

Activities of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2005

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Thierry CORNILLET (ALDE, FR) on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2005. It welcomed the conclusion of the negotiations on amending the Cotonou Agreement, but regretted that the agreement reached at the Brussels summit of 15 and 16 December 2005 - bringing the amount allocated to the 10th European Development Fund (2008-2013) to EUR 22 682 million - remained short of the initial proposals aimed at maintaining the same level of aid as under the 9th EDF. MEPs supported the request of the ACP-EU JPA, expressed at its 9th session in April 2005 in Bamako (Mali), that a suitable proportion of EDF appropriations should be used for the political education and training of parliamentarians and of political, economic and social leaders, "in the interests of a lasting strengthening of good governance, the rule of law, democratic structures, and the interaction between government and opposition in pluralistic democracies based on free elections".

The committee called for greater transparency with regard to the progress and the substance of the negotiations on the economic partnership agreements as well as delivery of substantial assistance in line with the Commission President's commitment, in Gleneagles, to provide EUR 1 billion in 'aid for trade'. On sugar, the committee noted that the EU package of compensation and restructuring measures for the EU sugar industry exceeds EUR 7 billion and urged that the 18 ACP signatories to the Sugar Protocol, many of whose economies depend almost entirely on sugar, should receive "timely and substantial" financial support, which must be additional to existing commitments.

Among other points, the report called on the JPA members and the European co-secretariat to do everything they can to strengthen the role and the position of the JPA within the European Parliament. And the JPA was urged to continue its work on human rights, thereby contributing to the political dialogue provided for in Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement.