# Activities of the ACP-EU joint Assembly in 1999

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The committee adopted the report by John CORRIE (EPP/ED, UK) on the results of the work of the ACP-EU Joint Assembly in 1999. The committee drew attention to the absolute requirement for the EU, in view of the failure of the WTO Conference, to achieve a suitable waiver to enable trade preferences to continue with at least existing market access for the ACP partners. It called for the new Convention to provide for an enhanced role for the Joint Assembly, including the possibility of holding regional Assembly meetings. It pointed out that the elected ACP Representatives now made up 75-85% of the ACP total and called on the ACP States to ensure that their delegations reflected a wide range of public opinion in their respective countries. The committee reaffirmed that the fight against poverty remained a key aim of development policy, and also urged that the proper level of consistency between European Union fisheries policy and development policy be assured, in order to guarantee the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources for the future benefit of all. It supported the recommendation, as expressed by the Joint Assembly, to create regional structures for monitoring and mediation in order to prevent tensions. It felt that natural disaster prevention and preparedness was a major element in achieving sustainable development. The report welcomed the signing of the Agreement on Trade, Development and Cooperation with South Africa, but expressed disappointment with the continuing delays in concluding the wine and spirits agreement. It echoed the Joint Assembly's request to the international community to recognise the state of East Timor and called on the Commission to take the necessary steps to ensure the rapid accession of East Timor to the Lomé Convention. As far as the WTO was concerned, the report called on the negotiating parties to defend the Lomé trade preferences and protocols within the WTO and to ensure the protection of the systems of preferences for cocoa, rum, sugar and bananas. Lastly, it stated that the application of sanctions against a country should be subject to Parliament's assent.