



DRAFT Concept Paper

EU PRESIDENCY SEMINAR ON AFRICA

The Assembly of the Republic of Portugal, AWEPA, the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe

“Strengthening Euro-Africa Partnerships: The Role of Parliaments”

Lisbon, Portugal
7 & 8 November 2007

EU Presidency Portugal

Background

Parallel to the EU Presidency of Portugal and the European Development Days (EDD), AWEPA, together with the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe and the Parliament of Portugal will organise an EU Presidency Seminar on Africa in Lisbon, Portugal, on 7 November. On 8 November, AWEPA organises a side-event to the European Development Days.

Overall objective

The overall objective of this seminar will be to reinforce the dialogue between African and European parliamentarians and discuss ways to strengthen Africa - EU partnerships. Participants will discuss the role of MPs from both continents in enhancing the effectiveness and quality of development cooperation strategies towards Africa.

This activity is part of the parliamentary support programme “Mobilising Parliaments for NEPAD” (MPN)¹, aimed at facilitating a greater involvement in the NEPAD process for African and European Parliaments, by raising awareness and promoting parliamentary action in various areas of development relating to the NEPAD initiative.

The seminar will therefore assist in promoting a North-South dialogue on development strategies, raising awareness of NEPAD in Europe and mobilising European parliamentary action to support the initiative.

Themes

On Wednesday 7 November seminar will focus on the following key areas of parliamentary responsibility:

- The Joint EU-Africa Strategy

As a preparation to the EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon in December 2007 the framework for the future relations of the EU and Africa will be addressed, namely the Joint EU-Africa Strategy. This should mark the beginning of a new strategic long term partnership between both continents for the 21st century. This includes reinforcing political partnerships between the EU and Africa and addressing common challenges

¹ The programme was endorsed by the following African institutions: the NEPAD Secretariat, the Pan-African Parliament, the African Parliamentarian’s Forum on NEPAD, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), the ECOWAS Parliament, SADC-Parliamentary Forum, and the NEPAD Contact Group of African Parliamentarians (NCGAP).

in this respect, such as the promotion of peace and security, sustainable development and human rights and trade and regional integration, including Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs).

- **Parliamentary Oversight of ODA**

In line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and in order to attain the MDGs, this seminar will address the need for greater transparency and mutual accountability by governments in Africa and Europe with regard to the achievement of commitments and goals concerning ODA. African and European parliamentarians have a central role to play in exercising oversight over their government how the aid is spent and if it is effectively spent. Participants will discuss obstacles to parliamentary oversight of ODA, as well as ways to overcome them.

On Thursday 8 November the side-event to the EDD will address the following topic:

- **The EU Response to Situations of Fragility in Africa**

One of the high priority topics on the agenda of the EU Presidency of Portugal is the launch by the European Commission of a process of "reviewing its capacity and experience in dealing with situations of fragility in developing countries" (EU paper, July 2007).

During the event, MPs from the EU and Africa will discuss their parliamentary role and responsibility in promoting the prevention of conflict and the emergence of failed states. The participants will discuss ways to prevent these situations such as the support of democratic processes and the empowerment of parliaments, decentralised authorities and civil society.

The expected results of the seminar are:

- Parliamentarians are better informed about the new Joint EU-Africa Strategy and the EU response to situations of fragility in Africa.
The outcome of the discussions on the Joint EU-Africa Strategy will be presented at the upcoming EU-Africa Summit to be held in Lisbon on 8-9 December 2007;
- European Parliamentarians undertake action to hold their governments to account on international commitments, to exercise parliamentary oversight and to stimulate parliamentary questions and debates about the level, distribution and effectiveness of the European ODA;
- African Parliamentarians undertake action to analyse ODA data in the context of their national budgets, track government spending of ODA, and assess the impact and effectiveness of ODA from the standpoint of their constituencies.
- European and African MPs are better informed and stimulated to undertake action regarding the NEPAD commitments and to monitor progress of achieving the MDGs.

Participants and Resource Persons

The seminar will offer a platform for approximately 100 participants from Africa and Europe, consisting of representatives from the following:

- Parliamentarians from Portugal
- Parliamentarians from other EU countries

- Parliamentarians from the following Lusophone countries in Africa: Mozambique, Angola, Sao Tome en Principe, Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde
- Parliamentarians from the following other African countries: Rwanda, Burundi, DRC and Sudan
- Representatives from the following African regional parliamentary organisations:
 - the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF)
 - the Pan African Parliament (PAP)
 - the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
 - Representatives from the NEPAD Secretariat, the NEPAD Contact Group of African Parliamentarians (NCGAP) and the African Parliamentarian's Forum on NEPAD
- Representatives from international civil society organisations (e.g. ECDPM)
- Representatives AWEPA and the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe

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