACP-EU trading arrangements, market access and the gradual integration of ACP States into the world economy (Articles 34 to 37 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement);
4. Trade and labour standards (Article 50 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement);
5. Rural development, fisheries and food security (Articles 53 and 54 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement);
6. All issues concerning development finance cooperation including follow-up of the implementation of the European Development Fund.

III. COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

This committee is responsible for matters relating to:

1. Social and human development;
2. Social infrastructure and services, including health and education issues (Article 25 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement);
3. Youth and cultural issues (Articles 26 and 27 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement);
4. Gender issues (Article 31 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement);
5. Environment and natural resources (Article 32 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement).

Article 2

1. Each member of the Assembly shall have the right to be a member of one of the standing committees.
2. The committees shall be composed of 52 members and shall consist of equal numbers of, on the one hand, members of the European Parliament and, on the other, members of parliament from ACP States. Should the number of ACP States increase, the number of places on the standing committees will increase pro rata.
3. Members may also attend meetings of committees to which they do not belong in an advisory capacity or if the subject under discussion covers their country or region, if invited by the Committee Bureau.
4. The participation of representatives who are not members of a parliament shall only be allowed if the subject under discussion covers their country, but they will not have the right to vote.
5. Unless a committee decides otherwise, all meetings shall be public.

Article 3

1. The composition of the committees shall, as far as possible, reflect the composition of the Assembly.
2. The committees shall elect a Committee Bureau from amongst their members for a period of one year.
3. The Committee Bureau shall consist of two co-chairs (one representative of the European Parliament and one representative of the ACP States) and four co-vice-chairs (two representatives of the ACP States and two representatives of the European Parliament).

4. The committees shall be jointly chaired by a member of the European Parliament and by a member of parliament from an ACP State.
5. The committees may appoint rapporteurs to examine specific questions within their competence and prepare reports to be submitted to the Assembly subject to authorisation from the Bureau, in accordance with Article 2 of the Rules of Procedure.

Motions for resolutions contained in reports may be accompanied by an explanatory statement, which shall not exceed four pages.

6. The standing committees may discuss other agenda items without a report and advise the Bureau in writing that the said items were discussed.
7. Committees shall also contribute to the dialogue with non-state actors, in accordance with Article 17(3) of the Partnership Agreement, in particular by means of hearings.
8. The committees shall report to the Assembly on their activities.

Article 4

1. Committees shall meet when convened by their co-chairs and for a maximum of four sessions per year, two of them during the session of the Assembly.
2. Any member may table amendments for consideration in committee. As far as the procedure is concerned, Articles 3 (attendance of other institutions), 4 (observers), 8 (quorum), 9 (presidency of sittings), 16 (right to vote and methods of voting) and 29 (consultation with civil society) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to committee meetings.

ANNEX II

Length of texts

The following maximum lengths shall apply to texts submitted for translation and reproduction:

- Explanatory statements, preparatory working documents and reports on fact-finding missions: six pages
- Motions for resolutions contained in reports and urgent topics: four pages, including recitals but excluding citations

A page shall be taken to mean a text of 1 500 characters (not taking into account spaces).

This annex may be amended pursuant to a simple decision by the Bureau.

ANNEX III

Meetings of political groupings

Political groups of the European Parliament, as well as members of the European Parliament and of parliaments of ACP States, according to their political affiliations, may meet in the margins of the sessions of the Assembly, but not at the same time as the sessions themselves. Interpretation shall be provided for such meetings.

ANNEX IV

European Parliament rules regarding interpreting and translation facilities (Article 11 of these Rules of Procedure)

Interpreting and translation facilities¹

- (a) For all meetings held at Parliament's normal places of work:
- (i) interpretation will be provided in all the working languages of the European JPA members actually present;
 - (ii) actual presence within the meaning of this paragraph refers to attendance at all sittings of a session, and at meetings of the Bureau and the standing committees for the members concerned;
 - (iii) translation services during each meeting will be provided in English and French.
- (b) For all meetings held outside Parliament's normal places of work:
- (i) Interpretation facilities shall be provided for the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly as a general rule in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese; other languages might be considered under exceptional circumstances for particular meetings (e.g. the language of the Council Presidency);
- If it is established two weeks before a scheduled meeting that fewer than three Members using any one of these languages will attend, interpretation will not be provided in the language(s) concerned.
- Attendance is confirmed in the following ways:
- in the case of meetings outside the European Union, by booking a plane ticket with the European Parliament's accredited travel agency, or
 - in the case of meetings within the European Union, on the basis of the lists sent by the political groups to the European co-secretariat, with reservation of a travel ticket and/or a hotel room,
- (ii) once the meeting has started interpretation will be provided in the languages foreseen even if fewer than three Members using any one of those languages remain present at that specific meeting,
 - (iii) if, after application of the rules in paragraph (i), the language of the host country is not included in the interpretation language profile for the JPA session, active and passive interpretation of that language can be provided additionally, if the language is a Community language,

¹ See also the Code of Conduct on Multilingualism, particularly Articles 2(2) and 8(2) thereof.

(iv) translation services during each meeting will be provided in English and French.