Work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2009

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The Committee on Development unanimously adopted the own-initiative report drafted by Eva JOLY (Greens/EFA, FR) on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2009.

In-depth dialogue: Members welcome the fact that in 2009 the JPA continued to provide a framework for an open, democratic and in-depth dialogue between the European Union and the ACP countries, and calls for an enhanced political dialogue. They stress in particular the crucial role of the ACP national parliaments, as well as local authorities and non-state bodies, in monitoring and managing the Country and Regional Strategy Papers and in the implementation of the EDF and calls on the Commission to guarantee their involvement.

Improved Parliamentary monitoring: Members stress the crucial role of the ACP national parliaments, as well as local authorities and non-state bodies, in monitoring and managing the Country and Regional Strategy Papers and in the implementation of the EDF and call on the Commission to guarantee their involvement. They underline the need for close parliamentary scrutiny during the negotiation of EPAs. They call on the parliaments of the ACP countries to insist that their governments and the Commission involve them in the process of drafting and implementing the Country and Regional Strategy Papers relating to cooperation between the EU and their countries (2008-2013), and ensure their full participation in the EPA negotiations.

Financial crisis: Members draw attention to the JPA's concern at the repercussions of the current financial crisis, the adoption in Luanda of a resolution on the impact of the financial crisis on the ACP States and the resolutions on its impact and on addressing the crisis in the ACP States. They encourage the JPA to continue to work on this area and to explore additional and innovative sources of financing for development, such as an international financial transaction tax. They further call on the JPA to address the question of the eradication of tax havens.

Integration of the EDF into the EU budget: Members reiterates their position that the European Development Fund (EDF) should be incorporated into the EU budget in order to increase the consistency, transparency and effectiveness of development cooperation policy and guarantee democratic scrutiny thereof. They underline that incorporating the EDF into the EU budget is also an appropriate response to the difficulties affecting the implementation and ratification of successive EDFs.

Sudan and Somalia: Members call on the JPA to continue to monitor the situation in Sudan, Madagascar, Niger and Guinea Conakry. They call on the JPA to continue to address the situation in Somalia, which is endangering the lives of the Somali people and poses a threat to security in the region and calls on the EU to maintain its commitments regarding the promotion of the rule of law, restoring stability in the region and fighting piracy. They also call on the JPA to continue to contribute to the international community's efforts to raise awareness of the conflicts affecting the eastern DRC, to promote a negotiated political solution to the crisis and to support any action that may be proposed as part of a negotiated solution.

Exchange of views: Members welcome the fact that further regional meetings provided for in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement and the JPA Rules of Procedure were held in 2009. These meetings make for a genuine exchange of views on regional issues, including conflict prevention and resolution, regional cohesion, human rights, environmental issues and EPA negotiations.

Universality of human rights: Members regret that the Council ignored the repeated calls by the European Parliament notably at the JPA in Luanda, to include a stronger clause on non-discrimination in the revision of the Cotonou Agreement. They reiterate the principle of the universality of human rights and non-discrimination as the basis upon which to enhance legitimate democratic governance and the political dialogue at the JPA and call on the Committees to make the Assembly a genuine forum for a debate.

Climate change: lastly, Members welcome the reports and resolutions on climate change adopted in 2009 which enabled the voice of the JPA to be heard at the Copenhagen Summit.