

# Work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2010

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) in 2010.

Parliament welcomes the fact that in 2010, the JPA continued to provide a framework for an open, democratic and in-depth dialogue between the EU and the ACP countries on the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, including the EPAs, and also the Regional Strategy Papers for the six ACP regions. **However, it stresses the need to pay more attention to the outcomes of the work of the ACP-EU JPA.**

Parliament regrets the fact that the **EU Council was absent from the 20th Session** which was held from 30 November to 3 December 2010 in Kinshasa (DRC). It urges the High Representative to ensure that the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) will lead to a **clarification** of the role of the EU Council and a clear delineation of responsibility between the EEAS and the Commission in terms of the implementation of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement.

The resolution emphasises, further, the need for close parliamentary scrutiny during the negotiation and conclusion of EPAs. In parallel, it calls on the JPA to maintain its pressure on EU Member States to take urgent steps to meet their 0.7% GNI commitments in order to achieve the MDGs, as well as their specific pledges to Africa and LDCs, and recommends fully transparent, multiannual, binding measures, including legislation.

Parliament stresses in particular the crucial role of the **ACP national parliaments** in managing and monitoring, and local authorities and non-state actors in monitoring, the Country and Regional Strategy Papers and the implementation of the European Development Fund (EDF), and calls on the Commission to guarantee their involvement. Members 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 over the period from 2008 to 2013 and ensure their full participation in the EPA negotiations.

Overall, Parliament draws attention to the need to involve parliaments in the democratic process and in the national development strategies, stressing their vital role in establishing, following up and monitoring development policies. Together with ACP governments, the Commission and the JPA, national parliaments are asked to:

- exercise close parliamentary scrutiny of the EDF;
- take steps to tackle climate change that take account of the need to maintain growth, eradicate poverty and guarantee fair access to resources;
- **promote equitable and sustainable development** incorporating the social dimension, which supports new forms of enterprises (e.g. cooperatives);
- uphold the full right to land and to take measures **restricting the phenomenon of land hoarding**.

Parliament goes on to call on the EU and the ACP countries to encourage citizens, and particularly **women**, to participate on issues such as gender violence or human trafficking, since the involvement of society is vital if progress is to be made in resolving these problems. In this regard, Parliament deplores strongly the fact that virtually no mention was made during the JPA in Kinshasa of the increase in acts of mass sexual violence and of general impunity, particularly in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

**Budgetary support and humanitarian aid:** the Commission is asked to provide the members of the JPA with information on the Community financing granted to host countries in the form of budgetary support. Parliament stressed that some States benefiting from budgetary support have a controversial political system and that Members of the European Parliament should be informed of the Commission's assessment of the eligibility criteria for budgetary support and of the monitoring thereof. Parliament calls on the JPA to continue to monitor the situation in Haiti, Madagascar and South Sudan, and to send an **observation mission to monitor the level and effectiveness of humanitarian aid** to the populations struck by famine in the Horn of Africa.

Lastly, Parliament emphasises once again the significance of the **Declaration by the JPA on the EU-Latin America bananas agreement**, given the major impact this agreement will have henceforth on the competitiveness of ACP and EU banana producers. It calls in this regard on the European Parliament and the Council to do all that is in their power to find an agreement which enables compensation for ACP banana producers, provided for in the regulation establishing the banana accompanying measures to be released.