Activities of the ACP-EU Joint Assembly in 2001

2001/2012(INI) - 14/03/2002 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted the resolution drafted by Marie-Arlette CARLOTTI (PES, France) on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2001. (Please refer to the document dated 21/02 /02). Parliament welcomed the fact that the political dimension has been placed at the heart of the partnership, and the JPA's increased responsibilities in this field. In order to implement this new approach, the JPA needs a thorough revision of its operating methods and its very nature. Reforms are required, and the JPA should be given new powers. Parliament felt that emphasising the JPA's political role should enable it more successfully to uphold the shared interest of and solidarity between ACP and European states and peoples at world level, in particular within the WTO, so that rules concerning the liberalisation of trade take account of the need for sustainable development and the problems of ACP countries. The scaling down of the EU's external relations service in the ACP countries is considered counterproductive. The Commission should reconsider the closure of delegations. With regard to rules of procedure, Parliament advocates revising the rules on the financing of the participation of the ACP parliamentarians in JPA sessions to bring them into line with the new approach in the Cotonou Agrrment. It welcomed the Assembly's intention to be more actively involved in the scrutiny of the management of EDF funds to ensure that payments are made effectivmey and speedily. The Commission needs to specify how the funds set aside for ACP parliamentarians are administered and used in order to guarantee their participation. On the basis of a strict assessment of funding arrangements for JPA sessions, the establishment of a specific fund for the sole purpose of financing the participation of parliamentary representatives is an avenue worth exploring. Furthermore, the democratic legitimacy of the JPA will only become fully effective once a solution is found to the basic imbalance between the European contingent, reflecting the spectrum of political views in the European Parliament and the "one country, one vote" principle for the ACP. This prevents different political views being expressed. There needs to be discussions with no taboo subjects, on a re-weighting of votes guaranteeing political pluralism.