

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2008/2303(INI)	Procedure completed
Work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2008		
Subject 8.40.13 ACP-EU bodies		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	DEVE Development	ALDE CORNILLET Thierry	07/10/2008
European Commission	Commission DG Development	Commissioner MICHEL Louis	

Key events			
18/12/2008	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
17/02/2009	Vote in committee		Summary
20/02/2009	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0081/2009	
24/03/2009	Results of vote in Parliament		
24/03/2009	Decision by Parliament	T6-0155/2009	Summary
24/03/2009	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2008/2303(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Annual report
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	DEVE/6/68915

Documentation gateway					
Committee draft report		PE418.102	13/01/2009	EP	

Amendments tabled in committee	PE419.896	29/01/2009	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A6-0081/2009	20/02/2009	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T6-0155/2009	24/03/2009	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2009)3245	08/10/2009	EC	

Work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2008

The Committee on Development adopted the own-initiative report by Thierry CORNILLET (ALDE, FR) on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2008. It welcomes the fact that in 2008 the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) continued to provide a framework for an open, democratic and in-depth dialogue on the negotiation of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the EU and the ACP countries. The JPA voiced concerns about several formal and substantive aspects of the negotiations, and Members point out that the debate is still in progress following the adoption of the EPA with the Cariforum and of interim agreements with certain countries in other regions.

They underline the need for close parliamentary scrutiny during the negotiation as well as during the implementation of EPAs. The report criticises the fact that the work and role of the JPA is threatened by the prospect of the creation of a new body in the context of EPAs ? namely the parliamentary committee ? without the relationship between that body and the JPA being made clear. The parliamentary committee should operate as part of the JPA, to avoid a costly and complicated proliferation of meetings, taking advantage of the JPA's system of regional meetings, and exploiting the experience of the JPA. This committee should operate in a flexible manner, enabling it to draw on the expertise on both trade and development issues of the Members of the European Parliament involved in the examination of the EPA in committee.

Members stress in particular the crucial role of the ACP national parliaments, non-state actors and local authorities in monitoring and managing EPAs, and call on the Commission to guarantee their involvement in the negotiation process. They welcome the Assembly's adoption of the Port Moresby Declaration adopted by the JPA on 28 November 2008 on the global food and financial crises. The JPA should hold regular debates on this issue.

The committee welcomes the undertaking given by the Commissioner with responsibility for development to subject Country and Regional Strategy Papers for the ACP countries (2008-2013) to democratic scrutiny by parliaments. It calls on the parliaments of the ACP countries to insist that their governments and the Commission involve them in the process of drafting and implementing the Country and Regional Strategy Papers. The Commission must supply all available information to the parliaments of the ACP countries and assist them in exercising democratic scrutiny, in particular by means of capacity-building.

Turning to the European Development Fund (EDF), the committee states that it is in favour of incorporating the latter into the EU budget, calling on parliaments to exercise close parliamentary scrutiny of the EDF. Highlighting the JPA's key position in this debate, the committee calls on it and the parliaments of the ACP countries to take an active part in the revision of the Cotonou Agreement scheduled for 2010. It insists that the JPA be involved in the whole process of negotiating that revision.

Moving on to individual states, the committee calls on the JPA to continue to address the situation in Sudan, and in particular in Darfur, namely by assessing the position of the Union and ACP countries regarding the ICC indictments. The JPA should continue to address the situation in Somalia, which is endangering the lives of the Somali people, and it must continue to discuss the alarming situation in Zimbabwe, and raise awareness of the conflicts affecting the eastern DRC, promoting a negotiated political situation to the crisis.

The JPA is asked to deepen dialogue with the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and the parliaments of regional organisations, in view of the importance of regional integration to peace and development in ACP countries. The committee deplores the fact that the JPA was not properly consulted during the drafting of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy and hopes that the Assembly will be actively involved in the implementation of that strategy.

The report welcomes the JPA Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment report on the social and environmental consequences of structural adjustment programmes ? adopted in Ljubljana ? which advocates that the practice of making World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) lending subject to economic policy conditions has had disastrous social and environmental consequences for ACP countries, and should be replaced by a country-specific lending policy that focuses on reducing poverty.

Lastly, the committee calls for joint discussions to be held between the secretariats of the ACP countries and of the European Parliament on the way the JPA works, with particular regard to voting by separate Houses, equality of treatment of parliamentarians, and joint fact-finding and election observation missions.

Work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2008

The European Parliament adopted by 619 votes to 20, with 18 abstentions, a resolution on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2008.

MEPs welcome the fact that in 2008 the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) continued to provide a framework for an open, democratic and in-depth dialogue on the negotiation of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the EU and the ACP countries. They draw attention to the concerns voiced by the JPA about several formal and substantive aspects of the negotiations.

Need for parliamentary scrutiny: the resolution stresses the need for close parliamentary scrutiny during the negotiation as well as during the implementation of EPAs. MEPs criticise the fact that the work and role of the JPA is threatened by the prospect of the creation of a new body in the context of EPAs ? namely the parliamentary committee ? without the relationship between that body and the JPA being made clear. The parliamentary committee is called upon to operate as part of the JPA, to avoid a costly and complicated proliferation of meetings, taking advantage of the JPA's system of regional meetings, and to exploit the experience of the JPA and promote synergy between all the EPA

regions. This committee should operate in a flexible manner, enabling it to draw on the expertise on both trade and development issues of the Members of the European Parliament involved in the examination of the EPA in committee.

The Parliament welcomes the undertaking given by the Commissioner with responsibility for development and humanitarian aid to subject Country and Regional Strategy Papers for the ACP countries (2008-2013) to democratic scrutiny by parliaments. It recalls, in this regard, the need to closely involve parliaments in the democratic process and in the national development strategies.

The resolution also calls on the JPA to pursue and deepen dialogue with the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and the parliaments of regional organisations, in view of the importance of regional integration to peace and development in ACP countries. In this context, MEPs deplore the fact that the JPA was not properly consulted during the drafting of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy and hope that the Assembly will be actively involved in the implementation of that strategy.

Lastly, MEPs stress the crucial role of the ACP national parliaments, non-state actors and local authorities in monitoring and managing EPAs. They call on the Commission to guarantee their involvement in the ongoing negotiation process, which requires a clear agenda for further negotiations, to be agreed by the ACP countries and the Union and based on a participatory approach.

Better use of funds: in relation to the European Development Fund (EDF), MEPs are in favour of incorporating the EDF into the EU budget and call on parliaments to exercise close parliamentary scrutiny of the EDF. Highlighting the JPA's key position in this debate, MEPs call on it and the parliaments of the ACP countries to take an active part therein, in particular in connection with the revision of the Cotonou Agreement scheduled for 2010.

MEPs also welcome the JPA Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment report on the social and environmental consequences of structural adjustment programmes ? adopted in Ljubljana ? which advocates that the practice of making World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) lending subject to economic policy conditions has had disastrous social and environmental consequences for ACP countries, and should be replaced by a country-specific lending policy that focuses on reducing poverty.

Addressing the situation in certain States: the JPA is called upon to continue to address the situation in Sudan, and in particular in Darfur, to address the situation in Somalia, to continue to discuss the alarming situation in Zimbabwe and to continue to contribute to the international community's efforts to raise awareness of the conflicts affecting the eastern DRC.

The way the JPA works: lastly, the Parliament calls, in addition to the annual report on the activities of the ACP-EU JPA, for joint discussions to be held between the secretariats of the ACP countries and of the European Parliament on the way the JPA works, with particular regard to voting by separate Houses, equality of treatment of parliamentarians, and joint fact-finding and election observation missions.