

7TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



**PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS
AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

REPORT

OF THE

**62ND SESSION OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN,
CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC STATES (OACPS) PARLIAMENTARY
ASSEMBLY AND THE INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS OF THE ACP-
EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY HELD IN BRUSSELS-
BELGIUM**

25 FEBRUARY TO 02 MARCH 2023

Table of Contents

ACRONOMYS AND ABBREVIATIONS	3
1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	4
2. PARTICIPANTS	4
3. BRIEFING MEETING WITH THE NAMIBIAN AMBASSADOR TO BRUSSELS, H.E. DR MEKONDJO KAAPANDA-GIRNUS	4
4. MEETING PROCEEDINGS	5
4.1. MEETING OF THE ACP PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY	5
4.1.1. 62 nd Session of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly	5
4.1.2. Statement by the OACPS Secretary-General: Mr Pinto Rebelo Chikoti	7
4.1.3. OACPS Parliamentary Assembly Special Session on the new OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement	8
4.1.4. The Parties among others, have agreed to the following:	9
4.2. The Current Status of the OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement.....	9
4.3. Orientation for new Members on the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly and the working methods of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly and ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly	11
4.4. MEETING OF THE OACPS-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY	11
4.4.1. Intersessional meetings of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly	11
4.4.1.1. Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade	11
4.4.1.2. Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment	12
4.4.1.3. Committee on Political Affairs	12
4.5. Bureau of the OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly	12
5. CONCLUSION	13
6. RECOMMENDATIONS	13
7. DATE AND PLACE OF THE 43RD MEETING OF THE 43RD JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY PLENARY SESSION OF THE OACPS EU-JPA	13
8. SIGNATURES	14

ACRONOMYS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACP-EU	African, Caribbean and Pacific European Union
AML	Anti-Money Laundering
CBAM	Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism
CNG's	Central Negotiating Groups
CTF	Counter Terrorism Financing
EC	European Commission
LDC	Least Development Countries
JPA	Joint Parliamentary Assembly
MEPs	Members of the European Parliaments
NPA	New Partnership Agreement
OACPS	Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States
SDG's	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The 62nd Session of the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) Parliamentary Assembly and the Intersessional meetings of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly took place from 25 February to 02 March 2023 in Brussels-Belgium. The purpose of the session was to discuss among others; issues of mutual interest such as food and energy security, trade and investment, culture,, ACP diaspora engagement, migration as well as women and youth empowerment. The OACPS also discussed and exchanged views on the New Partnership Agreement (NPA).

2. PARTICIPANTS

The Assembly brought together Members of Parliament from the three regions namely; Africa, Caribbean and Pacific States as well as their counterparts from the European Union States. The Namibian Parliament was represented by Members from the National Assembly's Parliamentary Standing Committee on Economics and Public Administration namely; Honourables; Natangue Ithete (Chairperson and Member of the ACP-EU JPA Bureau), Elifas Dingara and Celeste Becker. The Honourable Members were accompanied by a staff member, Ms Agnes N. Mukono

3. BRIEFING MEETING WITH THE NAMIBIAN AMBASSADOR TO BRUSSELS, H.E. DR MEKONDJO KAAPANDA-GIRNUS

The delegation held a briefing meeting with the Ambassador on 27 February 2023 in order to be enlightened on the political situation in the country as well as to share information on issues to be discussed during the Session or of mutual concern such as; the new Partnership Agreements with the view to find a common ground on the matter. Members had equally, expressed their profound gratitude and appreciation for the warm welcoming extended to them by the Ambassador and her entire staff during their stay in Brussels.

4. MEETING PROCEEDINGS

4.1. MEETING OF THE ACP PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

4.1.1. 62nd Session of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly

The 62nd Session of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly opened under the Chairpersonship of Hon. Ana Rita Sithole of Mozambique, in her capacity as the President of the Organization of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and the Co-President of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA).

In her maiden statement/speech, she mentioned that it was her first time to address the Assembly following her nomination in November 2022 and during the 61st Session of the OACPS-EU JPA that took place in Maputo-Mozambique. She thanked everyone for their support and confidence in according her the honour of representing them at the OACPS Assembly. She equally applauded her predecessor, Honourable Peter Kenilorea Junior of the Solomon Islands for taking over the Assembly at a critical time in the middle of a pandemic (Covid 19) as well as for managing to keep the Assembly when everyone was confined in their spaces.

In addition, she thanked the Secretary General of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly, H.E Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti for his steady leadership of the OACPS and for the warm welcome extended to her since she took over the Presidency position.

She stressed that, our many task is to ensure that multilateral governance is based on our common rules and values as well as institutions and processes by which our countries and leaders try to work towards common goals, make decisions, generate authority and legitimacy and ultimately exercise power for the benefit of the people who should be at the center of all our efforts.

In her concluding remarks, she under scored some four (4) priority areas that will guide her two year term, namely:

4.1.1.1. The visibility of the OACPS PA and ACP-EU JPA

The OACPS Strategic management plan for 2020-2025 commits to enhancing and broadening the role and visibility of the OACPS on the international scene, in this regard, the OACPS reaffirmed the need for improved visibility and enhanced impact of the OACPS on the global fora

She alluded that, increased visibility for the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly will not only put us on the global map but will also increase citizens understanding of the Assembly. In this regard, the Assembly will put in place a monitoring mechanism that will call on our members to report on the implementation of the resolutions adopted at our Assembly.

Additionally, she re iterated on the need for closer working relations between the Secretariat and the National Parliament's media team, as this will allow those in our Constituencies to have real time information of the work Members are undertaking.

4.1.1.2. Strengthening of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly

She further mentioned that, the Revised Georgetown Agreement officially established the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly in context of institutionalizing this organ and stressed that, she will shortly launch the process of drafting the Rules of Procedure for the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly.

Also, she will endeavor to strengthen the role of the Members of the Bureau In order to ensure their actively engagement with those Members in their regions. This will allow the Members of the Assembly to be more informed, engaging and included in all the processes.

In the absence of a Troika arrangement for the Assembly, she will have a small reflective group which will consist of the last three Former Presidents. In this case, she will work with Cameroon, Gabon and Solomon Islands

4.1.1.3. Engagement with key Strategic Assemblies

The OACPS adopted a Strategic Management Plan that aims to contribute to the sustainable development of Member States and the well-being of their population.

She noted that, for the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly, we will engage with other Strategic Parliamentary Assemblies at the level of engagement with Speakers. The purpose of these engagements will be to share best practices and establish a working collaboration through inviting some of the national Speakers like Speaker of Brazil and India to address our Assembly.

4.1.1.4. Financial Stability of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly

The President commended the Secretary-General for his bold leadership on the issue of financial stability of the Organization. In his Strategic Management Plan, objective 5, he has outlined ways in which he wishes to achieve sustainable financing for the Secretariat.

In light of this, the President will endeavor to begin discussions with her fellow members on the need to ensure that they also fund the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly hence, it is very often that the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly is unable to undertake its work due to funding restricted to only Joint Actions with the EU counter parts. This means, the President will establish a Task Force that will prepare a paper on to fund OACPS activities in a sustainable manner.

In addition, she will seek the support of the Secretary-General for the Assembly to move from paper usage during meetings to paperless Assembly

4.1.2. Statement by the OACPS Secretary-General: Mr Pinto Rebelo Chikoti

The Secretary-General of the OACPS, Mr Chikoti delivered his statement during the 62nd Session on behalf of the OACPS Secretariat. He outlined the following as key focus areas or priorities of the OACPS Secretariat for 2023.

- (a) To provide value membership
- (b) To develop partnerships
- (c) To succeed with resource mobilization
- (d) To ensure a presence and relevance on the international scene
- (e) To improve service delivery and excellence as well as
- (f) To focus on intra-OACPS cooperation/collaboration

He further gave a summary of the status of contributions to the budget of the OACPS Secretariat by saying,

- During 2022, 26 Member States paid in full their contribution to the Secretariat budget, representing a total amount of Euro 2, 675.245,96 and 12 of those countries have made advance payments towards the 2023 budget.
- 41 Member States have paid partially their contributions for 2022, representing a total amount of Euro 2,921.164,68
- 12 Member States still owe their total assessed contributions for 2022, amounting to Euro 395.815,00

➤ 9 Member States are under sanctions

In summary, he outlined that, during 2022, an amount of Euro 5.596.410, 64 which constitutes 75, 15 percent of the total budget of Euro 7.446.517,00 was received. This leaves the Secretariat with a funding gap of Euro 1.850.106, 36 or 24.85 percent of the approved budget for 2022.

He concluded by appealing to all Members of Parliament to ensure that each Member States pays a contribution for 2023 as soon as possible as well as to ensure a better rate of payment that will enable the Secretariat to carry out their task.

4.1.3. OACPS Parliamentary Assembly Special Session on the new OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement

On Saturday, 25 February 2023, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Togolese Abroad of the Republic of Togo and OACPS Chief Negotiator, His Excellency, Robert Dussey presented the aforesaid topic during the special session of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly.

In his presentation, he stated that the negotiations were formally launched on 28 September 2018 and ended on 15 April 2015. The political setting guiding the negotiations is that, the world has changed considerably since the Cotonou Agreement was adopted in 2000. Global and regional context in Europe, Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific as well as common global challenges and opportunities had changed significantly. As such, the core objectives of the Partnership had to be reviewed in order to adapt to the new realities.

According to him, the Parties in their respective negotiating mandates agreed to conclude a comprehensive political agreement, setting a modern agenda framed by the internationally agreed sustainable development roadmaps namely; the UN 2030 Agenda; the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as well as the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Additionally, the ACP Council of Ministers agreed that the key principle to guide the negotiations is the conclusion of a single legally binding Agreement in which the regional protocols are part and parcel. The process was concluded through a single negotiating framework and respecting the single undertaking principle based on equality, mutual respect and inclusiveness.

This was done to ensure solidarity of the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, not only in the negotiations but also in the implementation of the new Agreement. Negotiations were concluded by Central Negotiating Groups (CNGs) at

Ambassadorial and Ministerial levels, appointed by and representing the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States.

4.1.4. The Parties among others, have agreed to the following:

- To build peaceful and resilient societies, tackling ongoing and emerging threats to peace and security
- To foster human and social development in particular, eradicate poverty and address inequalities, ensuring that everyone enjoys a life of dignity and no one is left behind, with special attention to women and girls
- The Parties have identified education, health, food security and improved nutrition as well as water sanitation and housing
- Regarding the violation of essential elements namely; human rights, democratic principles and rule of law and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the Parties agreed to establish a special Joint Committee that would hold structured and systematic consultations on any issue that may arise within these areas
- In terms of Regional Protocols, the following Protocols have been anchored on the main Agreement and coherence shall be maintained among them:
 - (a) Africa Regional Protocol
 - (b) Caribbean Regional Protocol and
 - (c) Pacific Regional Protocol

4.1.4.1. All the above captioned Protocols are geared towards the following Strategic Priorities:

- Inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development
- Environmental sustainability, climate change and sustainable management

4.2. The Current Status of the OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement

- The new OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement was initiated by the Chief Negotiators on 15 April 2021

- The initiating marked the formal conclusion of the negotiations and it sets the framework cooperation between the Parties for at least twenty (20) years. However, the definition of the EU Party was to be finalized at a later stage
- The European Union (EU) wanted to sign the Agreement as an EU only Agreement, however, the EU Member States proposed to turn the Agreement into a mixed Agreement, namely; between the EU and its Member States, of the one party and the Members of the OACPS of the other party.
- To that effect, the EU Member States proposed amendments to the initialed text by changing the nature of the Agreement
- The OACPS Council subsequently, approved the EUs amendments which also included provisions allowing for accession to the new Agreement should a country join the EU and a text on the quorum was introduced to cater for the participation of EU Member States in Joint OACPS-EU meetings
- In addition, a revision was made on the Article on provisional application so as to operationalize the Agreement as soon as possible after signature
- Meanwhile, the transitional measures to extend the application of the Cotonou Agreement, which were to expire on 30 November 2021, were further extended until 30 June 2023, so as to avoid a vacuum in the OACPS-EU relations
- It appears that another extension may be necessary, if the EU side is still not able to sign soon. Therefore, this is the issue which the Committee of Ambassadors is mandated to address.

During the Special Session of the OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement, Honourable Joseph Hyacinthe Owona Kono, former President of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly and Co-President of ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, delivered a statement, outlining the milestone achieved in the accomplishment of the OACPS.

He cited the process of ensuring the retain of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) in the New Partnership Agreement (NPA) as one of the key achievement.

4.3. Orientation for new Members on the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly and the working methods of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly and ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly

Mr Lawrence Chimboyi presented the above topic virtually and stated the functions of the OACPS in relation to its purpose, Institutional differences between ACP and EU, Organs of the JPA as well as the main activities of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. He mentioned the four main types of the ACP –EU JPA activities which are: Plenary Sessions, Intersessional meetings, Fact Finding Missions and Election Observations.

During his presentation, some members condemned the high turnover of Members of Parliament resulting from lack of continuity and lack of dedicated Secretariat to serve the work of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly. The Session noted that, OACPS Secretariat are overburdened since their work involves serving all Organs of the OACPS namely; the Council of Ministers; Committee of Ambassadors; OACPS Parliamentary Assembly and the Summit of Heads of State and Government.

The proposal made during the presentation was that, there is a need for Institutional Mechanism for Permanent Secretariat to support the Head of delegation to the Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) Session. This means, National Secretariat should work jointly with OACPS Secretariat.

4.4. MEETING OF THE OACPS-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

4.4.1. Intersessional meetings of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly

The Inter-sessional meetings of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly commenced on the 1st of March 2023. The meetings exchanged views and considered among others; amendments to the following draft resolutions:

4.4.1.1. Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade

Namibia is a member of the aforesaid Committee which is chaired by Hon. Sibeso Sefulo of the National Assembly of Zambia. The Committee considered seven one (71) amendments on the draft motion on the EU list of non-co-operative jurisdictions for tax purposes and the list of third-world countries regarding anti-money laundering (AML) and the counter-terrorism financing (CTF). Significant

topics were also discussed with a focus on the new EU trade regulations such as the deforestation regulation, the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and the impacts they will have on ACP countries.

4.4.1.2. Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment

Strengthening Parliamentary Solidarity and political will for road safety in members of the OACPS and the EU countries including, infrastructure.

4.4.1.3. Committee on Political Affairs

Enhancing cooperation on maritime security and promoting the rule of law on oceans.

4.5. Bureau of the OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly

The meeting of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) Bureau took place on 2 March 2023 at the European Parliament and with the view to prepare for the 43rd Joint Parliamentary Assembly Plenary Session that will take place at the end of June 2023 in Samoa.

The two Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA), Carlos Zorrinho (S&D, PT and Ana Rita Sithole of Mozambique, emphasized on the delay in the signing of the Cotonou Agreement. They stressed that, the Cotonou Agreement has been extended multiple times and the latest extension was expected to expire at the end of June 2023, leading to a legal gap that would mean that the JPA meetings could no longer take place.

They further stressed the urgency of replacing the current Agreement which has run for a period of over twenty (20) years. In addition, they underlined that the new Agreement is better adapted to current and future common challenges linked to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, such as, climate change, promoting human rights, peace and stability as well as governance and growth.

The two Co-Presidents strongly believe that the delay in the signing of the Agreement means, delayed development and sends the wrong signals about our partnership and had therefore, appealed to both parties to sign the new Agreement by 30 June 2023.

Furthermore, Honourable Sefulo challenged the EU to relax their immigration laws, which poses challenges when accessing EU visas, even for diplomatic travelers invited to important meetings such as the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.

5. CONCLUSION

The 62nd Session of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly and the Intersessional meetings of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly was a success hence, it considered among others; pertinent topics such as amendments on the draft motion on the EU list of non-cooperative jurisdiction for tax purposes; list of third world countries regarding anti-money laundering and counter terrorism finance.

In light of this, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Economics and Public Administration would like extend its profound gratitude to the Honourable Speaker and the entire management and staff of the National Assembly for being accorded with the unique opportunity to attend the aforesaid Session in Brussels-Belgium.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Economics and Public Administration recommends that the House take note of the report.

7. DATE AND PLACE OF THE 43RD MEETING OF THE 43RD JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY PLENARY SESSION OF THE OACPS EU-JPA

The 43rd Session of the of the OACPS EU JPA will take place in June 2023.

8. SIGNATURES



Hon. Natangue Ithete (Chairperson)

Hon. Mathias Mbundu (Deputy Chairperson)

Hon. Modestus Amutse

Hon. Dr. Tobie Aupindi

Hon. Apius !Auchab

Hon. Celeste Becker

Hon. Reginald Diergaardt

Hon. Bertha Dinyando

Hon. Elifas Dingara

Hon. Maria Elago

Hon. Hamunyera Hambyuka

Hon. Gotthard Kasuto

Hon. Maria Kamutali

Hon. Johanna Kandjimi

Hon. Joseph Kauandenge

Hon. Sebastiaan Karupu

Hon. Patience Masua

Hon. Hilaria Mukapuli

Hon. Jan Mukwii longo

Hon. Fennie Nanyeni

Hon. Erastus Shuumbwa

Hon. Henny H. Seibeb

Hon. Nico Smit

Hon. McHenry Venaani

Date: 13/09/2023



























