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## **DRAFT REPORT**

on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2006  
(2007/2021(INI))

Committee on Development

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## CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION .....	3
EXPLANATORY STATEMENT .....	9

## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

**on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2006  
(2007/2021(INI))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the partnership agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000 (Cotonou Agreement)<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly's Rules of Procedure, which were adopted on 3 April 2003<sup>2</sup> and last amended at Bridgetown (Barbados) on 23 November 2006,
- having regard to European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006 of 18 December 2006 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to the resolutions adopted by the Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2006 concerning:
  - 'the problematics of energy in the ACP countries'<sup>4</sup>,
  - 'the role of regional integration in the promotion of peace and security'<sup>5</sup>,
  - 'fisheries and their social and environmental aspects in developing countries'<sup>6</sup>,
  - 'avian influenza'<sup>7</sup>,
  - 'the situation in Sudan'<sup>8</sup>,
  - 'light and small-calibre weapons and sustainable development'<sup>9</sup>,
  - 'tourism and development'<sup>10</sup>,
  - 'water in developing countries'<sup>11</sup>,
  - 'the stage reached in the negotiations on economic-partnership agreements',

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 317, 15.12.2000, p. 3. Agreement last amended by means of Decision No 1/2006 of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers (OJ L 247, 9.9.2006, p. 22).

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 231, 26.9.2003, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 378, 27.12.2006, p. 41.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 307, 15.12.2006, p. 22.

<sup>5</sup> OJ C 307, 15.12.2006, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> OJ C 307, 15.12.2006, p. 27.

<sup>7</sup> OJ C 307, 15.12.2006, p. 37.

<sup>8</sup> OJ C 307, 15.12.2006, p. 35.

<sup>9</sup> Not yet published in the OJ.

<sup>10</sup> Not yet published in the OJ.

<sup>11</sup> Not yet published in the OJ.

- having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Development (A6-0000/2007),
- A. having regard to the debates which took place at Vienna and Bridgetown concerning the stage reached in the negotiations on the economic-partnership agreements and in which Mr Peter Mandelson (Commissioner responsible for Trade) and Mrs Billie Miller (Barbadian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade) took part,
  - B. having regard to the adoption by Parliament and the Council of the regulation establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation which provides for theme-based programmes applicable to the ACP countries as well and a programme of accompanying measures for the benefit of the ACP countries which have signed the protocol on sugar,
  - C. whereas at the Bridgetown session the Commissioner responsible for development and humanitarian aid undertook to subject the national and regional strategy documents for the ACP countries (2008-2013 period) to democratic scrutiny by the parliaments,
  - D. having regard to the increasing importance of migration issues and of trafficking in human beings as matters of shared interest under the partnership agreement,
  - E. having regard to the fact-finding and study visits made by the Joint Parliamentary Assembly's Bureau in 2006:
    - to Mauritania in February - political transition and preparations for the elections,
    - to Swaziland and Mauritius in April - reform of the rules on sugar,
    - to Kenya in May - humanitarian consequences of the drought,
    - to Togo in May - political situation, in particular application of Article 96 of the Partnership Agreement,
    - to Ethiopia in October - political situation following the elections,
    - to Malta and to Spain (Tenerife) in November - situation of migrants from the ACP countries,
    - to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in November - election observation,
  - F. whereas the revision of the Cotonou Agreement (which has been endorsed by the European institutions) has laid the foundations for more extensive and more effective cooperation between the EU and the ACP countries,
  - G. having regard to the remarkable impact of the fact-finding and study visit to Malta and Spain which was concerned with the situation of migrants from ACP countries and which was the first of its kind to bring together parliamentarians from European countries and the countries of origin,
  - H. having regard to the persistence of the conflict in Darfur (Sudan) and the recurrent

serious human-rights abuses which occur there, and whereas effective humanitarian aid is essential,

- I. whereas the DRC - a country which has suffered for decades - has finally embarked upon a process which promises to be constructive, thanks to the commitment shown by the Congolese players involved and by the international community,
  - J. having regard to the Eritrean authorities' refusals to authorise the Joint Parliamentary Assembly's Bureau to undertake a fact-finding and study visit to Asmara,
  - K. having regard to the rejection of an urgent resolution on the situation in West Africa, following a vote in separate colleges,
  - L. having regard to the proceedings of the Pan-African Parliament and the formalisation of relations between the European Parliament and the Pan-African Parliament,
  - M. having regard to the decision taken by the ACP Secretariat to review its internal organisation,
  - N. having regard to the excellent contribution made by the Austrian EU Presidency and the Government of Barbados to the 11th and 12th sessions,
  - O. having regard to the increasing involvement of non-State players at the Joint Parliamentary Assembly's sessions,
- 1. Welcomes the fact that in 2006 the Joint Parliamentary Assembly provided a framework for an open, democratic in-depth dialogue on the negotiation of the economic-partnership agreements between the EU and the ACP sub-regions; also welcomes the adoption at Bridgetown of an urgent resolution on the stage reached in the negotiations on the economic-partnership agreements;
  - 2. Welcomes the fact that at the Bridgetown session the Commissioner responsible for development and humanitarian aid undertook to subject the national and regional strategy documents for the ACP countries (2008-2013 period) to democratic scrutiny by the parliaments;
  - 3. Calls upon the ACP countries' national parliaments to insist that their governments and the Commission consult them in respect of the national strategy documents relating to cooperation between the EU and their country (2008-2013 period);
  - 4. Calls upon the EU countries' national parliaments to exercise close parliamentary scrutiny over the executives as regards programming in respect of the European Development Fund (EDF);
  - 5. Calls upon the Commission to honour its commitment without delay on the basis of the procedure applied in the case of the regulation establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation;
  - 6. Notes with satisfaction the fact that the Joint Parliamentary Assembly has decided to

concern itself with migration issues (which are unquestionably matters of common interest), in particular by:

- organising a workshop during the Vienna session,
  - dispatching a fact-finding and study mission to two countries of arrival (Malta and Spain) in 2006 and taking a decision to dispatch a similar mission to Senegal in 2007,
  - taking a decision to have a report drawn up by the Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment concerning the migration of skilled workers and the effect which this has on a country's development,
  - taking a decision to have a report on migration issues drawn up by the Vice-Presidents responsible for human rights within the Bureau;
7. Encourages the Joint Parliamentary Assembly to continue debating migration issues and the contribution which it can make to ways which will foster development in the countries of origin and to action designed to counter trafficking in human beings;
  8. Welcomes the adoption at the Vienna session of a resolution on the situation in Sudan, in which a clear view is expressed regarding responsibility for the conflict in the Darfur region; calls upon the international community to take urgent and more vigorous action by common agreement with the African Union (AU) with a view to bringing the conflict, the suffering of the civilian population and the humanitarian tragedy to an end;
  9. Regrets the use of voting in separate colleges, which led to the rejection of the resolution in East Africa at the Bridgetown session, even though a net majority of the members of the Assembly as a whole supported the resolution;
  10. Urges all parties to avoid recourse to voting in separate colleges, so as to foster a sense of solidarity and cohesion within the Joint Parliamentary Assembly;
  11. Urges the Eritrean authorities to declare *persona grata* the fact-finding and study mission which the Joint Parliamentary Assembly's Bureau has on a number of occasions decreed and confirmed;
  12. Calls upon the Joint Parliamentary Assembly to continue and to deepen the dialogue with the Pan-African Parliament, with particular reference to peace and security issues;
  13. Encourages the Joint Parliamentary Assembly to discuss the future of ACP-EU cooperation, taking into account the new context surrounding the establishment of the African Union (and of the Pan-African Parliament) and the strengthening of the ACP-sub-regions and their institutions;
  14. Calls upon the sub-regional parliamentary assemblies within the ACP group which wish to establish a dialogue with the European Parliament to do so in accordance with the provisions laid down in Article 19 of the Cotonou Agreement;
  15. Welcomes the decision taken by the Joint Parliamentary Assembly's Bureau to consider

the issue of relations between China and Africa and to make it a topic for political dialogue within the Assembly;

16. Encourages the Joint Parliamentary Assembly to continue in making the Committee on Political Affairs a genuine forum for the prevention and resolution of conflicts within the framework of the ACP-EU partnership and for that purpose to ensure that the emergency situations in particular countries are more widely debated; welcomes the action that has been taken against light and small-calibre weapons;
17. Notes with satisfaction the desire expressed by the Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade to deal with matters relating to the supply of energy sources and to the development of tourism as a catalyst for development;
18. Highlights the role played by the Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment in order to encourage more responsible fishing which is more beneficial in development terms, and to provide universal access to water;
19. Welcomes the decision taken by the ACP secretariat to review its internal organisation; encourages the ACP; encourages the ACP party to establish - in the interests of democratic transparency - a clear distinction between the section of the ACP secretariat which is concerned with support for executive bodies and that which is concerned with support for parliamentary bodies; also encourages the ACP side to bolster the section of the ACP secretariat which is concurred with support for parliamentary bodies, in particular by making available to the Members of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly the expertise which they need in order to perform their tasks;
20. Congratulates the Austrian Presidency of the EU Council, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the city of Vienna and other bodies involved on the contribution which they made to the 11th session held in Vienna and in particular to the workshops on the following topics:
  - migration and integration,
  - non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction,
  - public transport in Vienna;
21. Congratulates the Government and the Parliament of Barbados and the social and economic players on the contribution which they made to the 12th session held at Bridgetown, in particular to the workshops on the following topics:
  - elements of environmental management systems to protect watersheds and coastal ecosystems,
  - EU cooperation for the competitiveness of ACP commodities: the case of rum and other ACP products;
  - the treatment of HIV/AIDS: identifying, measuring and meeting the costs;

22. Stresses that the organisation of meetings at regional or sub-regional level pursuant to Article 17(3) of the Cotonou Agreement must now actually take place; calls upon the Joint Parliamentary Assembly to schedule meetings of this kind on the basis of the parliamentary structures which already exist within the ACP group; such meetings must in particular be concerned with regional cooperation in the context of conflict-prevention and -resolution and with the conclusion and implementation of economic-partnership agreements;
23. Notes with satisfaction that non-State players are increasingly involved in Joint Parliamentary Assembly sessions;
24. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission, to the ACP Council and to the governments and parliaments of Austria and Barbados.



## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### *Introduction*

The Assembly met twice in the course of 2006. The 11th session was held at Vienna (Austria) from 17 to 22 June and the 12th session was held at Bridgetown (Barbados) from 18 to 23 November. 2006 is the first year in which the sessions were reversed. Nine resolutions were adopted in that year, and there were seven joint delegations. In the course of its proceedings the Assembly welcomed not only the successive Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Council but also the Members of the Commission responsible for development and humanitarian aid and for trade.

Mr Heinz Fischer (President of the Austrian Federal Republic), Mr Josep Borrell Fontelles (President of the European Parliament), Mr Al Qabazard (Director of research at the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) and Mr Owen S. Arthur (Prime Minister of Barbados) have been involved in the Assembly's work.

### *Standing Committees*

The standing committees have met **four times**: twice alongside the sessions in Vienna and Barbados and twice during the intervening period (in Brussels). The committees' main activity is the drawing up of reports which are subsequently adopted at the plenary sessions (a total of six reports per year).

Furthermore, the committees are responsible for **following up resolutions** by hearing Commission officials who have responsibility in the relevant areas. This provides an opportunity for an in-depth dialogue in good time on the action taken. Formerly, such follow-up was carried out in plenary and it constituted little more than a formal exercise.

Lastly, the committees have considered **matters of common interest** in connection with the implementation of the Partnership Agreement and they thus provide a forum for dialogue between European and ACP parliamentarians. The Committee on Political Affairs has discussed urgent matters, such as the situation in Mauritania and in Darfur (Sudan).

As regards the organisation of proceedings, it may be noted that the scheduling of committee work before the sessions (later in the afternoon) has led to better attendance by the European members. However, the difference in status between the European members and the ACP members persists, as does the resulting imbalance: the ACP members can be represented by ambassadors or other diplomatic personnel, whereas the European members cannot be represented by their assistants.

### *11th session at Vienna (Austria)*

The Joint Parliamentary Assembly's 11th session was held from 17 to 22 June 2006 at Vienna (Austria - the country holding the EU Council Presidency).

In addition to the reports by the standing committees the session adopted **two resolutions, one on the situation in Sudan and the other on avian influenza**. The resolution on the situation in Sudan was adopted by the Assembly as a whole (there had been no request for a

vote in separate colleges) and by 34 votes to 29. For the first time the resolution twice mentioned the issue of genocide.

With regard to **the workshop** on migration and on public-transport policy in Vienna, this was a success thanks to the contributions made by the Austrian authorities and local NGOs. Attention should also be drawn to the excellent cooperation on the part of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in connection with the workshop on non-proliferation. The revised Cotonou Agreement contains a new provision on cooperation to counter weapons of mass destruction (Article 11b).

### ***12th session at Bridgetown (Barbados)***

The Joint Parliamentary Assembly's 12th session was held from 18 to 23 November at Bridgetown (Barbados).

At that session the Assembly adopted the **three resolutions** contained in the reports drawn up by the standing committees and also an **urgent resolution on economic-partnership agreements**. Mrs Billie Miller (Barbadian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade) took part in the debates. The resolution on the situation in Darfur (Sudan) was not adopted, even though it was supported by a substantial majority of the Assembly's members. However, a request for a vote in separate colleges caused the resolution to be rejected, since there was no majority within the ACP college. In this report it is suggested that voting in separate colleges should be avoided.

The **workshops** provided an opportunity for discussions on aspects of the local economy covered by the partnership agreement: the environmental management of coastal ecosystems, the competitiveness of ACP commodities and the treatment of HIV/AIDS. The Barbadian authorities and the social and economic players made an active contribution to the success of the workshops.

The session in Barbados was marked by an unusual degree of interest in the Assembly's proceedings on the part of certain European media. In Europe, Barbados is essentially perceived as a tourist destination and the holding of a Joint Parliamentary Assembly session in the country prompted media criticism. The Barbadian political authorities condemned such criticism. As Mrs Miller (Foreign Affairs Minister) pointed out, the entire Caribbean region - with the possible exception of Haiti (for security reasons) - is a tourist destination. Was that an adequate reason for not holding meetings there? Furthermore, it should be pointed out that tourism also spurs development. The Assembly dealt with a report on the subject and put forward recommendations to the Council and the Commission.

### ***Fact-finding and study missions (Article 27 of the Rules of Procedure)***

The Joint Parliamentary Assembly undertook seven fact-finding and study missions in 2006.

A fact-finding and study mission to **Mauritania** took place in **February**. The purpose of the mission was to learn about the political transition and the preparations for the elections. The military forces which toppled President Ould Taya's regime have made a strong commitment to a transition towards democracy, constitutional government and the protection of human rights. They have also given undertakings regarding the transparent management of oil

resources. An election timetable has been drawn up for the establishment of democratic institutions prior to April 2007. The Joint Parliamentary Assembly encourages these welcome developments, which may have a beneficial effect on neighbouring countries, sub-Saharan Africa and the Maghreb.

The mission to **Swaziland and Mauritius in April** was concerned with the reform of the rules on sugar, from which ACP producers stand to lose. In a number of resolutions the Joint Parliamentary Assembly subsequently called for compensatory measures. Progress has been made by means of the development-cooperation instrument which provides for accompanying measures advantageous to the ACP countries which have signed the protocol on sugar.

A mission visited **Kenya in May** in order to assess the humanitarian implications of the drought in the northern part of the country.

A mission visited **Togo in May** in order to assess the political situation, in particular the application of Article 96 of the Partnership Agreement. The joint delegation expressed reservations regarding a straightforward normalisation of cooperation.

Another fact-finding and study mission visited **Ethiopia in October** in order to assess the political situation following the elections – a situation characterised by an increase in political violence. The mission called for human rights and constitutional government to be fully upheld, for the outcome of the elections to be recognised and for the majority and the opposition to work together in peace.

The mission to **Malta and Spain (Tenerife) in November** was the first of its kind. Its purpose was to assess the situation of migrants from the ACP countries and it caused quite a stir at local level. It was the first time that African parliamentarians had come to visit migrants' accommodation centres.

Lastly, ACP parliamentarians joined MEPs in order to observe the elections held in the **Democratic Republic of Congo in November**. The parliamentarians invited the candidates to the presidential election.

### ***Future developments***

Through the quality of its work the Joint Parliamentary Assembly has succeeded in establishing itself as an essential player in North-South cooperation.

**Strengthening the parliamentary dimension** in cooperation is essential if funding is to be put to good use in order to meet local people's needs and to achieve the millennium objectives as regards health and education. In response to the Assembly's repeated demands, Mr Louis Michel (a member of the committee responsible for development and humanitarian aid) undertook to submit the national and regional strategy documents to parliamentary scrutiny, both by the European Parliament and by the ACP countries' national parliaments. The Commission will now have to 'flesh out' its commitment and establish the arrangements for the proposed consultation.

The Assembly has played, and continues to play, a major role in **monitoring the negotiations on economic-partnership agreements (EPA)**. Hearings of chief negotiators on both sides,

encounters with economic players and civil society – both at formal meetings and at events taking place alongside them – and interaction between parliamentarians from Europe and the South have helped to make the process more transparent and make it easier for the local situation to be taken into account. Whatever the outcome of the negotiations, there is no doubt that the Assembly's activities have had a bearing on the process.

It should also be pointed out that **matters relating to migration** have punctuated the debate on ACP-EU cooperation. The arrival of boatfuls of migrants from ACP countries on the EU's southern shores has highlighted in a new and brutal fashion the importance of development policies and of action to combat poverty.

A further challenge is the establishment of the **Pan-African Parliament**. The establishment of the African Union and the growing power of the PAP are without doubt a challenge to ACP-EU cooperation and consequently to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. Although the relevance of ACP-EU cooperation is not in doubt, such developments should nonetheless be taken into consideration. The desire expressed by the Joint Parliamentary Assembly to develop good relations with the PAP and to invite its Speaker to attend a subsequent session should be welcomed. A further development is the bolstering of the ACP sub-regions (four regions in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific) – a development which will be boosted by the negotiation of economic-partnership agreements with sub-regions. The PAP too has begun discussing regionalisation.

Lastly, the decision taken by the ACP side to **review the work of its secretariat** should be noted and welcomed. In this connection, two developments would be desirable: on the one hand, the establishment of a clear distinction between staff members allocated to government representatives (Council and Committee of Ambassadors) and staff members allocated to parliamentary bodies (Joint Parliamentary Assembly and ACP Assembly); on the other, an increase in the provision of expert advice to ACP parliamentarians, in particular for the purpose of drawing up reports.