



ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

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LOMÉ
(Togo)

**QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWER
TO THE COMMISSION**

Questions 1-17

QUESTION 1

by Horst Schnellhardt

Subject: Funding of very small development projects

By making use of its development funds the European Commission is financing many projects in the ACP countries. Frequent questions from development aid workers emphasise that often only large-scale projects are initiated. However, in many regions relatively small amounts of funds (less than EUR 10 000) could already lead to significant improvements.

1. Is the European Commission willing to adopt actions allowing for the funding of such small-scale projects?
2. Does the European Commission consider the funding of touristic hubs as a likely means to boost economic development in that region?

QUESTION 2

by Michèle Rivasi

Subject: Land grabs vs food security

The Land grab phenomenon is taking a very worrying trend where foreign investors such as China, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar as well as EU based companies acquire arable land in developing countries, particularly in Africa and Latin America, at the expense of food security for the local population. What is the EU policy in this field, to avert food insecurity in these countries? Has the Commission raised this issue in the framework of its policy dialogue with partner countries? How does the Commission envisage guaranteeing the right of ACP populations to have access to natural resources including land and water as a fundamental human right?

QUESTION 3

by Licia Ronzulli

Subject: Sustainable agricultural development

According to a report by the Worldwatch Institute, produced following visits to 25 African countries during a one-year period, small-scale agriculture is the most sustainable and effective way of guaranteeing food security.

To feed the world's population in an efficient and environmentally sustainable manner, it makes sense to encourage self-sufficiency and to reduce waste, rather than simply produce more food.

However, most aid is distributed to farmers on a quantity basis, with little attention paid to quality and the impact of agricultural practices on health and the environment.

What proposals will the Commission be putting forward to encourage agricultural development which is increasingly eco-friendly but also respects local populations?

QUESTION 4

by Michael Cashman

Subject: Support for tuberculosis vaccines from 2014 and beyond

New tuberculosis vaccines will play a vital role in reducing the death toll from this devastating communicable disease in developing countries.

The clinical trials procedure for vaccine candidates is necessarily long and resource-intensive. Promising vaccine candidates need support throughout their development, especially in late-stage trials.

With particular reference to EU development funds, can the Commission clarify what funding is envisaged for the development of tuberculosis vaccines from 2014 other than that provided through the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership? Will the Commission give its assurance that promising vaccine candidates will be supported in late-stage trials?

QUESTION 5

by Hans-Peter Mayer

Subject: Water shortage in the ACP countries

Many people have too little water or only poor-quality water. This very problem was addressed in the Millennium Development Goals supported by the Commission, so the question arises of whether in the meantime there is a separate water facility that is independent of the general development aid.

If this is not the case: is it intended for there to be such a water facility? If this is the case: when and to what extent will the next tranche be paid out?

Which Commission unit is working on this water facility and taking the decisions in individual cases?

How can ACP countries approach the Commission to explain their particular water problem and, where appropriate, obtain assistance?

QUESTION 6

by Isabelle Durant

Subject: Economic Partnership Agreement

Many ACP governments, trade unions, employers in ACP countries and civil society organisations including in Europe consider EPAs as a threat to ACP countries weak economy. The Commission published a proposal for a regulation to withdraw Access to the EU markets for 18 ACP countries. ACP countries that initialled an EPA at the end of 2007 were granted market access until contentious issues were fully addressed and a comprehensive EPA was reached. How does the Commission explain its policy, which puts ACP countries at disadvantageous position? How does the Commission reconcile the EU trade and development policies?

QUESTION 7

by Gabriele Zimmer

Subject: Economic Partnership Agreements

The proposal to withdraw the Market Access Regulation for countries that did not sign Economic Partnership Agreements represents another example of policy incoherence of the EU. It represents an arrogant attempt to bully development countries into signing EPAs and so to guarantee our trade interests instead of respecting our development policy goals. These agreements are seen by the majority of the populations as contradictory to sustainable economical and democratic development.

How does the Commission want to fulfil the proclaimed aim of EU development policy to eradicate poverty if these agreements are against the interest of the governments of these countries?

QUESTION 8

by Fiona Hall

Subject: EPAs and Market Access Regulation

The Commission has recently adopted a proposal to terminate the Market Access Regulation for EPA countries in 2014.

Given the deadlock in negotiations, it is important to create an impetus towards the conclusion of agreements while recognising that negotiations are two-sided and both sides must be flexible. Does the Commission intend to be accordingly flexible in its approach and respond to ACP concerns over too-rapid liberalisation of their markets? Will the Commission give assurances that this is not a 'gun to the head' to pressure ACP countries into ratifying imperfect EPAs, especially for those disqualified under the latest GSP reform?

QUESTION 9

by Amadou Ciré Sall (Senegal)

Subject: WTO Ministerial Conference in December 2011 and concrete results for LDCs

Time and again the European Commission has expressed a determination to ensure that the WTO Ministerial Conference in December 2011 delivers concrete results for the least developed countries. The cotton issue will clearly be an integral part of any package for LDCs. Apart from the 2004 cotton subsidy reform, how will the European Union help to achieve this objective while at the same time implementing the principles of a coherent development policy?

QUESTION 10

by Jo Leinen

Subject: Energy Security in ACP States

Access to energy is a basic human right. What progress has been achieved by the European Union in improving the situation regarding energy security in ACP States? How does the Commission intend to contribute to achieving securing access to energy throughout the ACP States?

QUESTION 11

by Norbert Neuser

Subject: Universal energy access

How will the Commission shape the future Energy Facility in the upcoming new financial framework?

Will the Energy Facility remain the same or is the Commission planning to create a thematic programme?

What is the funding envisaged for the future Energy Facility in order to achieve the UN-target of universal energy access by 2030, especially for the poor and remote population?

Finally, I would like to encourage the Commission to come out with a new communication on universal energy access, since the last communication on energy dates from 2004.

QUESTION 12

by Filip Kaczmarek

Subject: Future of the ACP-EU Energy Facility

As arguably the only financial mechanism specifically focused on delivering energy access at the local level in Sub Saharan Africa, the ACP EU Energy Facility (EUEF) has the potential to contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development. How does the Commission look upon

the future of the EUEF and its potential to make the EU a leader in the global fight against energy poverty beyond Rio + 20?

QUESTION 13

by Maurice Ponga

Subject: Maintaining the socio-economic development of the Pacific Islands (Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea)

Several years ago the EU introduced favourable tariffs and trade treatment for ACP countries to facilitate their socio-economic development. However, the conclusion of free trade agreements between the EU and non-ACP countries threatens the socio-economic development of ACP countries. This is the case with the Solomon Islands and PNG, which face a serious threat from the free trade agreements currently being negotiated with Malaysia and Indonesia.

What does the Commission intend to do to maintain the socio-economic development of these island nations with fragile economies, and thus ensure that its own policies remain coherent?

QUESTION 14

by Catherine Bearder

Subject: African Nature Tourism and the Poaching of Local Wildlife Knowledge

Nature tourism in many African countries has spawned different certification schemes for wildlife guides. Knowledge on wildlife and ecosystems lies principally with local people who have lived for generations in natural areas which now attract many tourists. These people are prohibited, due to the high cost of certification, from qualifying as guides and making a living from these natural resources. This amounts to a 'brain drain' across Africa. Is the Commission aware of this problem? Is the Commission collaborating with the ACP states to share their experiences of harmonised training schemes and to highlight the problem of the undervaluing and subsequent loss of local wildlife knowledge?

QUESTION 15

by Frank Engel

Subject: Information and communication technologies (ICT) in cooperation and development policy with ACP countries

- What action does the ACP Secretariat propose for the ICT sector in view of the increasing demand among African countries to close the digital divide?

- How do you plan to involve the private sector?

QUESTION 16

by Assarid Ag Imbarcaouane (Mali)

Subject: Famine in Somalia and in the Horn of Africa

Africa is concerned about the famine in Somalia and the Horn of Africa. This is a disaster of devastating proportions and the images we see are difficult to watch.

Can you brief us on the action taken by the European Union as part of its humanitarian aid programme to help people in these countries?

QUESTION 17

by Ole Christensen

Subject: On the situation of Horn of Africa

With regard to famine and food security crisis in the Horn of Africa could the Commission inform us on the initiatives undertaken to improve the humanitarian situation? How does the Commission guarantee the transition between EU humanitarian aid and development aid as the drought crisis in the Horn of Africa clearly shows that years of emergency aid to drought stricken has not been effectively followed up by long term development policies?