Resolution on the on-going negotiations for a new Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States

2019/2832(RSP) - 28/11/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament has adopted a resolution tabled by the Development Committee on the ongoing negotiations for a new Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

Recalling that ACP-EU relations are of great importance, particularly at this juncture where the multilateral system, Parliament welcomed the progress made so far on the negotiations on the strategic priorities of the foundation and the work on regional protocols. In view of the expiry of the Cotonou Agreement in February 2020, it welcomed the decision made by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers to delegate to the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors the power to adopt transitional measures until the new ACP-EU partnership enters into force.

Parliament strongly reaffirmed the position expressed in its two resolutions on the post-Cotonou framework adopted in October 2016 and June 2018, respectively, while stressing that the institutional framework should include an ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) to strengthen the parliamentary dimension of the future agreement and encourage exchanges on global challenges such as human rights, democracy, good governance, gender equality, peace and security as well as climate, environment and biodiversity.

The JPA should be composed of equal numbers of EU and ACP representatives and should meet twice a year in plenary session, alternating between the European Union and an ACP State. The Regional Partnership Parliamentary Committees should meet once a year in each region, and should not be contingent on the meetings of the Regional Partnership Council of Ministers being convened.

In Parliament's view, the new agreement should:

- strengthen and maintain the unique characteristics of the Cotonou Agreement, such as respect for human rights, democracy, fundamental freedoms, good governance and the rule of law;

- strengthen the idea of a partnership on an equal footing while taking account of the particularities of each country and of cooperation between the ACP countries and the EU as united and mutually supportive partners within the multilateral system and make it possible to move beyond a mere donor-recipient relationship;

- provide for a more systematic use of political dialogue, which must be used more effectively and preventively to prevent political crises;

- give a greater role to civil society, including NGOs, human rights and community groups, diasporas, churches, associations and religious communities, as well as youth and women's representatives;

- emphasise the eradication of poverty and the promotion of sustainable development with a strong focus on combating exclusion, discrimination and inequality, as well as the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women as vectors of development;

- offer assistance to host communities, which are suffering from the massive influx of displaced persons, and address the root causes of forced displacement in a comprehensive manner with full respect for rights.

Parliament reiterated its demand for the creation of strong monitoring mechanisms to ensure that implementation of the agreement effectively contributes to and promotes the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It stressed the need to mainstream cross-cutting issues such as environmental sustainability, climate change objectives, gender issues and social justice, and incorporate them into all policies, plans and interventions as part of the future agreement.

The new agreement should include ambitious provisions to combat illicit financial flows and tax evasion, and to provide financial and technical assistance to developing countries to cope with emerging global standards on fighting tax evasion.

The European Parliament called for it to be immediately and fully informed at all stages of the negotiating procedure.