

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT

(Third Session)

**REPORT OF THE 37TH SESSION OF THE ACP PARLIAMENTARY
ASSEMBLY AND INTER-SESSIONAL MEETINGS OF THE ACP-EU JOINT
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**

ACP House & European Parliament

Brussels, Belgium

17th to 20th March, 2015

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November, 2015

*Paper laid on
the table of the
Senate by Sen.
Kombi Githumwa
on 25/11/2015*
Kombi

*Hon. Speaker
You may approve.
2009
19/11/15*

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACP: African, Caribbean and Pacific

ACP-EU JPA: African, Caribbean and Pacific – European Union Joint Parliamentary Assembly

ACP-PA: African, Caribbean and Pacific Parliamentary Assembly

CAR: Central Africa Republic

CEDFT: Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade

CPA: Committee on Political Affairs

CSAE: Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment

CTC: Counter Terrorism Committee

EAC: East African Community

EDF: European Development Fund

EPAs: Economic Partnership Agreements

EU: European Union

GSP: Generalised System of Preference

IOM: International Organization for Migration

JPA: Joint Parliamentary Assembly

LDCs: Least Developed Countries

MDGs: Millennium Development Goals

MFN: Most Favoured Nations

OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

OSCE: Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

SRHR: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

UNODC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

WTO: World Trade Organisation

PREFACE

Mr. Speaker,

The 37th Session of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Parliamentary Assembly took place on 18th March, 2015. The Assembly was preceded by Committee meetings of the ACP that took place on 17th March, 2015, and was followed by Inter-sessional Committee meetings of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) that took place on 19th and 20th March, 2015. The ACP Committee meetings and Assembly took place at ACP House, while the Inter-sessional meetings of the ACP-EU JPA took place at the European Parliament, both in Brussels, Belgium.

The Sessions and meetings were a follow-up to the 28th Session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and 36th Session of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly that were held in November – December 2014 in Strasbourg, France.

The Kenya delegation to this meeting comprised of the following:-

- (i) Hon. Joyce Laboso, M.P. – Leader of the delegation
- (ii) Sen. Kembi Gitura, M.P.
- (iii) Hon. Abdikadir O. Aden, M.P.
- (iv) Mr. Charles Munyua – Delegation Secretary, Senate
- (v) Ms. Gertrude Chebet – Delegation Secretary, National Assembly

The Kenyan Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the European Union, H.E. Johnson Weru, and Ms. Dorothy Nthiwa, from the Kenya Embassy in Brussels were on hand to provide technical support to the delegation.

Mr. Speaker,

The 37th Plenary Session of the ACP PA considered and debated issues affecting member-states. The ACP-PA also adopted a Declaration on the devastating impact of Cyclone PAM on the island states of Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Kiribati in the Pacific region.

The Committees also agreed on the topics for their next reports and appointed co-rapporteurs. They also exchanged views on these topics and urgent topics for resolutions in the presence of the experts appointed by each Committee.

Mr. Speaker,

The Kenya delegation participated actively in all the deliberations and issued statements with regard to the topics that were under discussion that fed into the final reports and resolutions that were taken.

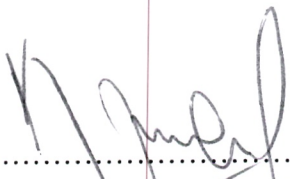
Mr. Speaker,

The JPA also discussed matters trade, the state of play in various blocs in regard to the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), and the 11th European Development Fund (EDF).

Mr. Speaker,

The delegation is grateful to the Speakers of the two Houses for allowing them to attend the Session, for facilitating travel and accommodation and providing logistical and technical support in liaison with the offices of the Clerks from the two Houses.

It is now my pleasant duty, on behalf of the delegation to present and commend this report to the House for adoption.



.....
SEN. KEMBI-GITURA, M.P.
MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION

DATED 18th Nov 2015

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE ACP COMMITTEES, ACP PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY AND INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS OF ACP-EU JOINT COMMITTEES: BRUSSELS, BELGIUM – 17TH TO 20TH MARCH, 2015

INTRODUCTION

1. The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly was created out of a common desire to bring together the elected representatives of the European Community – the Members of the European Parliament – and the elected representatives of the African, Caribbean and Pacific states (ACP Countries) that have signed the Cotonou Agreement: it is the only institution of its kind in the world.
2. Since the entry into force of the Treaty on the European and EU enlargement it has acquired a more prominent role. A substantial part of the work of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly is directed towards promoting human rights and democracy and the common values of humanity, and this has produced joint commitments undertaken within the framework of the UN conferences.

Composition and working methods

3. The representatives of the 78 ACP states, who under the Cotonou Agreement must be members of Parliament, meet their European Parliament counterparts drawn from the 27 member states of the EU in a plenary session for one week twice a year, bringing together more than 320 MPs. The Joint Parliamentary Assembly meets alternately in an ACP country and an EU country. The institution is governed by common, democratic rules.
4. Two co-presidents who are elected by the Assembly direct their work. Twenty four vice-presidents (12 European and 12 ACP) who are also elected by the Assembly constitute the Bureau of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly, together with the two co-presidents. The Bureau meets several times a year in order to ensure the continuity of the work of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly and to prepare new initiatives aimed notably at

reinforcing and improving cooperation. It also considers topical political questions and adopts positions on all human rights cases.

5. Three Standing Committees have been established to draw up substantive proposals, which are then voted on by the Joint Parliamentary Assembly. These Committees, which began their work in March 2003, are:-
 - i) Committee on Political Affairs;
 - ii) Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade; and
 - iii) Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment
6. The Assembly regularly forms exploratory or fact-finding missions. The members of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly are thus in direct contact with the situation on the ground in various developing countries which are signatories to the Cotonou Agreement.
7. The impact of the work of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly thus goes well beyond economic considerations and embraces the fundamental objectives of the development of mankind and the establishment of peaceful relations between the nations and the world. The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly is a democratic, parliamentary institution, which aims to promote and defend democratic processes in order to guarantee the right of each people to choose their own development objectives and decide on how to attain them.

Initiatives by the Joint Parliamentary Assembly

8. The Joint Parliamentary Assembly has made an active contribution towards implementing and reinforcing successive ACP-EU Conventions and has put forward numerous proposals, including the upgrading of the role of women in development process, the integration of environment policy in development projects, promotion of trade as a tool for development, particularly by way of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) foreseen in the Cotonou Agreement, the drawing up of rural development programmes and micro-projects tailored to the needs of specific communities and the promotion of regional, political and commercial cooperation.

Membership and meetings

9. The forum has members drawn from the European Community and the African, Caribbean and Pacific states. Prior to the Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA), the ACP committees hold meetings. This is followed by a meeting of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly (ACP-PA), then followed by the Joint ACP-EU committee meetings, and finally the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.

Some ACP-EU and Cotonou Agreements related to Kenya

A. *The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)*

10. As from 2002, the European Union and individual and groups of countries that together make up the ACP group of states have been negotiating “free trade” Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). The general framework for negotiating EPAs is found in the Cotonou Agreement.
11. The overall objectives of EPAs are to ensure sustainable development of Kenya and other ACP countries, their smooth and gradual integration into the global economy and eradication of poverty. Specifically EPAs aim at promoting sustained growth; increasing the production and supply capacity; fostering the structural transformation and diversification of the Kenyan economy and providing support for regional integration.
12. Kenya, along with other EAC Partner States initialled the framework EPA Agreement on 27th November 2007. This was pursuant to the commitment under the road map agreed between the ACP and the EU on establishment of Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) by 31st December 2007. The framework agreement was to be replaced by a comprehensive EPA with effect from 1st July 2009, by which time negotiations of all pending issues would have been concluded. However, that did not happen due to shifting focus to addressing the contentious issues in the FEPA, namely Export Taxes (Article 15 of FEPA) and Most Favoured Nations (MFN) clause (Article 16 of FEPA).

13. In general, the EAC/Kenya was keen to conclude an EPA Agreement that addresses the concerns of EAC/Kenya; bring industrial and general development, and lead to poverty reduction. The agreement should not also lead to displacement of Kenya products by EU products from the EAC market.
14. In September 2013, the European Parliament passed a resolution that countries which had not signed the EPAs would no longer have preferential market access to the EU. This meant that Kenya, as well as 17 other countries, had up to 30th September 2014 to ratify the EPAs in order to continue enjoying market preferences in the EU market.
15. Among the EAC countries, Kenya stood to be the most affected by this resolution, as it would have meant reverting to trade with the EU under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) trade regime, whereby Kenya's exports to the EU would be subject to increased import duties from 0% to between 5.5% and 15%. This would have had an adverse effect on Kenya's economy, and lead to increased unemployment as investors relocated to countries enjoying preferential market access opportunities in the EU.
16. Consequently, at the 28th Session of the ACP-EU JPA held in Strasbourg, France in December, 2014, Kenya appealed for the assistance of the Assembly in engaging the EU to immediately re-establish a duty and quota free access for Kenyan goods to the EU market, on the basis that the EPA with the EAC was yet to be signed, and the Kenyan economy was suffering greatly due to full taxation of goods entering the EU market. It is noted that Kenya has since been reinstated to the duty free quota free market access regime, which is a big a relief for Kenya, particularly for our horticulture and floriculture sectors.

B. The European Development Fund (EDF)

17. The European Development Fund (EDF) is the main instrument for providing Community aid for development cooperation in the ACP States and the 21 EU Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT). The 1957 Treaty

of Rome made provision for its creation with a view to granting technical and financial assistance, initially to African countries which at that time were still colonized, and with which some Member States had historical links. Even though a heading has been reserved for the Fund in the Community budget since 1993 following a request by the European Parliament, the EDF does not yet come under the Community's general budget. It is funded by the Member States, is subject to its own financial rules and is managed by a specific committee.

18. The EDF consists of several instruments, including grants, risk capital and loans to the private sector. A new partnership agreement that was signed in Cotonou in June 2000 streamlined the EDF and introduced a system of rolling programming, making for greater flexibility and giving the ACP States greater responsibility.
19. The development aid provided by the EDF forms part of a broader European framework and each EDF is concluded for a period of around five years. The Member States have their own bilateral agreements and implement their own initiatives with developing countries that are not financed by the EDF or any other Community funds.
20. The tenth EDF covered the period from 2008 to 2013 and provided an overall budget of EUR 22 682 million. Of this amount, EUR 21 966 million was allocated to the ACP countries, EUR 286 million to the OCT and EUR 430 million to the Commission as support expenditure for programming and implementation of the EDF. The amount for the ACP countries is divided accordingly: EUR 17 766 million to the national and regional indicative programmes, EUR 2 700 million to intra-ACP and intra-regional cooperation and EUR 1 500 million to Investment Facilities. An increased share of the budget was devoted to regional programmes, thereby emphasising the importance of regional economic integration as the basic framework for national and local development. An innovation in the tenth EDF is the creation of "incentive amounts" for each country.

21. The eleventh EDF will run from year 2014 to 2020. A budget of EUR 31.5 billion has been set aside for this particular period. This is divided into grants, approximately EUR 24.3 billion for national and regional indicative programmes; EUR 3.5 billion for intra-ACP and inter-regional cooperation; EUR 1.1 billion for the investment facility managed by the European Investment Bank; and EUR 2.5 billion for the European Investment Bank for loans with reduced interests rates, which are mainly to be used to promote the public sector in ACP states.

MEETINGS OF THE ACP COMMITTEES

22. The ACP Committee meetings took place on 17th March, 2015 at ACP House, where several matters were discussed, as follows:-

Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment

23. The Committee adopted its draft agenda and approved minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th November, 2014 in Strasbourg, France. It also considered the draft minutes of the ACP-EU JPA Committee on Social Affairs and Environment held on 29th November, 2014 in Strasbourg, France, as well as the agenda of the JPA CSAE Committee meeting scheduled to be held on 19th March, 2015 at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium.
24. The Committee considered and debated the draft Report on the challenges and opportunities of education and vocational training in ACP countries, as presented by the Co-rapporteur, Musa Hussein Naib (Eritrea). In his remarks, the Co-Rapporteur observed that the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio + 20) reaffirmed that full access to quality education at all levels is an essential condition for achieving sustainable development, poverty eradication, gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as human development, for the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

25. He also underpinned the importance of a well-educated and skilled workforce as a direct contributor to raising overall productivity, enhancing economic growth, eradicating poverty and ultimately improving the living standard of the population of ACP countries.
26. Among the challenges identified of vocational education and training in ACP countries were inadequate infrastructure, courses undertaken being unresponsive to market needs, and the challenge of conflicts. Measures proposed to address these included-
- i) embracing of ICT skills and integrating the same at all levels of learning to enhance knowledge transfer;
 - ii) regional integration and cooperation, particularly in higher education and technical and vocational training; and
 - iii) promotion of mobility of skills through south-south cooperation programmes in ACP countries, particularly through scientific, technical, cultural and curricular exchanges.
27. In contributing to the debate, the Kenya delegation observed that terrorism remained a threat to expansion of technical and vocation education institutions especially in the marginalised parts of the country, as well as, in the case of Kenya, the upgrading of mid-level colleges and polytechnics into university college and campuses without opening equivalent institutions to offer the technical and vocational courses previously offered by these institutions.

Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade

28. The Committee adopted its draft agenda and approved minutes of the previous meeting held on 26th November, 2014 in Strasbourg, France. It also considered the agenda of the JPA CEDFT Committee meeting scheduled to be held on 19th and 20th March, 2015 at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium.

29. Under matters arising, the Committee received and considered progress reports on the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) negotiations and implementation. The main issues discussed in this regard included-
- i) the level of market openness;
 - ii) products included in the opening-up of the markets;
 - iii) financing mechanisms in the context of the EPAs;
 - iv) protecting infant industries in ACP countries;
 - v) the institutional aspects of the implementation of EPAs;
 - vi) market access in the context of amendment of EU Regulation 1521; and
 - vii) the impact of the EPAs on the national economies and the regional integration processes.
30. In its contribution, the Kenyan delegation recalled that at the previous meeting held in Strasbourg, France in November, 2014 it had appealed for the support of the Assembly in engaging the EU to immediately re-establish a duty and quota free access for Kenyan goods to the EU market, on the basis that the EPA with the EAC was yet to be signed, and the Kenyan economy was suffering greatly due to full taxation of goods entering the EU market. It reported that Kenya had since been reinstated to the duty free quota free market access regime, and expressed its sincere thanks and gratitude to the Assembly for its support on the matter.

Committee on Political Affairs

31. The Committee adopted its draft agenda and approved minutes of the previous meeting held on 26th November, 2014 in Strasbourg, France. It also considered the agenda of the JPA CPA Committee meeting scheduled to be held on 19th and 20th March, 2015 at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium, and received and considered reports on the political situation in ACP States.
32. The Committee also considered and debated the draft Report on cultural diversity and human rights in ACP and EU countries, as presented by the Co-rapporteur, Abdoulaye Toure (Ivory Coast). In his remarks, the Co-

Rapporteur observed that in the world's nearly 200 countries, numerous different cultures exist and, as a result, the design of policies should explicitly recognise cultural differences, while at the same time ensuring the promotion and protection of human rights.

33. The Co-Rapporteur also took the Committee through the various international human rights instruments recognizing human rights as being-
 - i) universal and inalienable;
 - ii) interdependent and indivisible;
 - iii) equal and non-discriminatory; and
 - iv) both rights and obligations.
34. On the linkages between cultural diversity, development and human rights, the Co-Rapporteur emphasized that good management of cultural diversity, and the conflict/s that may arise from it, is a precondition for societies to live in a harmonious environment, which is indispensable to support economic growth, health, education and, consequently, poverty eradication.
35. The Co-Rapporteur further took the meeting through various institutional approaches to dealing with diversity, both from the perspective of international organizations such as UNESCO, as well as within ACP and EU Countries. He concluded by observing that cultural diversity in itself is not a problem for development and human rights, but rather human rights and cultural diversity have a mutually interdependent and beneficial relationship. Many human rights, such as the freedom of religion, thought or expression, play a direct role in the promotion and protection of cultural diversity.

OVERVIEW OF THE 37TH PLENARY SESSION OF THE ACP-PA

36. The ACP Parliamentary Assembly held its meeting on 18th March, 2015 under the Chairpersonship of the ACP President Hon. Fitz Jackson. He welcomed the ACP delegates to the session, after which the agenda of the meeting was considered and adopted.

37. The Plenary Session of the ACP-PA marked the first time for members to hear from the new ACP Secretary General Dr. Patrick Gomes, since he took office on 1st March, 2015. In his address, the Secretary General emphasized that his tenure of office will essentially be a transitional and repositioning preparatory period for the future of the ACP Group beyond 2020. However, he added that although 2020 marked the expiry of the ACP's current partnership framework with the EU, the Constitutive Act of the ACP Group, the Georgetown Agreement, has its own life outside of ACP-EU relations.
38. Dr. Gomes called for the ACP Group to engage more actively with each other as member states, as well as other developing countries and regions in the Global South. He outlined five strategic policy areas for the 79-member organization to pursue, these being-
- i) promoting trade, industry and regional integration;
 - ii) building sustainable, resilient and creative economies;
 - iii) supporting global justice and human security;
 - iv) advancing the rule of law and good governance; and
 - v) financing for development.
39. In order for these goals to be achieved, Dr. Gomes underscored the need to radically reform and transform the institutional architecture of the ACP Group, stressing the need to reorient the ACP Group and Secretariat as a knowledge management institution focusing on development programmes. Further, to ensure financial sustainability, the ACP was pursuing the idea of an ACP Trade Finance and Investment Facility and a long-term Development Fund.
40. The Co-President of the ACP-EU JPA Hon. Fitz Jackson and the delegates present congratulated Dr. Gomes on his new role and assured him of the support of the parliamentarians in his task to lead the ACP Group of States into a more relevant and effective body in international development.

41. The Meeting then considered and adopted the minutes of the 36th Session of the ACP-PA held on 28th November, 2014 in Strasbourg, France, after which it received reports from the three committees of the ACP as well as communications from the Bureau of the ACP-PA. Among the communications from the Bureau was to inform the meeting that in light of the recent cyclone Pam that had caused widespread devastation in several Pacific Island States including Vanuatu which was scheduled to host the next meeting of the Assembly in June, Vanuatu had indicated that it was no longer able to host the meeting, and an alternative host country was being sought.
42. The Meeting also adopted a Declaration on the devastating impact of cyclone Pam on the Pacific Island States of Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Solomon Is. and Kiribati, and observed a minute's silence in respect of those whose lives were lost during and as a result of the cyclone.

OVERVIEW OF THE INTERSESSIONAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF THE ACP-EU JPA

43. The Intersessional meetings of the ACP-EU JPA Committees took place on 19th and 20th March, 2015 at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium.

Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment

44. The Committee adopted its draft agenda, following which the EU Co-Chair, Michele Rivasi, welcomed the new ACP Co-Chair Raphael Mangouala (Gabon). The Committee then observed a minute of silence in memory of the victims of cyclone Pam in Vanuatu, Tuvalu, the Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Papua New Guinea.
45. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th November, 2014 in Strasbourg, France were considered and adopted.
46. The Committee considered and debated the draft Report on the '**Challenges and opportunities of education and vocational training in ACP Countries**', as presented by the Co-rapporteurs, Musa Hussein Naib

(Eritrea) and Francesc Gambus. In their remarks, the Co-Rapporteurs underlined the importance of education as a tool for peace and stability in a country, as well as a vehicle for achieving Decent Work for All. They emphasized the role of families in educating their children, and underscored the importance of education in guaranteeing the equal participation of all citizens.

47. In their contributions, Committee members underlined the importance of education and vocational training as a driver for economic and social development, and highlighted the importance of retaining girls in schools as well as providing for the needs of disabled children in schools. Members also acknowledged the role of private and public partnerships in education and the importance of ensuring quality education as well as the training and retention of teachers.
48. The Meeting then considered the topic of ***'How to improve economic and social conditions in Developing Countries, including the contribution of family businesses, in order to prevent health disasters'***. Arne Gericke and Ibrahim R. Bundu (Sierra Leone) were appointed Co-Rapporteurs and went on to highlight the important role of family business to the sustainable development of a country. They underscored the importance of small and medium enterprises in supporting health interventions, particularly in emergency situations. To this end, they underlined the need for permanent structures which can support the responses to health disasters.
49. In their contributions, Committee members noted that small businesses can lobby together to defend their interests and that in most cases they are the first to be affected in case of a health disaster. Members underlined the need for favorable legislations for the promotion and protection of family businesses, particularly in the case of competition with imported cheap food products. To this end, Members emphasized the need to support family businesses through micro-financing.

50. On 20th March, 2015, the Committee received presentations by Dr. Mit Philips from *Médecins sans Frontiers* (MSF) and Massimiliano Paolucci, Head of Brussels office, World Bank, on the topic '***The Ebola crisis and its impact on ACP States.***'
51. In his presentation, Dr. Mit Philips from MSF highlighted the epidemic itself and its knock-on effects revealed the weaknesses of the health services, and the social, economic and trust crisis. She further noted that the direct impact of the Ebola epidemic was evidenced in the deaths among health workers, the medium and long term health impact to survivors, the increased health needs and service gaps and the need for early detection, investigation and effective response. In responding to the presentation, Committee members emphasized the need to set up permanent health structures in the most affected countries in the post-Ebola recovery period, and the importance of involving legislators in the recovery efforts including the neighbouring countries whose economies have as well been affected by the epidemic.
52. Mr. Massimiliano Paolucci from the World Bank, Brussels Office highlighted the projected impacts from the Ebola epidemic to the economic growth of the three most affected countries, noting that the loss of GDP growth translated into loss of fiscal revenues. He further underlined the importance of working on increased preparedness for future pandemics, through the Pandemic Emergency Facility (PEF) of the World Bank. In their responses, Committee members underlined the importance of debt relief to the three most affected countries to assist them to restart their economies, and of ensuring the engagement of parliamentarians in the recovery efforts. Members underscored the need to ensure that funding for the health sector reaches the populations most in need.
53. The Committee lastly considered the topic '***The financing of health in ACP Countries***' and received a presentation by Dr. Bruno Meessen from the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Belgium. Dr. Meessen highlighted that aid instruments have taken over health financing in ACP countries, instead of

budget/collective resources, which require collaboration between respective ministries, parliamentarians and technical and financial partners. There was therefore need to promote equitable investments in the health sector and to ensure that health financing is pro-poor, benefiting the disadvantaged areas. This will lay out a path to Universal Health Coverage (UHC) for each country. He further underlined the need for increased domestic resources for health through enhanced revenue collection and allocation, reprioritization where relevant, and innovative financing, giving priority to immunizations, non-communicable diseases, AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, as well as reproductive, maternal and child health, in national budgets.

54. In their responses, Committee members underscored the need for a strategy to mitigate the brain drain of health workers from ACP countries. They noted the role of Parliamentarians in ensuring transparency and accountability of public and donor funds to the health sector and also supported a decentralised health system accessible to all in ACP countries.
55. The date of the next meeting of the Committee was set for 13th June, 2015. The venue of the same would be communicated to members once a host country was identified.

Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade

56. The Committee adopted its draft agenda and the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th November, 2014 in Strasbourg, France. Thereafter, a minute of silence was observed in memory of the victims of cyclone Pam in Vanuatu, Tuvalu, the Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Papua New Guinea.
57. The Committee considered and debated the draft Report on ***'The financing of investment and trade, including infrastructure, in ACP countries by the EU blending mechanism'***, as presented by the Co-Rapporteurs Malement Liahosoa (Madagascar) and Maria Arena on behalf of David Martin. Commenting on the draft report, Constance Kann from the European Investment Bank highlighted the importance of the

blending mechanism, in particular for large infrastructure projects and risk sharing. Committee members also stressed the need to take advantage of the enormous potential of loan-grant blending and particularly the involvement of the private sector. The deadline for tabling amendments to the draft report was set for 4th May 2015 at noon.

58. The Meeting then considered the topic '**Forty years of partnership: evaluation of the impact on trade and development in the ACP countries and prospects for enduring relations between the ACP countries and the European Union**'. David Martin and Jacob Oulanyah (Uganda) were appointed as Co-Rapporteurs, and presented their initial reflections on the topic. Commenting on the topic, San Bilal of the European Centre for Development Policy Management emphasized that the EU-ACP relationship, the largest North-South partnership worldwide, was exceptional given that it combined development finance, trade preferences and political dialogue. Members further emphasized the importance of the added value of the partnership, but noted that, the *status quo* was not an option post-2020.
59. The Committee then had an exchange of views with Mr. Remco Vahl, the Director General- Trade in European Commission, on the topic '**Economic Partnership Agreements: State of play of negotiations and implementation**'. Mr. Vahl informed members about the progress made on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), such as those with West Africa, SADC and the EAC that were concluded in 2014 and were to be submitted to the European Parliament for consent after legal scrubbing.
60. The Committee then had an exchange of views with San Bilal of the European Centre for Development Policy Management on the topic '**Post-2015 Development Agenda: inclusive and sustainable economic growth**'. Mr. Bilal noted that the Post-2015 global partnership would be a success only if it were global and universal, with all countries and stakeholders playing their full part. Some Committee members however

stressed the importance for the EU to respect its commitment of 0.7% of EU collective GNI and that funding for climate change adaptation should be supplementary.

61. Mr. Domenico Rosa (DG-DEVCO, EC) then informed members about the progress made on the programming of the Regional Indicative Programmes under the 11th EDF (2009 – 2020) during exchange of views with the Committee on the **'11th European Development Fund (2014-2020): Regional Indicative Programmes'**.
62. Under exchange of views on implementation of the resolution adopted by the ACP-EU JPA on **'Private sector development strategy, including innovation, for sustainable development'**, Committee members drew attention to extractive industries and transparency, as well as the importance of making the private sector more accountable. Following the same, it was resolved that the Commission provides more exhaustive information on the follow-up given to the resolution at the next meeting.
63. On the topic **'the future of development finance: modernizing measures and instruments'**, Ms. Suzanne Steensen of the OECD gave an assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of Official Development Assistance (ODA), and stressed the importance of private financing. In response, some Members emphasized that ODA was not sufficient and that other sources of revenue, with appropriate accompanying measures, were necessary.
64. Under exchange of views on the topic **'Continental free trade area in Africa – possibilities to foster intra-African trade and its potential benefits for the ACP'**, Mr. Guy Platton (DG DEVCO) informed Members about the progress made towards establishing the Continental Free Trade Area in Africa, in which process the EU and the World Bank were major donors. Some Members expressed concerns about the impact on integration at the sub-regional level, WTO compatibility, and differences in the level of development between countries throughout the continent.

65. The date of the next meeting of the Committee was set for 13th June, 2015. The venue of the same would be communicated to members once a host country was identified.

Committee on Political Affairs

66. The Committee adopted its draft agenda, and the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th November, 2014 in Strasbourg, France. Thereafter, a minute of silence was observed in memory of the victims of cyclone Pam in Vanuatu, Tuvalu, the Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Papua New Guinea.

67. The Committee considered and debated the draft Report on '**Cultural diversity and human rights**', as presented by the Co-Rapporteurs Davor Ivo Stier and Louis Dacoury-Tabley (Ivory Coast). Various Members presented views on the draft report, following which the deadline for tabling amendments was set for noon on 4th May, 2015.

68. The Committee then had an exchange of views with Norma Goicochea Estenoz, the Ambassador of Cuba in Belgium, on the topic '**ACP-EU reaction to recent developments in Cuba. Which impact on the relations of the ACP-EU JPA with Cuba?**' Ambassador Estenoz commended the good cooperation with the EU and EU Member States in the areas of trade and cooperation, and hoped for a positive outcome of the ongoing negotiations on the political level.

69. In her contribution to the topic, the Leader of the Kenya Delegation (Hon. Joyce Laboso) observed that Kenya had, since independence, enjoyed cordial and warm relations with Cuba, including cooperation in the areas of education, health, biotechnology, trade and industry, sports, sugar processing, culture, information and communication. Further, she informed the meeting that the Kenya Cabinet had, on 15th January, 2015, approved the opening of an embassy in Havana, Cuba, a move which was expected to deepen and strengthen the bilateral relations already existing between Kenya and Cuba. She also joined with colleagues from the ACP Group in commending the steps taken firstly by the EU and more recently by the USA to normalize relations with Cuba.

70. The meeting then received a presentation on '***The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) of the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO)***', following which a visit was organized to the Centre.
71. On the topic '***Irregular migration and trafficking in human beings and human rights***', Ms. Irina Todorova of the IOM introduced the activities of the IOM and gave an overview of the global migration trends, with a focus on the anti-trafficking response and a possible role of Parliaments. Committee members insisted on addressing the root causes of irregular migration, in particular inequality, resources allocation, political instability, poor conditions with regard to health, education and employment in the countries of origin and the failure of certain control aspects with regard to employment and housing conditions in the countries of destination.
72. In her contribution to the topic, the Leader of the Kenya Delegation (Hon. (Dr.) Joyce Laboso) observed that while Kenya was aware of her human rights law duty to not turn back refugees fleeing conflicts and disaster in their home states, the presence of these refugees and other immigrants had occasioned many challenges to Kenya, including threats to national security. This was manifested in the form of terrorist attacks, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, escalation of crime, fraudulent acquisition of Kenyan travel and identification documents, piracy activities; as well as Transnational Organized Crimes (TOC), particularly in human and drug trafficking, environmental degradation and commodity smuggling. All of these had presented a daunting security challenge to the stability and development of Kenya and the region as a whole.
73. Noting that national security and the wellbeing of its citizens were of paramount national interest to Kenya and which was hard to trade off in light of embracing unchecked immigration, Dr. Laboso called for increased cooperation of the international community, and particularly from you ACP-EU colleagues, to address these important issues of immigration and human trafficking.

74. The meeting then briefly evaluated the ***African Peace Facility***, with Mariya Gabriel and Kombo Gberi (Cameroon) being appointed as Co-Rapporteurs to prepare a draft Report which would be considered at the subsequent meeting of the Committee.
75. Ms. Kristin De Peyron (EEAS) presented the follow-up by the EEAS to the ACP-EU JPA resolution entitled "***the challenge of national reconciliation in post-conflict and post-crisis countries***" adopted at the 28th session of the JPA, held in Strasbourg, France in December, 2014.
76. Members then presented reports on the political situations in their respective countries, with contributions from Central African Republic (CAR), Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Togo, Djibouti, Cameroon, Sudan and Burundi.

The date of the next meeting of the Committee was set for 13th June, 2015. The venue of the same would be communicated to members once a host country was identified.

Recommendation

77. The Delegation recommends that Parliament notes the Report of the 37th Session of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly and the Inter-Sessional meetings of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly held in Brussels, Belgium from 17th to 20th March, 2015.

END

APPENDIX

Declaration of the 37th session of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly on the devastating impact of Cyclone PAM on the island states of Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Solomon Is. and Kiribati in the Pacific region

The Parliamentary Assembly of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, meeting at its 37th Session in Brussels, Belgium on 18 March 2015,

- A. Saddened by the loss of lives, people left homeless, the desperate need for food and shelter, the severe shortages of drinking water, and the catastrophic effects upon the socio-economic infrastructures caused by cyclone PAM; and
- B. Conscious of the widespread devastation in Vanuatu of private and public buildings, severe infrastructural damage to roads, communication systems, agricultural assets, electricity grids, of which preliminary estimated damages amount to millions of Euros with consequent adverse effects on health and livelihoods;
 1. Expresses its condolences for the loss of lives and the pain and suffering endured by the Government and the people of Vanuatu; and solidarity with Governments and people of Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Kiribati, which were also affected by the cyclone;
 2. Expresses its deep concern over the humanitarian impact of the cyclone which left the island nation of Vanuatu most severely affected, particularly the more heavily populated islands of Tanna and Efate;
 3. Calls on the specialized agencies of the United Nations System and the International Community to provide financial and technical assistance to help address the humanitarian crisis and support the affected island states of Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Kiribati, in the aftermath of the cyclone PAM;

4. Appeals to ACP member States to help alleviate the suffering caused by cyclone PAM, to show their solidarity and make contributions towards the humanitarian crisis situation in Vanuatu and the other affected Pacific Islands;
5. Welcomes the EU and the ACP Group's ongoing collaborative efforts under the 10th EDF Intra-ACP framework to implement the all-ACP Natural Disaster Risk Reduction Programme through the development of Early Warning Mechanisms, Capacity Building Initiatives and long term post-disaster 'Build Back Better' reconstruction schemes in all six ACP regions;
6. Recommends that resources be urgently earmarked from the existing EDF Bridging Facility to help support the humanitarian crisis and to address the challenges of social and economic reintegration of the population and communities in all of the affected states in the Pacific region;
7. Emphasizes the fact that disasters of this nature starkly demonstrate the fragility and the extreme vulnerability of the economies of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which can be adversely affected at any moment by natural disasters which are occurring with increasing frequency in the Region; and
8. Calls on the European Union (EU) and the international community to adopt a fast-track approach to render the required assistance given the importance and the grave urgency of this matter, and facilitate the quickest recovery for the affected Pacific islands.