

## ORAL QUESTION

pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure  
on behalf of the Committee on Development  
to the Council

Subject: Revision of the Cotonou Agreement

Unlike earlier agreements the Cotonou Agreement does not contain any provisions relating to the financial framework. The negotiations on that topic were inconclusive, partly on account of the fact that the debate on bringing the EDF into the budget and on the financial perspective is still proceeding. The new multiannual financial framework is due to take effect on 1 January 2008.

Annex 1a of the revised Cotonou Agreement states only that *'for this new period, the European Union shall maintain its aid effort to ACP States at least at the same level as that of the 9th EDF, not including balances; to this shall be added, based on Community estimates, the effects of inflation, growth within the European Union, and enlargement to 10 new Member States in 2004.'*

In the period since the negotiations on the revision of the Cotonou Agreement were concluded the Member States have on a number of occasions (at the 16-17 June 2005 European Council, at the UN Conference on the Millennium Development Objectives and in certain cases under the G8 umbrella) given further undertakings to the effect that public development aid (PDA) will be substantially increased.

The Council set itself the target of 30 September 2005 as the date for establishing the precise amount (and the period of application) of the multiannual cooperation financial framework under the revised Cotonou Agreement.

The European Parliament will not be able to express any view on the amended Agreement pursuant to the assent procedure until the precise amount has been set.

Would the Council say why the 30 September deadline has been allowed to pass? What stage has been reached in the task of setting the amount in question?

Would the Council also say how it intends to ensure that the new policy statements concerning a substantial increase in PDA are reflected in the multiannual ACP cooperation financial framework?