

# Activities of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2007

2007/2180(INI) - 05/06/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 592 votes to 24, with 10 abstentions, a resolution on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA).

The own initiative report had been tabled for consideration in plenary by Alain **HUTCHINSON** (PES, BE) on behalf of the Committee on Development.

The resolution welcomes the fact that in 2007 the JPA provided a framework for an open, democratic and in-depth dialogue on the negotiation of EPAs between the EU and the ACP countries, while stressing the concerns expressed by the JPA about several aspects of the negotiations, with regard to both form and substance. In this regard, the Parliament points out that the debate has continued since the adoption of EPAs with the Caribbean.

**JPA session in Kigali and the involvement of national parliaments:** the Parliament welcomes the commitment made by the Commissioner responsible for development and humanitarian aid during the JPA session in Kigali to subject Country and Regional Strategy Papers for the ACP countries (relating to the period 2008-2013) to democratic scrutiny by parliaments. It recalls, in this regard, the need to involve parliaments closely in the democratic process and in national development strategies as well as their vital role in establishing, following up and monitoring development policies. The Parliament calls on the parliaments of the ACP countries to demand that their governments and the Commission involve them in the process of preparation and implementation of the Country Strategy Papers. The Commission is called upon to supply all available information to the parliaments of the ACP countries and to provide them with assistance in this process of democratic control, in particular by supporting their capacities.

**Financial aid:** the Parliament reiterates its call for a percentage of EDF appropriations to be assigned to education and to the political training of parliamentarians in developing countries, as well as to political, economic and social leaders. Once again, the Parliament calls on the ACP countries to **exercise their parliamentary scrutiny** in respect of the European Development Fund (EDF), while the Commission is, again, called upon to fill the funding gap between the implementation of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> EDF.

**Impact of the JPA:** the Parliament considers that this structure plays a positive role in political dialogue and in the quest for a global agreement for peace in Darfur. It calls on the JPA to contribute to the international community's awareness-raising effort with regard to the conflicts affecting North Kivu and several regions in the east of the DRC. At the same time, it calls on the JPA to pursue dialogue with the Pan-African Parliament and other regional organisations on all issues related to conflict prevention. It therefore regrets that, having debated the issue of Somalia during the JPA session in Kigali, the situation in Somalia has not improved, and continues to be a 'forgotten crisis'.

**Organisation of the JPA:** the Parliament encourages the JPA to strengthen the role of its Committee on Political Affairs in order to make it a true forum for conflict prevention and settlement in the context of the ACP-EU partnership, and, to that end, to make the debates on urgent situations more general. While it welcomes the work done in the area of good governance, as well as in the monitoring of elections, it urges greater attention to be paid to the issue of food security, especially at a time when the World Food Programme is sounding the alarm due to the rise in prices and the decline in world food stocks. The

Parliament also hopes that regional JPA meetings take place in 2008 and that European policies are addressed in order to improve cohesion.

**Effectiveness of aid:** the Parliament urges the JPA to hold an in-depth debate on the concept of official development aid, budgeting issues and forms of alternative funding in development cooperation. It also notes with satisfaction the growing participation of non-governmental stakeholders in JPA sessions and calls on the JPA, the EU and ACP countries to encourage, from a financial and technical point of view, the participation of the civil society of ACP countries in this work.