

ACP-EU : "Zero immigration has never existed and never will"

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"The history of humanity is the history of migrations. Zero migration has never existed, and it never will", said Louis Michel (ALDE, BE), EU Co-President of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) at the opening of its 32nd session, in Nairobi (Kenya) on Monday. "We must manage migration flows in a human way, in line with our values. Fortress Europe is not working", he added.

The 32nd session of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA), of African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and European Union (EU) member states was opened by Kenya's President Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta, and attended by the Speaker of its National Assembly, Justin Bedan Njoka Muturi.

In the ceremony, JPA Co-President for the ACP countries Netty Baldeh (Gambia) reaffirmed the importance of the ACP-EU partnership in the current political context. "Our discussions are about people, not abstract themes or statistics, but concern humanity in general", he said, before mentioning the debates on the impact of hurricane Matthew on Haiti and the post-electoral situation in Gabon, on which resolutions will be voted on Wednesday.

EU JPA Co-President Louis Michel also advocated consolidated cooperation: "With Brexit, the retreat into nationalism, the proliferation of conflicts in Syria, the Yemen and elsewhere, it is vital to reaffirm and reinforce our partnership." On Monday afternoon, the parliamentarians and EU Commissioner Neven Mimica will debate the post-Cotonou future of ACP-EU cooperation, i.e. until the Cotonou agreement expires in 2020.

"Zero immigration will never exist"

"We must manage migration flows in a human way, in line with our values. Fortress Europe is not working", said Louis Michel. "The history of humanity is the history of migrations. Zero immigration has never existed and never will (...) because no coercive, repressive or security measure will ever be able to prevent a human being from trying his luck wherever he thinks he will be able to give his destiny the basic dignity to which any human being has a right."

The issue of migration and resettling migrants in their home countries will be debated on Wednesday morning.

Trade to achieve development

The role of trade in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be debated with United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Secretary General Mukhisa Kituyi on Tuesday afternoon. How UN member states can build the Agenda 2030 aspirations and targets into trade policies and the implications of the SDGs for the Doha Development Round will be among the points he will address.

Press release

Population growth: an opportunity for Africa?

Another Wednesday afternoon debate on "Demographic growth: challenges and opportunities" afternoon will focus on population growth issues and the consequences of strong demographic pressures in various regions of the world. Some African countries, such as Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia will be among the most populated countries in the world by 2050.

32nd ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly

On Wednesday 21 December, the Assembly will vote on three resolutions:

- Constitutional limits on presidential terms (debate on Tuesday morning, co-rapporteurs: Tulia Ackson (Tanzania) and Ignazio Corrao (IT)),
- Challenges for family farming and small-scale agriculture production in ACP countries (debate on Monday afternoon, co-rapporteurs: Uladi Mussa (Malawi) and Maria Heubuch (DE)); and
- The impact of illicit financial flows on development finance (debate on Tuesday afternoon, co-rapporteurs: Ousmane Kaba (Guinea) and Theodor Dumitru Stolojan (RO)).

Two urgent topics will be discussed and wrapped up in resolutions:

- The post-electoral situation in Gabon (debate and vote on Wednesday), and
- Impact of hurricane Matthew in Haiti (debate and vote on Wednesday).

Members of the European Parliament and their counterparts from ACP national parliaments will also hold debates with the ACP and EU Councils, represented by Lindsay F.P. Grant, Tourism and International Trade Minister of St Kitts and Nevis, and Lukáš Parížek, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic.

Following up on the signing of the Paris Agreement on climate change, members will debate the way to implement it as well as the environmental dimension of Agenda 2030 with Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on Tuesday afternoon.

Note to editors

The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) brings together MEPs and MPs from 78 European Union (EU) and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states that have signed the Cotonou Agreement, which is the basis for ACP-EU cooperation and development work.

Further information

- Final agenda and Work Programme of the ACP-EU JPA 32nd session: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/2016_nairobi/pdf/1113032en.pdf
- Media advisory on the ACP-EU JPA 32nd session: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20161213IPR55943/32nd-session-of-the-acp-eu-joint-parliamentary-assembly>
- Background note on the ACP-EU JPA 32nd session: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20161205BKG54616/32nd-acp-eu-joint-parliamentary-assembly-session>
- ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/10_01/default_en.htm
- Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dacp/home.html>
- Follow the session through EP Foreign Affairs committee Twitter account: https://twitter.com/EP_ForeignAff

Press release

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