



## ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

### **DECLARATION ON NIGER BY THE CO-PRESIDENTS OF ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY LUANDA, 2 DECEMBER 2009**

The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly held a debate on the current political situation in Niger.

The action of President Mahmmadou Tandja of Niger suspended the institutions guaranteeing the rule of law and violated the Constitution of Niger when he held an illegal constitutional referendum on 4 August 2009, allowing the President to stay in power for three more years. President Tandja organised unconstitutional parliamentary elections on 20 October 2009, which were widely boycotted by the opposition.

This constituted also a clear violation of the essential elements of the Cotonou Agreement, as provided for in Article 8 of the Agreement, to which the Government of Niger is a signatory. We therefore call on Niger to respect its commitments under the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement.

We fully endorse the international condemnation of Niger, particularly its suspension from ECOWAS and the EU's freeze of budget support.

We call on the President and the authorities of Niger to return to constitutional order as soon as possible and to uphold democracy and the rule of law and respect for basic human rights, and to immediately release all political prisoners, including Members of Parliament, human rights defenders and opposition leaders.

We call for an independent international investigation into human rights violations committed in the electoral period. We look forward to a satisfactory outcome to the EU's political consultations with Niger under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement. Given the conditions in which the last elections took place, the JPA decided to lower the status of the Niger delegation at this session to observer level.