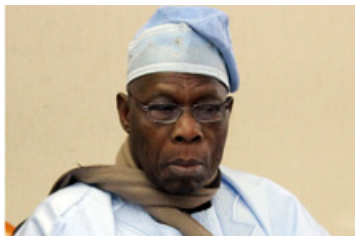


# East Africa region take stock of ACP future

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*Brussels, 17 February 2014/ ACP:* The ACP Eminent Persons Group (EPG) will hold its fourth round of consultations in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 24 - 26 February, to gather views from stakeholders in the region on the outlooks for the 79-member African, Caribbean and Pacific Group.

As the largest intergovernmental grouping of developing countries in the world, the ACP is at a crossroads as it nears the end of its long-time partnership agreement with the European Community in 2020. The agreement provides the framework for ACP-EU political relations, economic cooperation and trade, as well as the disbursement of the European Development Fund (EDF), worth more than 32 billion Euro for 2014-2020.

Participants representing government, parliament, civil society, academia and private sector stakeholders from 15 East African member states have been invited to take part in discussions.

EPG Chair and former President of Nigeria Chief Olusegun Obasanjo is slated to open the event, with presentations from other high profile speakers.

EPG members from the region, including former Deputy Director General of the World Trade Organisation Ms. Valentine Rugwabiza, Former Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund Mr. Peter Gakunu, and Former Acting Special Representative for the UN Secretary General in Burundi Ambassador Nureldin Satti will also chair several sessions.

Key elements to be covered include the major achievements and shortfalls of the ACP Group in the past 39 years, its relations with the EU, its relations with other partners, its role in regional integration and regional/ global development agendas, financing issues, and next steps for the future. The aim is to gather views on the role of ACP in the region and the globe, and how it can position itself as a stronger organisation in the future.

The outcomes will feed into a final report by the Eminent Persons Group, to be submitted to the 8th Summit for ACP Heads of State and Government this December 2014.

Previous rounds of consultations were held successfully in Samoa (Pacific), Grenada (Caribbean), and Benin (West Africa). The next round of consultations will be hosted for the Southern African region in Angola, with only the Central African region remaining.

*(Photo: Chair of the ACP Eminent Persons Group Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria, at the inauguration meeting of the EPG in March 2013)*

- ACP Press

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