

31st Joint Parliamentary Assembly session

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Background

The 31st plenary session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) took place in Windhoek, capital of Namibia, in Southern Africa, from June 13 to 15 2016. The session was opened formally by its Co-President ad interim Michèle Rivasi for the European Parliament, and Co-President Netty Baldeh (Gambia) for the ACP.

The plenary session was preceded and prepared by meetings of the three standing committees - Economic Development, Finance and Trade; Political Affairs; and Social affairs - on Saturday, 11 June. The meeting of the Bureau was held on Sunday, 14 June.

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Background

What was discussed in Windhoek?

The keynote debate of the 31st plenary session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly entitled "The future of the partnership ACP-EU Post Cotonou" emphasised the possibilities of new reinforced partnership after 2020. An in-depth discussion on how both sides foresee the evolution of this long-term relationship between the ACP countries and the EU in the coming decades was timely as the agreement expires soon.

The Assembly voted on Wednesday 15 June on 3 resolutions:

- The Continental area of free trade in Africa: opportunities to stimulate exchanges on the African continent and potential benefits for ACP countries (debate on Tuesday, co-rapporteurs: Jean-Marie Bulambo (DRC) and Marielle de Sarnez (FR));
- Migration between ACP countries and EU member states: causes, consequences and strategies for common management (debate on Tuesday, co-rapporteurs: Magnus Kofi Amoatey (Ghana) and Norbert Neuser (GR)); and
- Improvement of participatory governance through decentralisation and strengthening of local governance (debate on Tuesday, co-rapporteurs: James Kembi-Gitura (Kenya) and Aymeric Chauprade (FR)).

Two urgent topics were debated and concluded by resolutions:

- Pre-electoral situation and security in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (debate on Tuesday, vote on Wednesday); and
- Rape and violence against women and children in armed conflicts (debate and vote on Wednesday).

On Tuesday, 14 June, MEPs and their counterparts from national parliaments of the ACP countries also discussed the impact of the falling price of oil, and other strategic commodities on the economy of ACP countries.

The new face of conflicts and global security threat - impact on world peace and stability was one of the topics discussed on Wednesday, 15 June.

The formal opening session of the 31st session of the JPA on Monday, June 11 at 11h00 took place in the presence of Peter Katjavivi Hitjitevi, President of the National Assembly of Namibia. MEPs also debated with Commissioner Neven Mimica (CR) on Monday, June 13, and with representatives of ACP and EU Councils on Wednesday, June 15.

The entire event programme is available on the [Joint parliamentary assembly ACP-EU website](#).

Background

Why is there any need for ACP JPA meeting? What tangible results can be achieved?

The EU maintains a special partnership with the ACP countries, due to historical links between these countries and many member states. This partnership is established by the Cotonou Agreement, signed in June 2000. It is essential this partnership has a parliamentary dimension, allowing democratic control of the government and executive.

See *also*:

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/20_01/default_en.htm

Further information

[Why a Joint Parliamentary Assembly ?](#)

Background

What tangible results have been achieved during previous meetings?

The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly has no decision-making powers as such; its importance is due to the fact that it is the only forum where ACP parliamentary representatives can voice their needs and worries to the EU and vice versa. It also allows elected representatives of ACP countries to address their concerns directly to the EU Commission and inform themselves on the state of negotiations on trade agreements with their countries. The resolutions adopted by the ACP-EU JPA have fed into current ACP-EU agreements and will continue to do so.

Some examples:

- Improving the role of women in the development process,
- Integrating environment policy in development projects,
- Promoting trade as a tool for development, particularly through the Economic Partnership Agreements, provided for in the Cotonou Agreement,
- Rural development programmes and micro-projects tailored to the needs of specific communities,
- Improvement of measures to combat epidemics and reinforce health and hygiene services,
- Creation of decentralised development policies,
- Annual meetings between economic and social partners,
- Promoting regional, political and commercial cooperation,
- Closer cooperation with non-governmental organisations engaged in development,
- aid for indebted countries pursuing structural adjustment policies to allow them to maintain essential services,
- Measures to enhance the cultural dimension in North-South cooperation,
- Accelerating aid procedures and increasing funds for refugees and for displaced persons, and
- Measures to reinforce the commitment to respect and defend human rights and human dignity.

Background

How is the choice of venues made?

The JPA meets twice a year, once in the EU, traditionally in the member state which has presidency in the EU Council of Ministers, and once in an ACP country, determined by the group of ACP countries.

Previous JPAs:

- Wiesbaden, Germany, 23-28 June 2007,
- Ruanda 17-22 November 2007,
- Ljubljana, Slovenia, 17-20 March 2008,
- Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 29 November / 1 December 2008,
- Prague, Czech Republic, 4-9 April 2009,
- Luanda, Angola, 30 November - 3 December 2009,
- Tenerife, Spain, 29 March - 1 April 2010,
- Kinshasa, RD Congo, 2-4 December 2010,
- Budapest, Hungary, 16-18 May 2011,
- Lomé, Togo, 21-23 November 2011,
- Horsens, Denmark, 28-30 May 2012,
- Paramaribo, Suriname, 27-29 November 2012,
- Brussels, Belgium, 17-19 June 2013,
- Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 25-27 November 2013,
- Strasbourg, France, 17 - 19 March 2014,
- Strasbourg, France, 1 - 3 December 2014,

- Suva, Fiji, 15-17 June 2015 and
- Brussels, 7-9 Decembre 2015.

Background

When and where will the next Joint parliamentary assembly be held?

The 32nd ACP-EU JPA session is scheduled for 19-21 December 2016 and should take place in the Central African region.

As the EU hosted the Joint Parliamentary assembly twice in 2015, there should be two sessions in ACP countries in 2016.

Background

Who chairs the ACP-EU JPA?

Two co-presidents, one from the EU (currently Louis Michel, ALDE, BE) and one from an ACP country (currently Mr. Netty Baldeh from Gambia).

Background

How is the ACP-EU JPA organized?

78 MEPs (Members of European Parliament) and 78 MPs from the ACP countries.

Two Co-Presidents, one from the EU (currently Louis Michel, ALDE, BE) and one from an ACP country (currently M. Netty Baldeh from Gambia).

24 Vice-Presidents (12 MEPs and 12 MPs from ACP countries). They constitute the Bureau (the presidium) together with the two Co-Presidents.

There are meetings of the three standing committees (Political affairs; Economic development, Finance and Trade; Social Affairs and Environment) and a plenary session.

Background

Who make up the EP delegation?

78 members

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dacp/home.html>

33 MEPs took part in the meeting in Windhoek, Namibia.

MEMBER'S NAME	FIRST NAME	POLITICAL GROUP	LANGUAGE
ZELLER	Joachim	EPP	DE
GAHLER	Michael	EPP	DE
Heubuch	Maria	Verts/ALE	DE
NEUSER	Norbert	S&D	DE
NOICHL	Maria	S&D	DE
SCHUSTER	Joachim	S&D	DE
LEINEN	Jo	S&D	DE
CHRISTENSEN	Ole	S&D	DK
JEŽEK	Petr	ADLE	EN
TELIČKA	Pavel	ADLE	EN
MIZZI	Marlene	S&D	EN
GILL	Neena	S&D	EN
NART	Javier	ADLE	ES
GAMBUS	Francesc	EPP	ES
JIMENEZ-BECERRIL	Teresa	EPP	ES
LÓPEZ AGUILAR	Juan Fernando	S&D	ES
VALERO	Bodil	Verts/ALE	SE or ES
DE SARNEZ	Marielle	ADLE	FR
GRIESBECK	Nathalie	ADLE	FR
RIVASI	Michèle	Verts/ALE	FR
MANSCOUR	Louis-Joseph	S&D	FR
ARENA	Maria	S&D	FR
STIER	Davor Ivo	EPP	HR/EN
HÖLVÉNYI	György	EPP	HU/EN
ADINOLFI	Isabella	EFDD	IT
AGEA	Laura	EFDD	IT
PEDICINI	Piernicola	EFDD	IT
KYENGE	Kashetu	S&D	IT
HETMAN	Krzysztof	EPP	PL
ZORRINHO	Carlos	S&D	PT
SILVA PEREIRA	Pedro	S&D	PT
FRUNZULICA	Doru Claudian	S&D	RO
STOLOJAN	Teodor Dumitru	EPP	RO/EN

Background

Which ACP countries are represented?

78 countries:

Angola - Antigua and Barbuda - Bahamas - Barbados - Belize - Benin - Botswana - Burkina Faso - Burundi - Cape Verde - Cameroon - Central African Republic - Chad - Comoros - Congo - Cook Islands - Côte d'Ivoire - Cuba - Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) - Djibouti - Dominica - Dominican Republic - Eritrea - Ethiopia - Fiji - Gabon - The Gambia - Ghana - Grenada - Republic of Guinea - Equatorial Guinea - Guinea-Bissau - Guyana - Haiti - Jamaica - Kenya - Kiribati - Lesotho - Liberia - Madagascar - Malawi - Mali - Marshall Islands - Mauritania - Mauritius - Micronesia - Mozambique - Namibia - Nauru - Niger - Nigeria - Niue - Palau - Papua New Guinea - Rwanda - St Kitts and Nevis - St Lucia - St Vincent and the Grenadines - Samoa - Sao Tome and Principe - Senegal - Seychelles - Sierra Leone - Solomon Islands - Somalia - South Africa - Sudan - Suriname - Swaziland - Tanzania - Togo - Tonga - Trinidad and Tobago - Tuvalu - Uganda - Vanuatu - Zambia - Zimbabwe

Note: Cuba is also an ACP country, but as it did not sign the Cotonou agreement, it is not represented in the JPA.