

Towards a new partnership between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries after 2020

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Common global interests in a multi-polar world

1. To which degree has the partnership been effective in tackling global challenges?

Overall, the Partnership has been effective in identifying main global areas for cooperation, however, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the partnership for two main reasons. First, because of the fast-changing international landscape which has brought new challenges (e.g. financial crises, climate change, conflicts, immigration). Second, statistics are not available in all the cases. The EU has incorporated new Member States and has gone through several modifications as a result of the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. Clearly, the EEAS is playing a significant role since it was made fully operative. Besides, on the ACP's side, the partnership comprises different States with present various levels of development. The achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has been uneven. Several challenges in regard to human development, poverty eradication, and inequality still remain.

2. What would be needed to strengthen results in this respect and on which global challenges could the partnership add most value in the future, in the context of the new SDGs framework and in relevant international fora?

I would identify five main pillars: 1. Trade and Investment; 2. Further cooperation in economic issues; 3. Cooperation in environmental matters (in particular, concerning climate change) in light of the Paris Agreement; 4. Human development and migration; 5. Democracy, rule of law, human rights, and the fight against corruption.

Human rights, democracy and rule of law, as well as good governance

3. Have the mechanisms provided for in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) (i.e. political dialogue, financial support, appropriate measures, suspension of the agreement) achieved meaningful improvements on human rights, democracy, rule of law and good governance, including the fight against corruption? Should the future partnership do more in this regard, and in what way?

There is little information available on these issues. I think that in terms of cooperation (broadly speaking) the partnership has been successful in providing assistance to countries in need like Haiti. I have done research on CARICOM countries and on regional integration in Africa. At governmental level, there is a certain awareness about these mechanisms. However, many citizens and stakeholders are completely unaware of the CPA mechanisms.

4. Has the involvement of local authorities and non-state actors (i.e. civil society organisations, the media), national parliaments, courts and national human rights institutions in the partnership been adequate and useful to promote human rights, democracy and rule of law as well as good governance? Could they contribute more and in what way?

One of the main problems is the lack of knowledge about the partnership at citizens level. I think the current text should be modified, there is a narrow definition of the main actors including an open-ended list.

Peace and security, fight against terrorism and organised crime

5. Are the provisions on peace and security in the CPA appropriate and useful and has the balance between regional and ACP involvement been effective?

I would agree with that statement, even if more cooperation would be needed in the framework of MINUSMA and the peacekeeping operation in Haiti.

6. Should the future partnership provide for more effective joint action on conflict prevention, including early warning and mediation, peace-building and state-building activities, as well as on tackling transnational security challenges? Should this be done in the EU-ACP context?

Mediation is crucial, the EU could play a more active role in the ACP countries. Again, since the ACP group comprises different regions and subregions, including several different countries the strategic objectives should be identify accordingly.

Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, investment and trade

7. How effective has the partnership been in promoting sustainable and inclusive economic development?

In my view, the text as it stands falls short to achieve sustainable development. The current wording is very broad. Further cooperation in environmental matters should be enhanced with the involvement of the European Environmental Agency. Various articles of the current agreement could be better formulated see, for instance, Arts 72, 78 and 96.

8. Taking into account the new SGDs framework, should the future partnership do more in this respect, and what?

In my opinion, the partnership should include specific provisions such as: - Non-lowering of environmental standards clause - More detailed clauses regarding investment protection - The right to regulate

9. How effective has the partnership been in supporting macroeconomic and financial stability? In which areas would there be added value in ACP-EU cooperation on macroeconomic and financial stability?

I do not have access to up-to-date statistical information that would allow me to formulate an accurate assessment.

10. How effective has the partnership been in improving domestic revenue mobilisation, in promoting fair and efficient tax systems and in combatting illicit financial flows? Would there be added value and more efficiency in stronger ACP-EU cooperation on these matters?

I do not have access to up-to-date statistical information that would allow me to formulate an accurate assessment.

11. Has the partnership been able to contribute substantially to mobilising the private sector and attracting foreign direct investment?

On the whole, the perception is that overall the partnership has positively contributed to improve the investment climate. Standard of protection already embodied in the treaty provide legal certainty for investors.

12. How could the potential of the EU and ACP private sector be better harnessed? What should be the main focus of EU and ACP private sector cooperation in a post-Cotonou framework, and what might be the role of ODA in this?

I think there must be a better coordination in terms of private sector participation, more initiatives like business fora should take place.

13. In this setting, what opportunities do you see for the new, digital economy?

I would need to take into consideration different aspects and variables that exceed the space allocated to respond that question.

14. To what extent has the partnership been able to contribute to increase agricultural development and trade?

Essentially, there is a positive impact. However since the WTO Doha Round is stalled little progress could be really appreciated in general terms. A specialised dialogue with South Africa should be strengthened since this country is a key player in the WTO negotiations.

15. What has been the contribution of the partnership trade preferences to the integration of ACP countries in the world economy and to its development goals?

The answer to this question is extremely complicated and exceeds the word limit allocated.

16. Is there still a need for specific provisions on trade cooperation in the post-Cotonou framework, also taking into account the ACP countries which have not signed an EPA? If so, what could/should they cover?

There should be more coverage of energy issues, in particular, under the framework of SE4All and with regard to renewables.

Human and social development

17. Has the partnership delivered on its human development objective in an effective and efficient way, in particular on poverty eradication, and also concerning gender equality and empowerment of women? How could it be improved?

The overall effect of the partnership has been positive. Yet, it is not enough.

18. Taking into account the new SDGs framework, what are the main challenges related to human development that the future partnership should focus on?

There should be more emphasis on the development of human capital with a clear strategy in terms of education.

Migration and mobility

19. Has the partnership been a useful vehicle for discussing migration issues and has it positively contributed? Has Article 13 CPA been fully applied?

I am very critical towards the current wording of the article since it refers to "illegal immigration", it needs to be reformulated. The partnership could contribute to a more positive dialogue in terms of addressing the questions relating to irregular immigration.

20. Should a future partnership do more in this regard, and on which particular aspects should it focus (legal migration and mobility, addressing root causes of migration, return and readmission, tackling human trafficking and smuggling, international protection)?

As I have argued in the past (see EUI Working Papers) the crucial aspect is to address the causes of migration in the countries of origin. Another issue that requires further discussion is the role of countries of transit. Return and readmission should be addressed in light of the current EU legal framework. More cooperation is necessary in terms of fighting against human trafficking and smuggling. In order to do so, the EU should first coordinate positions, as Member States bear different burdens in terms of migration. International protection should be included on the agenda, to agree on the nitty-gritty of the implementation.

A stronger political relationship

21. How effective has the political dialogue been and at which level is it the most effective: national, regional and through the joint EU-ACP institutions? Should the scope of political dialogue be widened or narrowed?

Effectiveness is difficult to assess. One could say that the political dialogue has been successful based on the different meetings which have taken place. Still, it would be misleading to only focus on that aspect. Overall, the EU has played a significant role with regard to democracy and rule of law with 24 consultations in this regard. I find extremely important to continue the political dialogue over measures to fight against corruption.

22. Would a stronger involvement of EU Member States, associating their bilateral policies and instruments to the political dialogue at national level, enhance the dialogue's effectiveness and efficiency?

I agree with this statement a net of bilateral relations could reinforce the current political dialogue.

23. Has the fact that the agreement is legally binding been instrumental to its implementation as compared to other regional partnerships based on political declarations?

Definitely, even if some provisions are very wide in scope that are of a "soft law" nature the hierarchy of the agreement (international treaty) has had a positive impact.

Coherence of geographical scope

24. Could a future framework be usefully opened up to other countries than the current members of the ACP Group of States? Which countries would that be?

I think the possibility of opening up the current framework should be carefully assessed. The main drawback for such a process is diversity and peculiarities of the ACP countries. I do think that one of the main weaknesses of the current strategy is that there is an "assimilation" of countries which are totally different, take for instance, the cases of Belize and South Africa.

25. What kind of framework should govern EU and ACP relations? How could an ACP-EU successor framework relate to the more recent EU regional partnerships with Africa, Caribbean and Pacific States? Could a future ACP-EU framework include distinct partnerships with regional partners?

It would be good to see a reengineering of the ACP relations with a general agreement including sub-agreements with regional or sub-regional partners. My main concern in this regard is the negotiation process, usually the signature and the ratification of such multilateral treaties could prove to be extremely complex and time-consuming.

26. Is there scope for building in more structured relationships with Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa?

Since I have done extensive research on EU-LATAM relations I would say that there is the need to foster more structured relations. The last EU-CELAC (with the latter including Caribbean countries) Summit has a positive outcome. Nevertheless, the content seems so far very rhetorical.

Cooperation tailored more towards groups of countries with similar development level

27. Is the current system of allocation of development resources, based on need and capacities as well as performance, sufficient for channelling funds towards those countries where the highest impact can be obtained? Should allocation of resources continue to prioritise countries most in need, including fragile states?

N/A

28. What kind of cooperation could help to cover the specific needs of more developed ACP countries with a view to attaining more equitable and sustainable growth?

I think a tailored cooperation on climate change issues should be put in place.

Strengthen the relationship with key actors

29. Has the current model of stakeholder engagement been conducive to attaining the objectives of the partnership in an efficient way? Which actors could play a more significant role in the implementation of the partnership? How could this be addressed?

I think the participation of stakeholders could be enhanced through regional organisations. The African Union and CARICOM could take the lead in carrying out regional consultation processes.

30. What could be done to promote effective and efficient involvement of both international and domestic private sector, civil society, social partners and local authorities in the partnership?

More dissemination activities, regional and subregional consultations, academic seminars.

31. Should the partnership be open to new actors as referred above?

Yes

32. In this regard, should the possibility of opening up the partnership to 'associated members' or 'observers' be considered?

Yes, provided that clear criteria are established and subject to the existing members' consent.

33. How could a new framework promote triangular and South-South cooperation, including the increased involvement of ACP States as development actors in support of other ACP countries?

South-South cooperation is already taking place outside the partnership channels. The EU could help fostering the dialogue amongst the ACP countries.

Streamline the institutional set-up and functioning of the partnership

34. Has the joint institutional set-up (with the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors, and the Joint Parliamentary Assembly) been effective in debating and promoting common views and interests and in providing political guidance and momentum to the EU-ACP partnership and the implementation of the CPA?

In general, yes, they have been effective in terms of fostering the dialogue. Again, I think effectiveness requires an in-depth assessment. In terms of implementation, there are several difficulties.

35. What is the added value of the joint ACP-EU institutions as compared to more recent regional and regional economic community frameworks for dialogue and cooperation?

The main advantage is that the EU is the only international actor which offers a comprehensive forum (not only focused on economic issues) for an authentic interregional, whereas other regional economic forums are limited in scope and, sometimes, privilege bilateral relations.

36. What institutional arrangements would most effectively help address common challenges and promote joint interests?

N/A

37. Should a higher degree of self-financing of this functioning (ACP-EU Joint institutions and ACP secretariat) by the ACP States be required?

Yes

Better adapted and more flexible development cooperation tools and methods

38. Is there added value in having a dedicated financing instrument in support of the ACP-EU partnership? If so, what are the reasons and how would it differ from other external financing instruments funded by the general budget of the Union? Is this instrument flexible enough, especially to address crisis situations? Can this instrument be deployed differently?

I do not have access to up-to-date statistical information that would allow me to formulate an accurate assessment.

39. What is the added value of the EDF's co-management system involving national authorities in the programming and management of aid programmes, as compared to other EU cooperation instruments in non-ACP countries?

I do not have access to up-to-date statistical information that would allow me to formulate an accurate assessment.

40. Does the current set-up of the programming process and implementation of activities lead to real ownership by the beneficiaries? What could be improved? How can the EU and Member States maximise the impact of joint programming?

I do not have access to up-to-date statistical information that would allow me to formulate an accurate assessment.

41. Does the variety of existing tools adequately support the EU and ACP common principles and interests and are there gaps that should be addressed? How do you assess the effectiveness and efficiency of various implementation modalities?

I think the current tools should be revised.

42. Should a higher degree of self-financing from the ACP States be required for activities to ensure ownership? Would this apply to all countries? On which principles should this be based?

I do not have access to up-to-date statistical information that would allow me to formulate an accurate assessment.

43. How can the expertise of the EU and its Member States be better mobilised, particularly in the middle-income countries?

I do not have access to up-to-date statistical information that would allow me to formulate an accurate assessment.

Contact

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