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on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2009
(2010/0000(INI))

Committee on Development

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

**on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2009
(2010/0000(INI))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the partnership agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of states (ACP), of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000 (Cotonou Partnership Agreement)¹,
- having regard to the Rules of Procedure of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA), adopted on 3 April 2003², as most recently amended in Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea) on 28 November 2008³,
- having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation⁴,
- having regard to the Kigali Declaration for development-friendly Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), adopted by the JPA on 22 November 2007 in Kigali (Rwanda)⁵,
- having regard to the Luanda Declaration on the Second Revision of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement (Cotonou Partnership Agreement) adopted by the JPA on 3 December 2009 in Luanda (Angola)⁶,
- having regard to the Georgetown Communiqué adopted on 29 April 2009 in Georgetown (Guyana) at the JPA Caribbean regional meeting⁷,
- having regard to the Ouagadougou Communiqué adopted on 1 December 2009 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) at the JPA West Africa regional meeting⁸,
- having regard to the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid signed on 18 December 2007⁹,
- having regard to the resolutions adopted by the JPA in 2009:
- on challenges to the democratic accommodation of ethnic, cultural and religious diversity

¹ OJ L 317, 15.12.2000, p. 3.

² OJ C 231, 26.9.2003, p. 68.

³ ACP-EU/100.291/08/fin.

⁴ OJ L 378, 27.12.2006, p. 41.

⁵ OJ C 58, 1.3.2008, p. 44.

⁶ OJ C 68, 18.3.2010, p. 43.

⁷ APP 100.288

⁸ APP 100.452

⁹ Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission, entitled: 'The European Consensus on humanitarian aid' (OJ C 25, 30.1.2008, p. 1.).

in ACP and EU countries¹,

- on Economic Partnership Agreements and their impact on ACP States²,
 - on the social and environmental consequences of climate change in ACP countries³,
 - on the role of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement in addressing the food and financial crisis in ACP countries⁴,
 - on establishing and promoting peace, security, stability and governance in Somalia⁵,
 - on global governance and the reform of international institutions⁶,
 - on the impact of the financial crisis on the ACP states⁷,
 - on social and cultural integration and participation of young people⁸,
 - on climate change⁹,
 - on the situation in Madagascar¹⁰,
 - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Development (A7-0000/2010),
- A. whereas the JPA members expressed their concerns about the latest developments in the EPA negotiation during their regular session debates in March 2009 in Prague (Czech Republic) and December 2009 in Luanda (Angola),
- B. whereas the abovementioned Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006, which provides for thematic programmes also applicable to ACP countries and a programme of accompanying measures for Sugar Protocol countries, has been adopted,
- C. whereas the Commissioner with responsibility for development and humanitarian aid gave an undertaking at the JPA session in Wiesbaden (Germany) in June 2007 to subject Country and Regional Strategy Papers for the ACP countries (2008-2013) to democratic scrutiny by parliaments; and welcoming the fact that that undertaking has been fulfilled,
- D. whereas the revision of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement scheduled for 2010 provides a valuable opportunity for strengthening the role of the JPA and its regional dimension as

¹ OJ C 221, 14.9.2009, p. 19.

² OJ C 221, 14.9.2009, p. 24.

³ OJ C 221, 14.9.2009, p. 31.

⁴ OJ C 221, 14.9.2009, p. 38.

⁵ OJ C 221, 14.9.2009, p. 43.

⁶ OJ C 68, 18.3.2010, p. 20.

⁷ OJ C 68, 18.3.2010, p. 24.

⁸ OJ C 68, 18.3.2010, p. 29.

⁹ OJ C 68, 18.3.2010, p. 36.

¹⁰ OJ C 68, 18.3.2010, p. 40.

well as developing parliamentary scrutiny in ACP regions,

- E. whereas the two JPA regional meetings held in Guyana and Burkina Faso in 2009 were a considerable success and resulted in the adoption of the abovementioned Georgetown and Ouagadougou communiqués,
 - F. whereas the situation in Niger, Guinea and Madagascar deteriorated in 2009, leading to the removal of parliamentary democracy in all three countries and to the downgrading of the status of their representatives to observers at the 18th session of the JPA in Luanda,
 - G. whereas the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) resulted in grave, repeated human rights violations; whereas there is a need for effective humanitarian assistance and greater commitment from the international community,
 - H. having regard to the work of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and the establishment of formal relations between the European Parliament and the PAP, as well as the creation of the European Parliament inter-parliamentary delegation for relations with the PAP,
1. Welcomes the fact that in 2009 the JPA continued to provide a framework for an open, democratic and in-depth dialogue between the European Union and the ACP countries on the Cotonou Partnership Agreement including the EPAs;
 2. Welcomes the new Commissioner for Trade's positive response to the request by several ACP countries and regions to review the contentious issues, in line with the statements made by the President of the Commission;
 3. Stresses in particular the crucial role of the ACP national parliaments, as well local authorities and non-state bodies, in monitoring and managing the Country and Regional Strategy Papers and in the implementation of the EDF and calls on the Commission to guarantee their involvement; underlines also the need for close parliamentary scrutiny during the negotiation of EPAs;
 4. Calls on the parliaments of the ACP countries to insist that their governments and the Commission involve them in the process of drafting and implementing the Country and Regional Strategy Papers relating to cooperation between the EU and their countries (2008-2013), and ensure their full participation in the EPA negotiations;
 5. Calls on the Commission to supply all available information to the parliaments of the ACP countries and to assist them in exercising democratic scrutiny, in particular by means of capacity-building;
 6. Draws attention to the JPA's concern at the repercussions of the current financial crisis and the adoption of the abovementioned Luanda Declaration on the global food and financial crises;
 7. Welcomes the undertaking given by the previous Commissioner with responsibility for development and humanitarian aid, during the abovementioned JPA session in Kigali, to subject Country and Regional Strategy Papers for the ACP countries (2008-2013) to democratic scrutiny by parliaments; likewise, welcomes the work already done by certain

ACP parliaments in examining such documents;

8. Draws attention, in this regard, to the need closely to involve parliaments in the democratic process and in the national development strategies; stresses their vital role in establishing, following up and monitoring development policies;
9. Reiterates its position that the European Development Fund (EDF) should be incorporated into the EU budget in order to increase the consistency, transparency and effectiveness of development cooperation policy and guarantee democratic scrutiny thereof; underlines that incorporating the EDF into the EU budget is also an appropriate response to the difficulties affecting the implementation and ratification of successive EDFs;
10. Calls on parliaments to exercise close parliamentary scrutiny of the EDF; highlights the JPA's key position in this debate and calls on it and the parliaments of the ACP countries to take an active part therein, in particular in connection with the ratification of the revised Cotonou Partnership Agreement;
11. Welcomes the increasingly parliamentary – and hence political – nature of the JPA, together with the ever more active role played by its members and the greater quality of its debates, which are helping it to make a vital contribution to the ACP-EU partnership;
12. Considers the abovementioned JPA resolutions on the situation in Niger and Madagascar to be significant examples of this enhanced dialogue;
13. Calls on the JPA to continue to monitor the situation in Sudan, in Madagascar, Niger and Guinea Conakry;
14. Calls on the JPA to continue to address the situation in Somalia, which is endangering the lives of the Somali people, poses a threat to security in the region and, through the increasing incidence of lawlessness, extremism and piracy, is a source of global instability;
15. Calls on the JPA to continue to contribute to the international community's efforts to raise awareness of the conflicts affecting the eastern DRC, to promote a negotiated political solution to the crisis and to support any action that may be proposed as part of a negotiated solution;
16. Calls on the JPA to pursue and intensify dialogue with the PAP and the parliaments of regional organisations, in view of the importance of regional integration to peace and development in ACP countries;
17. Deplores the fact that the JPA was not properly consulted during the drafting of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy and hopes that the Assembly will be actively involved in the implementation of that strategy;
18. Welcomes the fact that further regional meetings provided for in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement and the JPA Rules of Procedure were held in 2009; considers that these meetings make for a genuine exchange of views on regional issues, including conflict prevention and resolution, regional cohesion and EPA negotiations; commends the

organisers of the two extremely successful meetings in Guyana and Burkina Faso;

19. Encourages the JPA to strengthen the role of its Committee on Political Affairs so as to make the Assembly a genuine forum for a debate within the ACP-EU partnership on respect for human rights, democratisation of society, and conflict prevention and resolution;
20. Welcomes, further, the JPA Committee on Political Affairs report on global governance, adopted in Luanda, which called for major reforms of the world's financial institutions;
21. Highlights the work of the JPA Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment with regard to its report on child labour and its intention to organise analysis and debate in relation to the environment and the social situation in ACP countries;
22. Welcomes, further, the reports and resolutions on climate change adopted in 2009 which enabled the voice of the JPA to be heard at the Copenhagen Summit;
23. Welcomes the growing involvement of non-state actors in JPA sessions, as illustrated by the debate resulting in the adoption of the abovementioned Port Moresby Declaration on the current international crisis and by the economic partners' report on EPAs submitted at the JPA session in Ljubljana;
24. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the ACP Council, the JPA Bureau and the governments and parliaments of the Czech Republic and Angola.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Introduction

The Joint Parliamentary Assembly met twice in 2009. The 17th session was held in Prague (Czech Republic) from 6 to 9 April and the 18th session was held in Luanda (Angola) from 30 November to 3 December. Ten resolutions and the Luanda Declaration on the Second revision of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement were adopted. Two regional meetings were also held during the year, in Guyana (Caribbean region) and Burkina Faso (West African region).

In the course of its proceedings, the assembly welcomed the Members of the Commission with responsibility for development and humanitarian aid, Mr Louis Michel (Prague) and Mr Karel de Gucht (Luanda) and the Member of the Commission with responsibility for International Trade, Baroness Ashton. The successive Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Council also attended the two sessions.

The following also took part in the work of the Assembly:

Mr Jan Kohout, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Dr Mirek Topolánek, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Mr Dias dos Santos, Speaker of the National Assembly of Angola and Mr dos Santos, President of the Republic of Angola.

The year was overshadowed by the decision by the ACP Council of Ministers in December 2008 to make major cuts in the budget of the ACP secretariat for missions for staff, which had a considerable impact on their ability to service the meetings of the JPA outside Brussels. This led to the cancellation of the planned visit to observe the European Parliament elections in the UK and Germany as well as no JPA fact-finding missions being organised at all. In December 2009 the ACP Council took steps to ensure that budget funding would cover two plenary sessions, one regional meeting and up to two additional missions in 2010.

Standing committees

The three standing committees met four times: twice alongside the sessions (in Prague and Luanda) and twice (in Brussels) between sessions. The committees' main role is to draw up reports which are subsequently adopted at the plenary sessions (a total of six reports per year).

Moreover, the committees are responsible for following up resolutions by hearing the Commission officials with responsibility in the relevant areas. This provides an opportunity – and sufficient time – for in-depth dialogue on the action taken. Previously, such follow-up was carried out in plenary and was a mere formality.

The Committee on Economic Affairs, Finance and Trade has been entrusted with an additional responsibility, that of scrutiny of the Regional Strategy Papers (RSPs) for the different ACP regions. These were published in 2009 and set out the strategy of the European Commission for the regional development of the region concerned. The Committee appointed Co-rapporteurs for each RSP and will adopt reports on each RSP, the conclusions of which

are to be adopted in the 19th Session in Spain, in time for them to be incorporated into the mid-term review process.

Lastly, the committees have taken responsibility for issues of common interest in connection with implementation of the partnership agreement. They accordingly provide a forum for dialogue between European and ACP parliamentarians.

17th session in Prague (Czech Republic)

The 17th session of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly was held from 6 to 9 April 2009 in Prague (Czech Republic – the country holding the EU Council Presidency).

In addition to the reports by the standing committees, the session adopted resolutions on the food and financial crisis, and the situation in Somalia. The workshops on disabled persons, rural tourism and minority rights in the Czech Republic all attracted a large number of participants and great interest.

18th session in Luanda (Angola)

The 18th session of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly was held from 30 November to 3 December 2009 in Luanda (Angola).

The Assembly adopted the three resolutions contained in the reports by the standing committees and two urgent resolutions on climate change and the situation in Madagascar. The Luanda Declaration on the Second Revision of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement was also adopted. Finally, a declaration by the Co-Presidents on the situation in Niger was adopted.

The workshops on training for better governance, construction projects and urban re-housing provided an opportunity to visit the country and hold discussions on a variety of subjects,

Fact-finding and study missions

For the reasons already stated above, it was not possible to organise any JPA fact-finding or election observation missions, despite pressure being exerted by the JPA Bureau and members on both the ACP Council and the Bureau. It is hoped that the situation will improve in 2010, otherwise the JPA will not be able to carry out these important tasks provided for under the Rules of Procedure.

Other activities

After the European elections in 2009 a process of restructuring of the European Parliament's Directorate-General for External Policies led to the secretariat of the JPA being moved from the Committee on Development and established in a new unit in Directorate B. The ACP Unit also has responsibility for the Delegations for relations with the PAP and South Africa. This move will enable the staff of the new unit to be more focussed on the work of the JPA and will provide for better continuity of service, while retaining contact with former colleagues in the Development and International Trade Committees. At times of peak activity, such as

plenary sessions, the Unit will be able to call on other services in the Directorate-General for assistance.

Future developments

Through the quality of its work, the JPA has succeeded in establishing itself as a key player in North-South cooperation.

Strengthening the parliamentary dimension of cooperation work is essential if funding is to be put to good use in meeting people's needs and achieving the Millennium Development Goals for health and education. The Commission now subjects Country and Regional Strategy Papers to parliamentary scrutiny by both the European Parliament and the ACP countries' national parliaments. It is important for the Committee on Development and the JPA to monitor the situation and ensure that effective use is made of this means of parliamentary scrutiny.

The Assembly has played, and continues to play, a key role in monitoring the negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). Hearings of the head negotiators on both sides, meetings with economic and social players (both at formal meetings and at events held alongside them) and interaction between European and southern parliamentarians have helped to make the process more transparent and have made it easier to take local issues into account. Whatever the outcome of the negotiations, there can be no doubt that the Assembly's work has had a bearing on the process.

In 2009 the Commission and the ACP countries made proposals for the second revision of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement to be negotiated in the course of 2010. In view of the regionalisation of the ACP group being brought about by the EPA process, it is important for the JPA to monitor developments extremely closely in order to ensure that it can survive and move forward as an institution.

The establishment of the African Union and the growing power of the PAP are without a doubt a challenge to ACP-EU cooperation and, consequently, to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. Cooperation between the European Parliament and the PAP began in 2007, and in 2009 the European Parliament created a fully-fledged Delegation for relations with the PAP, and it is important for these relations to be taken into account in the JPA's work.

Lastly, at the end of 2009 a proposal was made to create a Working Group on the Working Methods of the JPA in order to enhance the political role of the JPA as well as to provide for improvements in efficiency.