

# **ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**

**16th session from 25-28 November 2008**

**PORT MORESBY  
(Papua New Guinea)**

## **ORAL QUESTIONS TO THE COUNCIL**

**No. 1 to the ACP Council  
Nos. 2 - 16 to the EU Council**

## ORAL QUESTIONS TO THE ACP COUNCIL

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## ORAL QUESTIONS TO THE EU COUNCIL

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## **QUESTION TO THE ACP COUNCIL**

### **QUESTION 1**

**by Waven William (Seychelles)**

#### **Subject: Fisheries**

Now that the ACP Council of Ministers has decided to set up an ACP ministerial monitoring mechanism for fisheries, will it consider combining with its EU counterpart to create a joint ACP-EU ministerial monitoring mechanism for fisheries?

With reference to the Joint Parliamentary Assembly's report on the fact-finding mission to Seychelles on the tuna industry, what follow-up action will be taken by the ACP Council with the EU and will negotiations be conducted to secure the EU's agreement to fully investigate allegations of underreporting by EU vessels?

## **QUESTIONS TO THE EU COUNCIL**

### **QUESTION 2**

**by Johan Van Hecke**

**Subject: Global financial crisis**

The global financial slump may mean a further slap in the face for the developing countries. The very poorest are already in danger of suffering as a result of climate problems and rising food prices. Observers are predicting that the international banking crisis will greatly slow down Africa's economic growth. Indirectly, it may lead to a fall in investment, which will be disastrous for what is much-needed economic growth in the developing countries.

What efforts is the Council making to limit the harmful consequences of the financial crisis for the developing countries? In the light of this financial crisis, is the Council planning to reconfirm its Monterrey financial commitments?

### **QUESTION 3**

**by Jo Leinen**

**Subject: Financial crisis**

The EU's budget is determined by the gross domestic products of its Member States, which are not growing as projected because of the economic situation and the spreading financial crisis. Could the Council estimate what effect this will have on the EU's support programmes for, in particular, the ACP countries?

## **QUESTION 4**

**by Assarid Imbarcaouane (Mali)**

**Subject: Official development assistance**

At the United Nations High-Level Meeting on Africa's Development Needs in New York on 22 September 2008, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon put those needs at US\$ 72 billion per year to enable Africa to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

At that meeting, EU President-in-Office Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France, stated the following:

'The 27 European Union Member States recently reiterated, collectively, very clear commitments with respect to aid. We have confirmed the EU's target of devoting 0.7% of our wealth to official assistance in 2015. A real agenda for action between now and 2015 has been drawn up and we will debate it on 25 September at the special high-level meeting on the Millennium Goals convened by the UN Secretary-General. We also want to do more when it comes to the global partnership for agriculture and food.'

Could the EU Council give details of the commitments and agenda referred to and, in view of the vast sums marshalled in so short a time in order to cope with the current financial crisis, should there not be a similar remedy in order to eradicate underdevelopment in the world? In other words, does the EU Council not believe that the time has come for the development of the ACP countries to be thought of in Marshall Plan terms?

## **QUESTION 5**

**by Achille Tapsoba (Burkina Faso)**

**Subject: Financial crisis**

The international financial crisis mainly hitting banks and insurance companies, which is shaking the markets in the process, could bring about a slowdown in growth rates for ACP countries and increasingly volatile exchange rates.

In view of this situation, what measures have been taken or are being considered by the EU Council to safeguard the fragile economies of the ACP states, most of whose banks have partnership arrangements with European banks?

## QUESTION 6

by **Marie-Arlette Carlotti**

**Subject: Programming of the intra-ACP budget within the 10th European Development Fund (EDF)**

In accordance with the rules governing the 10th EDF, there must be Commission programming, ratified by joint decision of the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors, of the intra-ACP cooperation budget (€ 2.7 billion).

Can the EU Council say what programming decision was taken on the intra-ACP budget?

Can the EU Council specify, in particular, the amounts in that budget which will be earmarked for funding the EU-Africa Strategy and its various action plans?

Since, to date, neither the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly nor the European Parliament has been involved or informed, can the EU Council say what the arrangements will be for involving the two bodies in monitoring the programming and implementation of the intra-ACP budget?

## QUESTION 12

by **Anne Van Lancker**

**Subject: Funding for family planning, basic reproductive health services and research**

Despite the commitments of European governments towards sexual and reproductive health (SRH), 'Euromapping 2008', a study presented by the German Foundation for World Population and the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development, shows that SRH is no longer a priority in bilateral funding. While funding for HIV/AIDS has sky-rocketed (42% increase in 2005 over the previous year), funding for family planning, basic reproductive health services and research decreased in both real and relative terms.

How will the Council ensure that sufficient bilateral financial resources will be allocated for international population assistance and especially for SRH?

How will the Council ensure this funding through budget support?

## **QUESTION 7**

**by Vittorio Agnoletto**

### **Subject: Access to essential medicines**

Both the European Parliament resolution of 12 July 2007 on the TRIPS Agreement and access to medicines and the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly resolution of 22 November 2007 on access to healthcare and medicines, with a particular focus on neglected diseases, recalled the need for the Council and the European Commission to take further action and enter into further commitments to improve access to essential medicines for developing countries. Today, the question of access to medicines is an aspect of a number of important ongoing issues (e.g. EU free-trade agreements and Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations, counterfeiting, and the EU budget discussion on more funding for poverty-related disease). Could the Council explain what specifically has been done on each of the requests made by the European Parliament since the adoption of the above-mentioned resolutions?

## **QUESTION 8**

**by Catherine Neris**

### **Subject: Regional cooperation in response to the natural disasters in Haiti**

The four hurricanes and tropical storms which hit Haiti in August and September this year devastated the country, with a death toll of several hundred and 600 000 other victims, destroying infrastructure and the farming sector and causing serious food shortages.

As there are several EU Member State overseas territories in the vicinity of Haiti, can the EU Council say whether and, if so, how it intends to act on its stated intentions, as regards regional cooperation, in order to alleviate this situation?

## **QUESTION 11**

**by Mikel Irujo Amezaga**

### **Subject: Re-recognition of Somaliland as a model for the Horn of Africa**

The Somali Republic was formed on 1 July 1960 by uniting Somaliland (an independent nation, recognised worldwide, which had been formed in June 1960 when the British protectorate ceased to exist) and Somalia (which had been formed from the former Italian colony on 1 July 1960).

Since 1991, Somaliland has rebuilt itself both physically and in governmental terms, on the basis of liberal, democratic and lawful practices which had existed 31 years previously. Somalia, on the other hand, has degenerated into an ungovernable no man's land.

Does the Council not believe that an initial solution for averting a worse crisis than the current crisis in the Horn of Africa is to re-recognise the nation of Somaliland as it existed in June 1960?

Taking into account the fact that there is some willingness to recognise the independence of Somaliland de facto but not de jure, can the Council intervene at all on a decision by the United Nations on the request for recognition for Somaliland?

Does the Council really think that the proposal of the British government (i.e. 'We continue to urge Somaliland authorities and the Transitional Federal Government in Somalia to engage in dialogue so that a mutually acceptable solution for their future relationship can be agreed.') is feasible despite the fact that Somalia has had no real government since 1991?

## **QUESTION 14**

**by Olle Schmidt**

### **Subject: Dawit Isaak in Eritrea**

The Swedish journalist Dawit Isaak has been imprisoned in Eritrea for over seven years. He has not been given a trial, and several other journalists have been murdered. At the last ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly meeting in Ljubljana, the Presidency promised me that it would act and follow up this issue. I am looking forward to news on action taken.

Secondly, is it not time to increase the pressure on the regime in Eritrea and for the Council to impose a ban on Eritrean Government members and senior military officers from entering European Union territory until Eritrea releases its political prisoners, including journalists unlawfully imprisoned, such as Dawit Isaak?

## **QUESTION 15**

**by Ana Gomes**

### **Subject: Human rights violations in Angola**

Is the Council addressing, in the context of the political dialogue with the Angolan authorities, the following accusations of human rights violations?

- The Angolan Government attempt to close down the Association for Justice, Peace and Democracy (AJPD), one of Angola's most active human rights organisations, through constitutional court proceedings aimed at banning the AJPD.
- The manifestly unfair trial of former Voice of America correspondent Jose Fernando Lelo, who was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment on 19 September this year and whose accusers were allegedly tortured to make them testify against him.

## **QUESTION 16**

**by Emanuel Jardim Fernandes**

### **Subject: EU-Zimbabwe relations**

The EU-Africa Summit was a priority, and a success, for the Portuguese EU Presidency in 2007, since it made it possible to strengthen a platform for essential dialogue with the countries of Africa, even if the governments of some countries represented deserved to be roundly condemned. That was the case with regard to Zimbabwe. How will the current EU Presidency help to improve the present appalling situation in that country?

## **QUESTION 9**

**by John Bowis**

**Subject: UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

At the JPA in Wiesbaden, in June 2007, I was pleased to hear of the approach the EC is taking with regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Assembly heard of the imminent plans the EC had to carry out a full legislative review, and to ensure that EC Delegations have the tools to integrate disability in the policy dialogue with partners. It was also mentioned in the oral reply from the Commissioner that ‘disability contact persons’ would be nominated for each Delegation.

At this point, now that the CRPD has come into force, I am interested to hear an update on progress which has been made.

What discussions has the Council had with the European Commission in terms of revising the EC Guidance Note on Disability and Development?

## **QUESTION 10**

**by Marie H el ene Aubert**

**Subject: Natural resources**

There is a need to establish closer links between the ACP-EU partnership and the associated overseas territories in the Pacific (e.g. New Caledonia) in areas such as protection of marine ecosystems and natural resources, sustainable management of mineral resources, and food strategy.

What policy does the EU Council intend to conduct for better dovetailing of the ACP-EU partnership and European policy towards the Pacific associated territories?

## **QUESTION 13**

**by Waven William (Seychelles)**

**Subject: United Nations Parliamentary Assembly**

Could the Council say whether the EU supports the creation of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly, especially now that it is more evident that, because of limited oversight over certain worldwide issues, some individuals and organisations have abused their positions, leading to what is a global financial crisis?