

ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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on stagnation in the production sectors for bananas, rice and other products

The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly,

- meeting in Cape Town (South Africa) from 18 to 21 March 2002,
- A. whereas ACP countries have for several years been offered preferential access to the EU market, notably for bananas, rice and other products, with a view to supporting the ACP countries' export revenue and further development,
- B. whereas the ACP countries ought to benefit from this preferential access but, in the table-banana sector, Suriname and Belize do not have access to the EU market as exporting countries because access is granted to multinationals by a licence system,
- C. whereas the EU's intended support for the ACP countries is adversely affected by the EU's official administrative system, with the result that the ACP countries become more dependent on multinationals, which deprives them of substantial quantities of revenue that are pocketed by the multinationals,
- D. whereas for many ACP countries the cooperation relationship with regard to the banana protocol is not compatible with cooperation objectives as the ACP countries do not in fact benefit from the advantages due to them,
- E. whereas a request for financing for a marketing study that would include rice was able to obtain approval and confirmation in writing only after seven years, in the second half of 2001,
- F. whereas the EU representative rejected this, leaving Suriname to achieve its objectives through a regional study although this is totally different in character, and whereas the national rice survey has been pending for seven years and its implementation has been confirmed in writing but this is now dependent on circumstances, and whereas the contribution of local experts has been neglected because of the unnecessary involvement of foreign consultants,
 1. Considers that the table-banana sector, which is now going through serious problems and is at risk of an unacceptable slump, must be saved;
 2. Considers that this also applies to the rice sector, which is struggling with similar problems;
 3. Considers that the EU bureaucracy's take-it-or-leave-it attitude should be abandoned and efforts should be made to establish a relationship on a rational, commercial and equal basis;

4. Considers that the EU's policy of cutting staff and closing offices in the countries concerned should be reviewed and a greater contribution from qualified local personnel should be envisaged;
5. Considers that EU promises committed to writing should be honoured;
6. Considers that an inventory of complaints of this kind should be drawn up and proposals for necessary adjustments should be taken into consideration;
7. Considers that the setting up of an independent appeals body for issues of critical importance to the ACP countries should be envisaged;
8. Considers that, for the remaining period of preferential treatment of products such as table bananas, rice, etc., this support should still be given so that as regards quantity and quality these products are capable of facing up to competition on the international market;
9. Instructs its Co-Presidents to forward this resolution to the ACP-EU Council and the Commission.