Basic information

1996/2267(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) Relations between the European Union and the ACP countries: options for a new partnership. Green Paper **Subject** 6.30 Development cooperation 6.40.06 Relations with ACP countries, conventions and generalities **Geographical area** ACP countries	Procedure completed

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
DEVE Development and Cooperation	MARTENS Wilfried A.E. (PPE)	19/12/1996

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	MAYER Christine (ARE)	27/05/1997
BUDG Budgets		
RELA External Economic Relations	SMITH Alex (PSE)	25/02/1997
FEMM Women's Rights	RIBEIRO Sérgio (GUE/NGL)	22/05/1997

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Development	2012	1997-06-05
Development	1967	1996-11-22

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
20/11/1996	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1996)0570	Summary

22/11/1996	Debate in Council		
09/12/1996	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
05/06/1997	Debate in Council		
16/09/1997	Vote in committee		Summary
16/09/1997	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0274/1997	
02/10/1997	Debate in Parliament		
02/10/1997	End of procedure in Parliament		
27/10/1997	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1996/2267(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	DEVE/4/08483

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0274/1997 OJ C 325 27.10.1997, p. 0003	16/09/1997	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0477/1997 OJ C 325 27.10.1997, p. 0011-0028	02/10/1997	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1996)0570	20/11/1996	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES0775/1997 OJ C 296 29.09.1997, p. 0065	10/07/1997	Summary

Relations between the European Union and the ACP countries: options for a new partnership. Green Paper

1996/2267(COS) - 20/11/1996 - Non-legislative basic document

OBJECTIVE: the purpose of the Green paper is to propose new guidelines on cooperation with the ACP countries in the light of international developments and Union policies. According to the Commission, EU-ACP cooperation policy should be restructured around three main areas (which provide mutual support): - the social, economic and environmental dimension, - the institutional dimension, - trade and investment. SUBSTANCE: . The economic dimension: cooperation should be tailored to each state and should give priority to integrating the ACP countries into the world economic system. In particular there must be support for the establishment of a stable macro-economic framework which is non-inflationary and generating growth. A more systematic approach must be adopted to the causes of poor investment; support must be given to the restructuring of state companies and privatization; increased support for the opening of world markets and regional integration; promotion of EU-ACP partnerships (development of infrastructures, telecommunications, etc.); development of scientific expertise; establishment of macroeconomic and monetary activities; support in order to ease the foreign debt burden. . The social dimension: EC support should mainly seek to combat poverty and find strategies to reduce it as far as possible. The idea is to plan job-generation measures and bring about improved access to productive resources (in particular education and training). . The environmental dimension: the Union must be quite clear in its aid by establishing a link between poverty and environmental degradation. Environmental costs must be internalized and new capacities must be developed as regards a participatory approach. Major efforts are needed as regards water quality, soil degradation associated with population pressures, deforestation and the urban environment. . The institutional dimension: the EU could play a more active role in problems associated with the governance of many ACP countries: the need to restore or bolster the rule of law and to reduce inequality is becoming an absolute priority. The Union has solid experience in this area, in particular in support for institutional development. Its activities could concentrate on promoting respect for human rights, assistance for regional organizations, improving the formulation of economic and social policies, managing budgets, improving legal systems, competition rules, investor protection, education and training, environmental protection, consumer protection, the development of institutions deriving from a civil society. . The trade dimension: significant progress must be made in order to integrate the ACP countries into the world economy. Different options are possible which could be combined so as to allow the adaptation of the trade system to the level of development of each state. The Union could also support the adoption of an agreement on the protection of foreign investment: negotiations are in progress in the WTO and in the OECD. In the meantime cooperation at sub-regional level could be established. . Technical arrangements for financial cooperation: the Union should review the practical arrangements for cooperation. They should move towards: - a new logical approach to the instruments: at present the Lomé Convention has instruments for specific objectives. It should now move towards setting overall allocations of funds (distinguishing between emergency and long-term operations); - greater selectiveness on aid: the automatic nature of the allocation of resources has already been substantially reviewed and a new quality criteria has been introduced. The Union should now base the granting of aid on reciprocal undertakings, according to which aid can be granted only in relation to domestic reform activities. The criterion of need, which is based essentially on development indicators, must therefore be supplemented by the criteria of performance or good management; - project aid or direct budget aid: the question raised is whether the Community should abandon the 'project' approach and endeavour to create the conditions for giving its support in the form of direct budget aid for the countries concerned and support for sectoral policies. This approach implies a reform of the conditionality of aid; - towards a new management system: the co-management system weighs on the efficiency of the system and does not encourage the recipients to take responsibility for the development programmes. A phased and individualized approach should be adopted making it possible to define the most appropriate method of management on a case by case basis, on the basis of criteria such as the quality of political dialogue, the progress recorded, the additional nature of EC aid and the existence of coordination mechanisms for external aid. Lastly, the Commission once again recommends the budgetization of the EDF which would give Community aid a real Community status.

Relations between the European Union and the ACP countries: options for a new partnership. Green Paper

1996/2267(COS) - 10/07/1997 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

The Committee emphasizes that the main objectives of cooperation are sustainable economic and social development and an increase in living standards that will follow from the growth of a dynamic, wealth-creating private sector and genuine social progress. This objective will be attained if a fabric of trade union and other interest groups is built up to ensure that the socio-economic players are involved in the decision-making process; this must take place in the setting of a state governed by the rule of law, guaranteeing individual liberties and providing the services of general interest needed for social progress.

Relations between the European Union and the ACP countries: options for a new partnership. Green Paper

1996/2267(COS) - 02/10/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Wilfried MARTENS (PPE, B), Parliament said that, under the Fifth Lomé Convention (2000-2010), it supported the renewal and strengthening of ACP-EU cooperation and was in favour of a political dimension that was close to the people and which would allow the ACP countries to find their place in the world economy: (1) Principles of the new partnership: Parliament expressed support for a fifth Convention consisting essentially of a global agreement defining for all ACP countries the political, economic, financial, commercial and social objectives and principles of cooperation. This agreement should incorporate institutions to promote parliamentary and political dialogue and include a range of cooperation instruments tailored to the level of development of the ACP group, without however, calling into question their identity or political history. This new

Convention should consist of several levels in addition to the national level: - the first level, bringing together all partners who share the same objectives of sustainable social development, peace and respect for human rights, - the second level, promoting regional cooperation and enabling issues such as security, restrictions on the arms trade, the banning of landmines and the prevention and resolution of disputes to be dealt with, - the third, encouraging sub-regional integration in Africa. Parliament believed that the composition of the ACP group could only be expanded or changed by mutual agreement with the ACP countries. It considered that the EU, which did not respect its commitments towards the developing countries at the Uruguay Round, should do all it could to ensure that non-reciprocal preferences and protocols were recognized as instruments of development until its objectives had been reached. The principles of the Lomé Convention, contractuality, foreseeability, security and partnership should be maintained, and the EU should not scale down the efforts it had made to assist its partners in the South. The Union should ensure that the common agricultural policy, commercial policy and fisheries policy were consistent with development policy. Parliament asked the Council to give the Commission a mandate to negotiate with the WTO differentiated trade regimes for the ACP countries in respect of products which were 'economically and socially sensitive'. (2) Partnership: Parliament was in favour of: - re-balancing the partnership in favour of the ACP countries (so as to give them as much control as possible over their development); - using contracts in place of the unmanageable cumulation of multiple conditionalities provided that the countries involved respected democratic principles and human rights; - giving greater importance to civil society organizations and decentralized cooperation; - including crisis and conflict prevention; - including protection of the environment, social issues and culture; - paying particular attention to the social dimension and specific problems of the small island ACP countries (rules of origin and climate change); - promoting the rule of law and the proper utilization of resources. Parliament called for the new partnership to be characterized by cooperation among the population; the programmes should therefore be transparent and accessible. It also stated that cooperation should also take full account of the situation of children. (3) Human rights and security: As regards human rights, Parliament believed that basic human rights should be guaranteed to ensure that citizens could participate democratically in decision-making and so that alternative proposals for sustainable development might be drawn up. To guarantee the security of the African continent, il recommended: - a ban on landmines; - monitoring and establishing a code of conduct for the limitation of arms sales; - limiting military budgets to 1% of GNP failing cooperation aid would fall;; - establishing regional evaluation of tensions and preparation for mediation; - crisis management instruments which would ensure the possibility of financial aid to help re-establish peace; - providing the ACP counties with satellite information which could help with the prevention of crises. (4) Objectives: The main objective of this cooperation was to combat poverty, concentrating mainly on the poorest countries (which should favour Africa) while reducing extreme poverty by half in the ACP countries by the year 2010. Getting the birth rate under control would be a decisive factor in this respect. Parliament called for the protection of the environment to be incorporated into all policies. It advocated a joint ACP-EU environmental policy which would conserve biodiversity, develop renewable sources of energy, halt the process of desertification and drought, protect forests, coastal zones and wetlands, establish regional genetic units to preserve local vegetable and animal species and which would take into account urban development and the protection of natural resources. It called for the inter-African centre for the prevention of natural disasters be reestablished. (5) Instruments of cooperation: Parliament called for measures to help the ACP countries become integrated into the world economy through: - the establishment of regional economic areas; - the diversification of production; - the adaptation to the rules governing international trade; - the resumption of investment; - the introduction of measures to help stabilize local monetary systems; - the reduction of debt. Parliament proposed the establishment of a centre to monitor economic practices and the establishment of an ACP quality label. It asked that the next Convention introduce measures aimed at protecting intellectual property in ACP countries, and it supported advanced research and technology that would help combat poverty. As regards trade, Parliament supported the Commission's decision regarding differentiation under a single framework. It called for the revision of the specific instruments used in ACP-EU cooperation (Stabex and Sysmin) with a view to ending the exclusive dependence of the ACP countries on a small number of basic products. It recommended increased support for scientific and technical research and for the information society and proposed the establishment of a European foundation to provide long-term support for research laboratories in developing countries. It emphasized the importance of micro-credits in promoting the development of the popular economy and the private sector as well as the development of small businesses, cooperatives and craft industries. Parliament recommended regional integration and hoped that the regions on the periphery of the Union and the Overseas Countries and Territories should be involved in the process of cooperation and regional integration promoted by the Union. It asked that the new Convention highlight the advantages of the Protocols on bananas, rum, sugar and beef and veal. (6) Financial and technical cooperation: Parliament supported the Commission's decision to retain three financial envelopes (long-term, short-term, non-governmental operators) and the inclusion of existing instruments therein. It asked that social criteria which improved the living and working conditions of the population be incorporated into the programmes and gave its support to budgetary and sectoral assistance in the place of project aid. It asked that NGOs make their commitment to the poor a priority and that the Union help them escape from the straitjackets of projects in order to build on the traditional skills of district associations and groups of villagers. It asked that Structural Adjustment Programmes ensure that more rather than less support was given to basic social services. It also demanded that the ACP debt be decreased, rescheduled or cancelled and reiterated its call for the incorporation of the European Development Fund (EDF) into the EU budget. (7) The Union's responsibilities: Parliament demanded the retention of the EU's commitment towards the South and did not accept its recent reduction. It was alarmed by the efforts to renationalize development cooperation made by the Member States and asked that policies become more consistent with European development policies. To conclude, it strongly welcomed the Commission's proposal for a global European strategy vis-à-vis the ACP countries and asked that it be implemented and that a Union policy on Africa covering all aspects (including security) be drawn up.