

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?

The current negotiations on a post-2015 development framework will have implications for the way in which the EU engages in international and development cooperation, including for the role played by EU aid in the achievement of the future SDGs. The ongoing discussions on the sustainable development agenda have introduced a paradigm shift aimed at ending the North-South conceptual framing that has historically underpinned the EDF as a policy tool. There are a number of principles inherent to the post-2015 agenda, such as universality, the move towards policy coherence for sustainable development in all countries, and the growing emphasis on shared responsibilities. These will have implications for the future of the ACP-EU relationship. The 11th EDF already seeks to address certain global challenges, by placing a stronger emphasis on sustainable energy and mainstreaming climate issues.

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?

The partnership could add more value on global challenges of mutual interest for workers both in North and South: reducing inequalities (among and inside countries) and providing decent work and inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

In a revised CPA these global challenges, and the shared but differentiated responsibility of the EU and its ACP partners' needs, in our view, to move to the foreground, with an extension of the scope of common public goods, from climate change and sustainable energy, equally to food security and migration and in general peace and security but in the processes of structural transformation for ACP economies in the different fields.

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?

The ACP and the EU share a long history of political dialogue that precedes the CPA. In the 1980's, the European side began to insist on strengthening the political dimensions of the partnership, particularly on human rights. The CPA integrated references to democracy and human rights as essential elements of cooperation as well as provisions for possible sanctions in case of violations. This marked a clear trend away from non- interference towards conditionality and value driven cooperation. In the area of development cooperation, this also meant a shift from historical entitlement to a performance-based partnership and increasing differentiation between partners based on their domestic policies. The political dimension is one of the three pillars of the CPA, underpinned by political dialogue and the non-execution clauses (art 96 and 97). The focus of the dialogue provisions is on positive conditionality and preventive measures. Only when all political dialogue has failed sanctions may apply. Research however shows that the use of art 96 has been inconsistent since the very beginning. Hard EU and member states interests can dilute the EU's normative position in countries that are of high strategic or economic importance. Inconsistent use of the clause has given rise to a sense amongst ACP countries that the EU uses a double standard and targets certain regimes and not others. Concerning the international labour standards and in order to avoid this inconsistency, more automatic (trade) sanctions may apply based on the ILO considerations concerning the respect of its own conventions.

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?

Priority for ACP countries remains to stay on policies that call for transparency, democratic ownership and accountability. These are the essential building blocks for the construction of good governance systems, and politically stable environments, as basis for turning economic performance in sustainable and inclusive development.

The EU thus remains an important partner and the principles espoused by the CPA of transparency, ownership and (mutual) accountability remain relevant in a revised CPA. The declared and ambitious aims of the CPA of transparency, mutual accountability, joint ownership and equal partnership need to be realized in the framework of the development program, trade agreement and political dialogue with our ACP partners. Evaluation of 15 years of practice of CPA show up that a lot more can and must be done to come true on these worthy ambitions and for the EU to be a credible partner to the ACP countries, who really makes a difference in development cooperation.

Research shows* that programming in the framework is still mainly EU driven and that key choices are still made by the EU following a top down approach. Practice of country ownership tends to be more of an administrative interface and not a joint strategic function. A thorough appraisal of existing mechanisms, structures and practices in PME is thus important to go towards strengthening the dimension of country ownership, programs more shaped from the South, more context-driven in the framework of a revised CPA.

The EU can in the framework of a revised CPA promote good democratic governance by enhancing the promotion of national civil and social dialogue, and non-state actor participation in the three pillars of the CPA, cooperation program definition planning, monitoring and evaluation and trade agreements and political dialogue. Our call on EU is to see non-state actors as strategic partners, to be involved at the every stage of making of policies and programs in the framework of CPA, including the stage of implementation and monitoring of policies, programs and agreements.

Trade unions call on EU to actively promote, whether in the framework of political dialogue, trade and investment agreements and policies and the sustainable development chapter and in the development cooperation program trade union rights and social dialogue as prerequisites for democratic and transparent governance.

*See European Centre for Development Policy Management. The Future of ACP-EU Relations: A Political Economy Analysis Perspective. Progress Report. 2015

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?

Regarding peace and security, it is essential to redefine the EU/ACP relations, first at continental level (African, Caribbean and Pacific) before initiating the search for solutions within the regional blocs within the continent.

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?

Concerning these issues, the EU / Africa relations seem more important than the EU / ACP relations.

Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, investment and trade

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

At the formal adoption of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement in 2000 the ETUC & ITUC in a joint statement appreciated positively the CPA as a unique model of North South Cooperation, because of its comprehensive scope covering three pillars cooperation program, trade and political dialogue and because of its objectives reducing and eventually eradicating poverty consistent with the aims of sustainable development and gradual integration of ACP countries in world economy. The ETUC and ITUC acknowledged in particular the following as positive elements in CPA:

- Legally binding, contractual nature of the agreement, CPA as predictable multiannual development cooperation tool,
- Regional approach (going beyond bilateral approach) – Regional integration as strategic priority
- Social and human development as priority domains of development cooperation
- institutional framework consisting of joint institutions based on the principle of equal partnership and joint planning, monitoring and evaluation of the program, aiming at ownership
- Multilateral approach, participation of non-state actors not only at the level of development cooperation but also at the level of political dialogue and in monitoring of trade agreements aspects
- Inclusion of mechanisms, suspension of cooperation included to remedy violations of human and labour rights and rule of law as basis for political dialogue
- Social and Labour rights as inseparable of all efforts for growth and economic development
- Transparency as principle of development cooperation and basis of good public management
- Differentiation between ACP countries, taking into account their level of development
- Decentralized cooperation / increased responsibility of ACP countries for joint program
- Inclusion in the agreement of crosscutting issues : gender equality, youth, environment, cultural development

Trade Unions would like to first and foremost see that any revised CPA, after 2020, would maintain these basic elements in the Partnership Agreement. For ACP, it is important to focus on structural transformation as a pillar in promoting sustainable and inclusive economic development.

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

First and foremost our call on EU is, for the mainstreaming of social policy throughout the agreement, in the development cooperation program chapter with stronger focus on decent work (SDG 8), including social protection, and the fight against inequalities (SDG 10), including wage policies; in the trade agreement with a strong chapter on sustainable development with enforceable labour and environmental provisions, as well as in the political dialogue, with focus on participation of non-state actors and social dialogue as essential building stones for democratic governance. We believe that EU delegations in key capitals of ACP countries should include labour reporting officers with close relations with the social partners in those countries, as well as with the international social partners (including the ITUC and its relevant regional organisations) and with enhanced contacts with the European social partners, including the ETUC. We would encourage the EU to work closely with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in the promotion of high labour standards.

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?

More efficient taxation and especially the implementation of progressive taxation policies are needed. Domestic financial resources mobilization by tax and fiscal policies will be needed for more investments in labour and social protection and strengthening capacity of fiscal and tax governance services and systems are a necessary prerequisite equally for decent work and social protection in order to address inequalities while generating revenue in an equitable way. Decent wages, as a responsibility of the private sector in ACP countries, is also an essential element for a better mobilisation of domestic resources.

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?

EU and the ACP countries share a common responsibility: for the ACP countries to eliminate the many tax exemptions of many privileged groups, and putting greater emphasis on the fight against corruption, and for EU to work with ACP countries to eliminate tax havens and illicit financial flows, ensuring the European businesses and private companies' regular reporting on tax payments, along with their impacts on sustainable development and human rights. In this regard, it is important to establish a transparent collaboration between EU and ACP states on tax matters with monitoring indicators and results concerning the decrease of illicit financial flows and ultimately their removal.

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

There is no evidence that the Partnership has incentivized investment in ACP that would not, either way, go to ACP countries. Africa which accounts for the largest share of ACP in terms of GDP, attracted only USD54 billion in 2014 down from USD56 billion in 2012. This figure includes FDI from non-EU countries. Africa accounts only for 4.4% of the total FDI in 2014 (UNCTAD WIR, 2015). The UNCTAD WIRs show that in time the EU-ACP partnership is in place, FDI heading to Africa has not increased in an exponential way and it has been fluctuating up and down depending on economic trends in the world economy. Therefore, not only the partnership has not made any substantial contribution to mobilizing private sector investment; in fact, the partnership is not to take credit for any investment heading to ACP countries virtually at all. Africa's share of global FDI has been in a rather declining trajectory showing that there are structural reasons that do not allow Africa to attract more FDI. The development of private sector and FDI also depends on good governance, including social dialogue, and on the investment on quality public services and infrastructure (e.g. transport, education).

It is questionable whether the partnership, and more general EU's trade and investment policy in ACP, have contributed to addressing the structural deficiencies in ACP. Indeed, there is evidence that the partnership might be one of the reasons why ACP has not been able to transform economically.

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?

With increasing interest in the private sector as a development actor, existing instruments for business accountability should assume additional importance. Adherence and implementation of internationally recognised guidelines and principles concerning business behaviour and their accountability instruments (namely the ILO Conventions and standards, including the ILO Declaration on Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the UN Global Compact and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights) should become key condition to grant private sector support in development cooperation. Compliance should be linked to eligibility and an adequate monitoring system should lead to suspension of financial support in case of violations. To ensure policy coherence, the EU should also include these accountability mechanisms in the policies of investments banks such as the EIB.

Trade Unions demand that social partners are included on an equal footing in policy-making processes around private sector support in

development, at global, regional and national levels. Social dialogue constitutes not only a means to improve socio-economic conditions (mode of implementation of sustainable development), but it is also a concrete tool to grant accountability of business as opposed to voluntary approaches and to achieve ownership of development policies.

Concerning the role of the ODA:

- Financial additionality should be ensured by establishing indicators that assess financial needs as well as opportunity costs in relation to other development concerns, and by creating eligibility criteria that favours the domestic private sector that abides to ILO standards and takes into account track records of the private sector actor in delivering development results.
- Given the problems in measuring additionality, intended development outcomes need to be clarified and ensure that public investments to the private sector translate to sustainable livelihoods, observance of labour rights, generation of quality employment, and improvement of social and environmental outcomes. Aid resources should primarily be used to reduce poverty and inequality and achieve development goals. The goal of any private sector engagement in development should be producing positive development outcomes and this should not be obscured by the drive to create and increase profit.
- Agree on a global framework, modelled on the development effectiveness principles that can also be applied to all forms of support to the private sector. This should particularly include, alignment with the country's development priorities and an inclusive approach to citizen engagement (i.e. CSOs, trade unions (through social dialogue) and local communities, in addition to private sector actors). These principles must be consistent with democratic ownership and the use of country systems including in public procurement including fully untying aid to ensure that aid resources can be used most effectively and efficiently and can target strategic partners in the private sector, namely those contributing to sustainable development and more specifically respecting ILO standards.
- Improve the tools used to record and monitor ODA support to the private sector. Special attention should be paid to assessment and reporting related to new instruments on 'leveraging' aid modalities such as blending, guarantees, equity investments and PPPs. Blending and PPPs are often used for implicit support to public subsidy of European/international businesses operating in developing countries, risking undermining country ownership and untied aid commitments.

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

The digital economy offers huge opportunities in terms of jobs for the ACP countries, especially African countries. With a young population, more and more educated, African States could innovate to create activities in the sector, taking into account the potential of each country. These include cases of finances in the rural sector and informal.

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

The partnership, the EPAs and most importantly, EU's policy in the WTO have gravely damaged agricultural production and food security in ACP. Voices from the trade unions and the civil society warning that the WTO Agreement on Agriculture need to be overhauled have been ignored by the EC. In 2015, developing countries are still not allowed to subsidize their agriculture and they face import influxes of agricultural goods from a lavishly subsidized production in EU, US and other developed countries. The ACP countries, like many other developing countries, are facing a discriminatory WTO regime that puts them in disadvantage with regards to agriculture. There is ample evidence for this in the literature (for instance, Jacques Berthelot, Faizel Ismail, Kanaga Raga) and the work of international NGOs like the Third World Network and the South Centre. There is a great gap of policy coherence between the partnership's declared goals and EU's trade policy in multilateral and bilateral level.

The EPAs aim at liberalizing trade in goods (including agriculture) and services. As the agricultural, industrial and more broadly economic structures in ACP are still to be developed with own means, become diversified and sustainable, the ITUC has warned against the EPAs because they are to reduce policy space and the ability of ACP countries to apply tariffs to protect their production. The production basis of ACP is largely still in an infantile stage. One of the reasons is the escalating tariffs regimes maintained till recently. The EPAs give a phase-out timeline of about 20 years for tariffs. However, eliminating tariffs need to be decided by ACP countries when they have developed a production basis that can stand international competition, and not with a deadline of 20 years for these countries to achieve it. EU's declared goals in the partnership and the actual goals of the EPAs are in stark contrast.

ACP's agricultural basis is still on a subsistence level. Mechanization and productivity increases need to be locally owned. With this understanding, green field FDI in agriculture usually ends up reproducing patterns of economic dependency and takes the form of land grabbing.

Therefore, the EU has to stop negotiating EPAs and revisit its WTO positions in order to promote development, food security, and structural transformation in ACP even if this means that certain private interests in EU are put in a second priority.

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 long drawn out and often contentious negotiations between EU and its partners giving shape only very recently in 2014-15 to the Economic Partnership Agreements with the regional economic communities (REC) have not contributed to good standing in relations between EU and its ACP partners. The latter consider in many instances these agreements as imposed and motivated by EU self-interest and not by the declared aim of the CPA of promoting sustainable development and equal partnerships with the ACP's. Our call is to restore relations by addressing the issue of economic damages as to be incurred by the ACP countries as a consequence of the free trade agreements (see Q16). In this respect, it is essential for Africa that discussions regarding the integration of ACP in the world economy are done under the leadership of the African Union and in the context REC pro developmental taking account need and priorities for African countries and people and not inside regional blocs redefined by the EU for its interests.

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?

The Economic Commission of the United Nations for Africa estimated in 2012 that considerable losses of revenue would be incurred, through loss of customs incomes and especially through the opening of African economies to goods imported from Europe. For the countries of Ghana and Ivory Coast the losses would amount up to losses of respectively 354 and 159 million euros. In the EPA that were concluded in 2014-2015 fairly long transition periods were negotiated, which would pull back losses of governments customs revenue 10 to 15 years in time. Also, the percentage of and type of manufactured goods to be freely imported from Europe has been negotiated down to avoid losses for ACP countries. Implementation over the course of the next 10 to 15 years of free trade with ACP countries must then be accompanied by parallel measures for the domestic industries and in terms of development programs as foreseen under Aid for Trade, otherwise it will lead to increased unemployment, as well as significant loss of government revenues. Exports may increase for ACP countries with the adoption but measures for protection of infant industries need to be integrated.

In the transition period EU must invest in building up capacity of the ACP countries for the structural transformation of the ACP economies through industrialization and adding value to raw materials available, so as to strengthen the economic infrastructure and ready them for the opening up to the competition. Regional economic integration within the REC is very weak; in West Africa intraregional trade within the West Africa Regional Economic Community amounts to no more than 9% of total

trading. Support to processes and structures from Aid for Trade funds towards stronger regional integration is thus also important. Equally important is support in the case of Africa to the processes of regional integration agenda towards a common continental agenda.

In the EPA rendezvous clauses are foreseen that call on the contracting parties to start negotiations on services, financial payments and capital flows, protection of personal data, investment, competition, public procurement and access to public markets, intellectual property and innovation, including traditional knowledge. Trade Unions call on EU to negotiate these matters for a revised CPA in a way that fully safeguard the necessary policy space for ACP countries to finance their development and to take measures to tackle the negative effects of trade liberalisation, as well as to allow them to make the necessary changes so as to ready their economies for integration in the world economy, with assistance of the Aid for Trade funds.

Further trade liberalization policies should be anchored on the basis of creating decent work, social protection and foster inclusive development, we call on the EU to provide for strong and enforceable labour chapter to ensure workers' and trade union rights in a revised CPA. A recent study by the ILO research Institute clearly showed up that enforceable and sanctionable social clauses in free trade agreements have demonstrable positive effects on the respect of labour standards, with changes in labour law to be in accordance with ILS (ante hoc) and by monitoring processes set up under the terms of the agreements of respect of ILS (post hoc). Ex-ante and ex-post impact assessments of policies on decent work and social protection need to be undertaken and trade, investment, and energy policies should be designed, implemented and revised based on the outcome of these assessments.

Monitoring of efforts concerning labour rights should be conducted in a more thorough, systematic and inclusive manner similar to the monitoring of the current GSP+ system, thereby systematically involving civil society forum that is established under the sustainable development chapter.

A revised CPA must lay out in its sustainable development chapter how it will ensure responsible management of supply chains and implementation of the UN's Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights, the UN Global Compact and the ILO Tripartite Declaration on Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy as well as initiatives on particular issues such as the conflict minerals initiative and on illegal logging and on working conditions in the garment sector. The EU can promote good democratic governance by providing for involvement of civil society and trade unions in particular in implementation and monitoring of these contractual stipulations, policies and programs. The EU can enhance in the framework of its revised CPA respect for human rights standards by both domestic and foreign private sector enterprises, and ensuring compliance with social and environmental standards according to the UN Guide lines on Business and Human Rights by adopting and applying

conditionality social clauses for enterprises applying for access to grants or loans or contracts under the CPA development programs.

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?

Trade Unions appreciate as very positive factor the large portion attributed in the CPA development program to human and social development, 20% of total expenditure.

Sub Saharan Africa, which makes up the bulk of ACP countries' citizens, has seen over the past decade economic growth figures of between 5 and 10% but they remain with very low human development levels. One point in case: the Democratic Republic of Congo which has an economic growth rate of 9% but is classed as the very last of the 183 countries in the UNDP Human Development Index. Economic growth is thus not enough to achieve sustainable development but policies and programs directed at promoting decent work and social protection are needed.

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

Our recommendation is supporting the decent work goal (SDG 8), including social protection, and the fight against inequalities (SDG 10). Concerning social protection, we aim at the promotion of the universal right to access to social protection with focus on the social protection minimum floor in LDC's and in MIC's on extending the scope of social protection, promoting access for vulnerable and precarious workers, especially workers in the informal economy and the setting out of a universal and comprehensive and financially sustainable social protection system through a formalisation process.

The Recommendation 202 of the ILO exhorts all member states to set out policies and programs for the social protection floor, in social dialogue and with participation of credible and representative relevant actors in civil society. The EU can actively support the participation of social partners and relevant and credible non state actors in the social protection policies and programs promoted in the framework of CPA.

In its 2008 Declaration for global Justice and in the 2009 Global Job Pact, the ILO encourages, as a part of the Decent work agenda, "policies in regard to wages and earnings (...) and a minimum wage to all employed".

Concerning the reduction of inequalities, our recommendation is therefore to support wages policies as indicated in the targets of SDG 10, and doing so helping to solve the problem of the “working poor”. To develop social dialogue on these topics is essential, at national level but also at the level of the economic units.

Of equal importance is the Recommendation 204 (2015) on the transition of the informal to formal economy. This recommendation represents a real paradigm shift for ILO. It is the first instrument on the informal economy and stipulates that all workers have equal rights at work, whether in formal or informal work places. The recommendation appeals to governments to develop integrated policy frameworks to facilitate this transition based on the four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda. These policy frameworks need to be developed in national social and civil dialogue platforms.

The absence of a Decent Work Country Programme (DCWP) in a set country is more often than not a sign of absence of social dialogue and in particular the absence of democratic space for social dialogue. The EU can then play a very valuable role in promotion of participation of tripartite social dialogue in the framework of programmes on social protection, wage policies and on transition of the informal to formal economy.

Challenges with regard to decent work in ACP countries are first and foremost with regards to the growing informalisation of work – in African countries up to 90% of jobs – and the surge of precarious work, even in formal work places. Workers in the informal economy and workers in the grey zone of precarious working conditions suffer exclusion of decent work, across the board of the four pillars to the agenda on Decent Work: exclusion of productive jobs with living wages, exclusion from rights at work, exclusion from social protection and exclusion of trade union rights and social dialogue. The profile of informal sector and precarious workers are typically young workers, women, migrant workers, who should therefore receive attention as special target groups in our programs and policies.

Overall challenge remains the deficit in governance systems and of responsibility of many (but not all) ACP states to ensure respect of fundamental labour rights in the work places, be they formal or non-formal. This is certainly due in certain cases to manifest lack of political will, but also more often than not due to clear deficit in governance systems. Employment administration and services, labour inspectorate in particular, are weak; the judicial system responsible for upholding the law even so; in many countries labour courts are not functional or non-existent. Building up capacity in labour and social affairs, including social security systems and wage policies, at governmental level is a prerequisite for decent work, including social protection, and for the reduction of inequalities, and can be supported within the component of governance support of the CPA. Better social and labour protection, will need better and more efficient taxation and

especially the implementation of progressive taxation policies.

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?

No. It is essential that the future CPA take into consideration the recommendations made by African Heads of State at the Africa-Europe Summit in November 2015 in Valletta (Malta Measures must be taken to create conditions and opportunities of decent work for youth in ACP countries).

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)?

Investing in decent work in ACP countries, including social protection and the reduction of the “working poor” by appropriate wage policies, is inextricably bound for EU with issues of migration. The Council conclusions on migration in EU development cooperation of December 2014 highlighted the importance of the nexus between migration and development as one of the thematic priorities of the EU global approach to migration and mobility which provides the overarching framework for the EU external migration policy. Important ingredients are the promotion of decent working conditions for all migrants that conform to international labour standards, extending social protection for migrant women, men and children in countries of origin and destination as well as facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration, through enhanced international cooperation.

In the framework of CPA support can be given to the new initiative of the African Union Commission together with the International Labour Organization, the International Organization for Migration and the Economic Commission for Africa on Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration in Africa. In this way EU and ACP countries are working in joint partnership on a crucial issue for development and political stability and governance both in Europe and in Africa.

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?

Programs and policies on decent work in ACP countries, including social protection and the reduction of the “working poor” by appropriate wage policies, supported in the framework of CPA should take into account the intergovernmental structures at sub regional level (CPGL, EAC, SADC, UEMOA and CEDEAO) but especially the at continental level, African Union. Although these structures represent divergent results on decent work, recognition needs to be given to the reinforced role of the African Union as intergovernmental policy platform on decent work. The General Assembly of the African Union in Ouagadougou, 2005 and the tripartite Symposium of Yaoundé of 2010 took important commitments on for policy and programs on decent work and social protection, that can be supported within the framework of CPA, in partnership with these regional authorities.

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?

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?

The legally binding nature is very important but it should be accompanied by an effective monitoring and sound accountability system, based on democratic ownership. Our call on EU is to be forward looking and see the historical heritage of ties with the ACP group as an opportunity for a strong global alliance of equal and strong partners, rooted in cultural and socio-political commonalities and mutual knowledge networks built over long periods of time, for the realization of the SDG's. Already, after only 15 years, the number of LDC countries in the ACP group has decreased from 44 to 26 and the MIC's subsequently increased from 30 to 43. The relations between EU and ACP's will move away from dependency relations to relations between equal partners and a revised CPA in 2020 can and must provide a framework of action to muster up these relations.

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?

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?

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

The EU should focus its efforts in the existing multilateral structures (UN, WTO) and reinforce them. However, new structured relations can be created and take the form of Leaders, Ministers' and officials meetings that are open to unions and civil society. The ASEM is one process of dialogue between Asia and Europe - others exist with Latin America and Africa. The EU could push for these dialogue processes to turn into a solid partnership in the form of a new international organization with a charter, a basis, a secretariat and its own enforcement (soft or hard) mechanisms. The work of such dialogue processes and relationships needs to align with the SDGs and be orientated to action, instead of a series of meetings and conferences whose outcomes are rarely followed-up as they are now. For this, the EU and other partners need to put in resources and also institutions that have the ability to enforce common decisions, leading to more integration globally.

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?

The political choice in the framework of the CPA for differentiation and preference given in terms of budget for the Least Developed Countries is one that we support. However, we would like to underscore that there needs still to be scope for joint programs in Middle Income Countries.

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?

The Middle Income Countries host the bulk of the world's poor, so targeting help to the poor and vulnerable groups in the MIC's countries is fully coherent with the CPA's aim of eradicating poverty. Joint partnership programs in the framework of the CPA in MIC's remain necessary to help MIC's address inequalities, (including aid to support wage policies, and aid on research and innovation and knowledge sharing) and mobilizing domestic resources for development with focus on building up capacity in tax systems and in social security systems as essential redistributive tools and address good and transparent and inclusive governance systems. Allowing for space for joint programs with MIC's is fully coherent with the objective of moving beyond the classical North South and donor recipient divide and move towards global partnerships which carry sufficient weight with the inclusion of MIC's – for a common international agenda for Change and the globalization of the EU's agenda and mission, guaranteed by its Treaties, for the promotion of sustainable and inclusive growth.

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?

In 2000 the EU introduced the at the time very innovative practice in development cooperation in CPA of non-state actor participation. The participation of non-state actors should in our view be maintained in a revised CPA as an important tool towards promoting democratic governance but should provide for improvement and strengthening of the implementation of the guiding principle, taking into account a thorough appraisal of practices in the framework of the current CPA. In actual practice non state actors involvement in CPA is limited; consultations of non-state actors are sparse, very formal and without much influences on political choices already made by EU. The access to funds for non-state actors is very limited and the funds are underutilized due also to the very heavy procedural constraints. Presently, non-state actors participation programs make up no more than 2,8% of the total budget of the EDF (11th), programs for non-state actors typically limited to capacity building.

The EU can in the framework of a revised CPA promote good democratic governance by enhancing the promotion of national civil and social dialogue, and non-state actor participation in the three pillars of the CPA, cooperation program definition planning, monitoring and evaluation and trade agreements and political dialogue. Our call on EU is to see non-state actors as strategic partners, to be involved at the every stage of making of policies and programs in the framework of CPA, including the stage of implementation and monitoring of policies, programs and agreements.

Trade Unions call on EU to actively promote, whether in the framework of political dialogue, trade and investment agreements and policies and the sustainable development chapter and in the development cooperation program trade union rights and social dialogue as prerequisites for democratic and transparent governance.

All actors have their importance, and a role to play, but we must admit that the Cotonou Agreement even if it gives greater space for civil society, should be renegotiated or reformed to institutionalize the involvement of civil society.

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?

In the ITUC 2015 Report 'The Worst Countries for Workers' , 5 out of the 10 worst countries for workers are ACP countries with a 5+ category marking of 'no guarantee of rights due to breakdown of law' and 27 ACP countries are listed in the category just below of no guarantee of rights 5. While the legislation in these countries may spell out certain rights, workers have effectively no access to these rights and are therefore exposed to autocratic regimens and unfair labour practices. Trade union rights and rights to collective bargaining in particular are not guaranteed in these countries.

Trade Unions reiterate their offer to EU to work closely in alliance so as to identify in each ACP country credible, representative and democratic unions, who actively strive to promote and defend workers' rights. These unions deserve support of EU in the framework of the CPA in capacity building so as to be credible vehicles for development, decent work including social protection and the reduction of inequalities (including wage policies), and first and foremost need to be considered as strategic partners to further the aims of eradication of poverty and sustainable development of CPA.

The effective participation of civil society and social partners assume their involvement in decision making. On each of the aspects of the partnership, global involvement of civil society is now essential. But it is up to each society to remind their politicians the importance of civil society participation in the process and to demand its involvement by taking a position on all issues affecting our countries. Whether NGOs, trade unions, farmers or other civil society organisations, they must all mobilize to participate in all negotiations on future agreements.

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

Twenty years onwards, the economic and political situation in the ACP countries, first and for most in Africa, that stands for 94% of the total of 700 million people covered by the CPA, has undergone profound changes. Africa has gone through a remarkable decade of economic transformation. Links with traditional partners face profound changes and relations continue to develop with emerging partners. This year's African Economic Outlook considers Africa's surge in relations with "emerging partners", who now sit at the top tables of economic decision making alongside "traditional partners" from Europe and North America. China takes centre stage, but other emerging partners together make up a larger share of many of the dealings: Africa's top five emerging partners are China, India and Brazil, South Korea and Turkey. Europe and North America's trade share has quickly eroded, but they still account for more than half of Africa's trade and foreign investment stock, and their economic health remains key to Africa's growth performance.

It is instrumental for African countries to seek leverage in order to turn this burgeoning opportunity for collaboration and support from Southern partners into sustainable, broad based development, which targets poverty, unemployment, food security and structural transformation, these being key challenges the continent struggles with.

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

We believe that opening up the partnership would be beneficial towards inclusivity and coherence. BRIC's countries insist on the principles of equal partnerships, mutual (or win-win) benefits, non-conditionality, non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states, as well as sharing of experiences as basis of their development cooperation. Cooperation development programs supported by BRIC's are on the whole targeted to the hard sectors of infrastructure, energy and transport, whereas the EU promotes more of soft targets, governance - both in the public and private sector - and social and human development. There is thus a large part of complementarity in the programs espoused by BRIC's and EU respectively.

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?

Sharing experiences would merit being foregrounded in a revised CPA, whether through increased South-South exchange between the ACP countries across the three continents and between the 6 regional partners (Caribbean, Pacific, West-, East, Central and Southern Africa), or whether in cooperation with the BRIC's countries, through forms of triangular cooperation between EU, BRIC's and 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?

The institutional structure allows major decisions to be taken in the framework of the partnership, given that various political actors gathered in it happen to be the decision makers. However it is appropriate to ask questions about the mechanisms. Indeed decisions concerning the whole future of populations should be done in a climate of consultation and involvement, for proper ownership of policies. In this sense the involvement and consultation of civil society would result in fewer challenges and could be more effective for better management of issues ACP countries face.

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?

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

The Cotonou Agreement recalls the need to involve all stakeholders in development. Civil society's role in the institutional framework should be strengthened and better taken into account. To promote the interests of the Partnership, involvement of all economic and social actors is essential on all issues affecting the development of ACP countries.

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

To achieve the SDGs, ACP countries should count on the partnership through development aid and the EDF. However this aid system increases dependence of ACP countries and even the level of debt. The use of this method of financing in the field is denounced by the population and by economic and social actors and in some cases may be ineffective. ACP countries would benefit of a new partnership if funding of development program is redefined. Self-financing is a guarantee of independence and good governance. Our countries should aspire to a true win-win partnership based on own resources first.

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?

The EU considers the EDF to be an essential element of partnership and has always praised it. But on the side of the ACP countries, even if the EDF is widely appreciated for his contribution to development, heaviness and slowness of procedures is an obstacle.

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?

Participatory management has become an indispensable management tool. But beyond this management system the Paris Declaration enshrines the need to comply aid policies and funding policies with plans and programs developed at local level. This is especially valid for the EDF since, to finance a project or program, beneficiaries should be fully involved in the system, in order to guarantee more efficiency. Beyond co-management, monitoring and evaluation would better measure the effectiveness of the system. Improving the business and labour rights climate and good governance are also factors to be taken into account to bring more added value to the financing and management system.

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?

It is clear that good ownership by the beneficiaries of the programs is more efficient when they are involved in all stages of the process, from decision-making to implementation.

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?

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?

This higher self-financing rate would be ideal for the ACP states. However the question does not seem as easy as the internal situation in some countries is not favourable, in the current state, to a higher self-financing ratio. Situations of political or economic crisis in some countries do not promote self-financing and makes them still very dependent on development funds. To achieve more autonomy is necessary to review the governance systems to fight against corruption and promoting good governance, peace and security. Stability is crucial for development.

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

The EU's expertise in the partnership could be very beneficial because the EU has acquired a certain expertise in many areas including science technology, research and development. Thus partnership and exchange of good practice but also cooperation in key areas such as education, health, agriculture and others could benefit ACP countries. But to mobilize expertise, ambitious programs to trigger exchange of best practises should be designed.

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