

ACP Members of Parliaments support the spirit of unity in lead up to post Cotonou Negotiations

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Parliamentary Assembly held its 49th session and first plenary meeting of the year on Wednesday 21 March at ACP House in Brussels. Hon. Joseph Hyacinthe Owona Kono of Cameroon, the new president of the Assembly, presided over deliberations, which brought together lawmakers from more than 70 countries to discuss relevant political and development issues and prepare for the intersessional meetings with members of the European Parliament.



Hon. Kono seized the opportunity to offer the ACP Secretariat a gift symbolizing the spirit of unity, fraternity and solidarity that has always guided the ACP Group of States since its creation.

As the legally-binding Cotonou Agreement which outlines parameters for trade, development cooperation and political dialogue between the ACP Group of States and the European Union is coming to an end in February 2020, the ACP Parliamentary Assembly insisted on preserving the spirit of solidarity and togetherness that should guide the negotiations that are expected to begin in August this year.

Speaking on behalf of the ACP Secretary General Dr. Patrick Gomes who was in Kigali to attend a very important session of the African Union, Assistant Secretary General Amb. Léonard Ognimba reminded the Assembly of their critical role to actively defend the interest of the ACP Group to achieve the ACP we want and reiterated that “all principal organs of the ACP Group, in particular the Summit of Heads of State and Government, which adopted declarations to this effect at its 7th and 8th Summits, are firmly committed to preserving the unity of the Group and to oppose any attempt to call into question this fundamental value.”



He also added “It is encouraging that the ACP Parliamentary Assembly is determined to contribute to the revision of Georgetown agreement and Post-Cotonou negotiations, and in this regard, has set up a Working Group on Post-Cotonou.”

The ACP Parliamentary Assembly session also debated reports from its three Standing Committees, that is, the Committee on Political Affairs (currently Chaired by Democratic Republic of Congo), Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade (Chaired by South Africa), and the Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment (Chaired by Eritrea).

At the end of its seating, the Assembly adopted a Declaration which, among other issues, calls upon all Member States of the ACP Group to maintain its unity and undertake the negotiation of the Post Cotonou Agreement as a single entity in line with the vision and mission of the ACP Group as articulated at the 7th and 8th Summits and the ACP Policy Framework document “Towards the ACP We Want” [1].

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