

36th ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in Cotonou, Benin

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Brussels 05 December 2018/ACP/: His Excellency Mr. Patrice TALON, President of the Republic of Benin presided the official opening ceremony of the 52nd session of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly and the 36th Session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) in the presence of distinguished guests and more than 350 participants from all over the world on Monday 03 December 2018.

This great international Assembly was born of a common desire to bring together the elected representatives of the European Community, Members of the European Parliament and the representatives and elected representatives of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States signatories to the Cotonou Agreement, for clear objectives, including the promotion of North-South interdependence, the promotion of human rights and democracy and the values common to humanity.

For Mr. Joseph OWONA KONO, ACP Co-President of the JPA, the Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) provides the ACP-EU legislator with a framework for an open, democratic and in-depth dialogue on the implementation of the Cotonou Agreement, as well as for reviewing the mechanisms for global development cooperation and ensuring that it is compatible with the SDGs, in particular with regard to peace, justice, respect for human rights, civic and political freedoms.

For Mrs. Michèle RIVASI, EU Co-President of the JPA, the implementation of Agenda 2030 must be at the heart of the future partnership. There are many common challenges between the EU countries and the ACP-EU group of countries and it is together that they must find tomorrow's solutions to address the challenges of climate change, migration, economic, security and social issues.

For the President of the Republic of Benin, His Excellency Mr. Patrice TALON, multilateralism and cooperation no longer have the good times they once had. And that is why it calls for more realism and innovation in granting the new role of ACP-EU cooperation.

The Head of State urged both sides not simply to denounce populism, the setbacks of the world's leaders in relation to climate problems, but rather to take note of them and see to what extent they could take action to reverse this trend that is putting people under stress.

For the President of the Republic, the observation of the limits of development aid in relation to the objectives set, leads to encouraging the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises, which are now a factor in sustainable development. He then wished full success to the work in the implementation of a new dynamic so that Cotonou 2, to be signed in 2020, would establish another model of cooperation that, without questioning the successes of the past, would meet the challenges of the future.

Photo from left to right: (Dr Patrick Gomes ACP Secretary General; Hon. Joseph Owona Kono, ACP Co-President of the JPA; H.E Mr. Patrice Talon President of the Republic of Benin; Mrs. Michèle RIVASI, EU Co-President of the JPA and Hon. Adrien Houngbédji President of the National Assembly of Benin)

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