

# ACP enlists top expert to explore future prospects of Group

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*Brussels, 13 December 2011:* The Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific States has appointed international relations specialist Professor Dr. Mirjam van Reisen to undertake a critical study on future perspectives for the ACP Group, aimed at reviewing the value and essence of the institution and how it can effectively adapt to changing geopolitical realities.

Prof. Dr. Mirjam van Reisen currently holds the Endowed Chair Marga Klompé on International Social Responsibility at Tilburg University (School of Humanities, Department of Culture) and is also the founding-director of the research and consultancy group Europe External Policy Advisors (EEPA) based in Brussels. Beginning this month, she will be carrying out outreach and consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, including state and non state actors at the national, regional and all ACP levels. Key issues for the research include the ACP Group's achievements and the performance of its different organs and institutions in a new global environment, the ACP's privileged relationship with the European Union in the context of trade and international agreements, as well as the ACP's relations with other regions and international organisations.

The study will also consider various options and scenarios for post-2020, when the ACP Group's main framework for partnership with the EU, the Cotonou Agreement, expires.

"The ACP Group has a long and rich history defining its relations with the outside world and the former colonial powers after independence... In the new century the ideas and conception of cooperation is changing in a fundamental way and it can no longer be based on traditional dividing lines of established realities. This means that this exploration of the future of the ACP should go beyond the set paths, even though its historic achievements must inform the direction ahead," said Prof. van Reisen.



"I am excited to help explore the way forward within the current new international landscape to which both the ACP and the EU must adapt. I am convinced that in this process we can build on the strengths of past experience and we must look for win-wins of the ACP within its partnerships."

She added that she hoped to "invoke the spirit of Marga Klompé", the first female Minister of the Netherlands, who had a keen eye for the need for cooperation between the EU and ACP Group, and for the EU to contribute to the prosperity of ACP countries.

The outcomes of the assignment will outline recommendations for future outlooks and various scenarios for the ACP Group, on which the Working Group on Future Perspectives will base its report for the next ACP Heads of State Summit.

Prof. van Reisen is an expert on international cooperation, the Lisbon Treaty and the EU Budget. At the 2010 ACP Day, she addressed international decision-making on international common interests. She is also the author of *Window of Opportunity. The EU development policy after the Cold War* (2008: Africa World Press), which includes a chapter on the history of ACP – EU relations. Prof. van Reisen has also published on the issue of South-South cooperation and organised international exchanges on the international social floor and issues of social justice and carried out research projects in relation to international trade, agriculture, finance and investment. Prof. van Reisen is a Dutch national, based in Brussels and married with children.

*(Pictured: Professor Mirjam van Reisen in consultations with a minister from Kenya)*

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