

**18<sup>th</sup> ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly,  
Luanda, 2 December 2009**

**Statement of Ms Gunilla Carlsson,  
Swedish Minister for Development  
President-in-office of the EU Council**

Honorary colleague of the ACP-EU Council, the Minister from  
Malawi,  
Co-chairs,  
Members of ACP Parliaments,  
Members of the European Parliament,  
Mr Secretary General,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be here and to take part, on behalf of the EU  
Council, in this session.

I am also very pleased that this meeting is taking place in Luanda.  
Not so long ago, this country was divided by civil war. Today, it  
plays host to parliamentarians representing over 100 countries  
discussing joint solutions to common problems. That is no small  
achievement and should be recognised.

The JPA is an important institution within the EU-ACP set-up. It  
provides a valuable platform for dialogue and has an important role  
in promoting democracy, facilitating greater understanding and

highlighting issues relevant to the development of ACP countries. In many ways, it embodies the unique "joint spirit" of the ACP-EU partnership.

It makes a valuable contribution to the policies and the dialogue of the EU-ACP partnership. Having been a member of the Swedish and the European Parliaments, I recognise and appreciate the value of international parliamentary cooperation and the mutual understanding of common challenges that it promotes. I therefore greatly value the JPA's engagement.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Two issues have dominated the international agenda during the past year, and indeed the agenda of the Swedish Presidency of the EU, namely the global economic crisis and climate change.

Firstly, the **global economic crisis** – the worst since the 1930s - has had a profound impact on EU and ACP economies alike. In the past year, the volume of world trade has fallen at its fastest rate in over 40 years. Economic growth stalled. Lending dried up making credit difficult to access. Increased uncertainty led to

weakened demand and falling industrial output. Many jobs were lost, in Europe and ACP countries and in many other regions too.

The effects of the crisis have been far-reaching and wide-spread. But for developing countries, already faced with significantly increased energy and food prices, this has been especially challenging.

The analysis is clear. Up to 90 million more people risk falling into extreme poverty by end-2010 and up to 400,000 more children could die each year. Progress towards achieving the MDGs is under serious threat.

The international community's actions have helped prevent an even more serious situation in the global financial system which would have made the effects of the crisis far worse. The EU has played an influential role, working with G8 and G20 partners and international institutions, including the World Bank and IMF.

In May, the EU agreed a comprehensive and coordinated response to support developing countries cope with the crisis. Helping ACP countries was a central focus. Amongst the measures agreed was the establishment of a 500 million euro "vulnerability FLEX-

mechanism” to support social service provision in the most vulnerable ACP countries. The EU also undertook to ‘front-load’, where possible, support for agriculture and food security and to prioritise investment in essential infrastructure. EU commitments to increase ODA were reaffirmed and have been subsequently restated, most recently by EU Development Ministers in Brussels a few weeks ago. Progress will be kept closely in view.

Also in May, the ACP-EU Council adopted a joint declaration on the economic crisis. This stressed the importance of safeguarding progress towards the MDGs, to securing basic services, supporting the business environment, and mobilising domestic resources for development. It also highlighted the importance of moving forward towards development-oriented EPAs and successfully concluding the WTO Doha Development Round, objectives which I whole-heartedly endorse.

There are now some signs of improvement in the global economy. But, there is no room for complacency. The need for coordinated global action will remain for some time. Many developing countries face a long recovery with external and fiscal financing gaps. The EU and ACP must continue to work together using all

of the instruments of our partnership to address new and emerging needs as they arise.

Secondly, ladies and gentlemen,

There are now only a few days until the start of the **UN Climate Change Conference** in Copenhagen.

The EU has led the way in these negotiations and remains strongly committed to seeking a legally binding international agreement that includes ambitious emission reductions to meet the two degree goal and provide appropriate financing to support action in developing countries.

The EU has a very clear position on these issues. EU leaders have agreed to a 20% reduction in emissions by 2020 compared to 1990 levels; and will move to a 30% reduction if other developed countries commit to comparable emission reductions and developing countries contribute adequately according to their respective responsibilities and capabilities.

The EU has said it will contribute its fair share of support to help developing countries undertake necessary mitigation and adaptation

activities. It is important to emphasize that such financing should not undermine or jeopardize the fight against poverty and continued progress towards achieving the MDGs.

Other developed countries need to similarly engage in the discussions and show the same leadership in taking on ambitious emission reductions, presenting proposals on financing and intensifying work. Recently we have seen welcome steps by some developing countries on concrete proposals to start limiting their emissions. We expect others to follow suit.

There is much work still to do. But I hope an effective agreement will be secured in Copenhagen. It is so vitally needed.

Looking beyond Copenhagen, EU Development Ministers also recently adopted Council Conclusions on Climate Change and Development. Taking a medium to long-term perspective, the conclusions focus on how development cooperation can integrate issues of climate change and how we can support partner countries in their work on coherence between continued development and addressing climate change. We will review progress next year.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I want to take this opportunity to highlight another of the issues that Sweden has prioritised in its Presidency agenda, and one in which I personally have taken a particular interest over many years, namely **democracy support in external relations**. The EU's Foreign and Development Ministers recently reached agreement on an Agenda for Action for increased coherence and effectiveness in the EU's democracy support. Progress will be reviewed next year.

The EU-ACP partnership has democratic governance as its cornerstone. This is important and valuable. I strongly believe that ensuring a fair and transparent distribution of resources and equitable access to basic services, as well as taking efficient measures to tackle corruption or gender inequality, can best be achieved in a democratic political environment. A system that is transparent, accountable and upholds human rights and the rule of law also provides the best environment for innovation, trade and economic growth. All of these are factors essential for sustainable poverty reduction.

The EU and other donors can play a supportive role, but the impetus and ownership of this process can only come from the governments, parliaments, civil society and citizens of developing countries. They all have an important role to play, the responsibility to act and to be allowed to act where not currently able to do so.

We will have the opportunity to discuss many important topics in detail in the following sessions so let me briefly conclude on the ongoing revision of the Cotonou Agreement which underpins the EU-ACP partnership.

I believe this is an excellent opportunity to update the Agreement to reflect the many developments in policy and practice that have taken place since the 1<sup>st</sup> revision was agreed in 2005.

For example, the EU has enlarged to 27 Members, meaning new partners for ACP countries.

Regional and cross-border processes and institutions have continued to flourish.

New advances in development policy have been agreed - on enhancing aid effectiveness and promoting policy coherence for development. Both of these issues featured strongly during Sweden's EU Presidency.

Issues concerned with migration and development and security and development have emerged.

Trading arrangements have been updated and commitments to increase trade-related assistance have been made.

Therefore, it is important that the Cotonou agreement is updated to reflect these and other changes and to meet future challenges. I look forward to the revision being successfully concluded early next year.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Many new issues for global development have emerged in the past few years. These demand new innovative responses and new ways of working together. The world will review progress towards meeting the MDGs next year. The EU-ACP partnership provides

an excellent example of how partners from North and South can work effectively together towards common goals. I strongly believe in the importance of continually building and strengthening our relationship in all areas. I believe it is in our collective interest to do so.

Let me conclude by paying tribute to the JPA for its past work and to encourage you to continue to play an active and constructive role in the years to come.

Thank you.