



(03-02-2006)

**Terms of Reference
EU Presidency Seminar on Africa
25-26 May 2006
Cape Town, South Africa**

***The new European Union and the new EU Strategy for Africa:
Towards a Euro-Africa pact to accelerate Africa's development.***

1. Introduction

The Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) organizes twice a year international parliamentary seminars under the auspices of the rotating EU Presidency. The main objectives of these seminars are:

- To keep African priorities, in the context of NEPAD, on the political agenda of the EU and the EU member states
- To promote partnerships between European and African (members of) parliaments to strengthen strong parliamentary democracies
- To promote dialogue and networking for parliamentarians from Africa with each other and with their colleagues from Europe to stimulate action to achieve the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs)

In October 2005, during the UK's chairmanship of the EU, AWEPA in cooperation with other parliamentary organizations organized in London the EU Presidency Seminar on "*Partnership Beyond 2005: The Role of Parliamentarians in Implementing NEPAD Commitments*". The seminar, taking place after the G8 Summit in Scotland and the UN Millennium Review Summit, looked at the issue of *international partnership* and monitoring of progress in Africa on NEPAD priorities, and progress in Europe and G8 countries on fulfilment of commitments. It focussed on the crucial role of parliamentarians and parliamentarians as a bridge between civil society and government and scrutinisers of government legislation, accounts and commitments. It also looked at how best to support the capacity of parliamentarians as they try to fulfil these roles. The seminar agreed on a statement identifying priorities for action. The statement called on parliamentarians and parliamentary networks to ensure they fulfil their roles in holding governments to account on the commitments made to development in Africa or in their respective countries. It also called for a report back involving parliamentarians on progress made.

AWEPA plans to organize another EU Presidency seminar during the first half of 2006, when Austria holds the EU chairmanship. The overall objective will be to provide a platform that promotes dialogue and partnerships between African parliamentarians and their colleagues from the (new) EU member states. This is in line with one of the cornerstones of the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement, namely the need for more frequent, intense and meaningful political dialogue to ensure consistency and increased impact of development cooperation. The seminar therefore also provides an important opportunity to sensitize and mobilize MPs from the new EU member states for development cooperation, and to report back to the conference what actions their countries take in this respect. European parliamentarians need to exercise their responsibility to initiate, stimulate and deepen this dialogue. AWEPA, through its expertise, contacts and African partners, plays a catalyst-role in this respect.

2. Issues to be addressed

- The potential positive role of parliamentarians is under-recognised and under-utilised with regards to the implementation of EU cooperation with Africa, especially in relation to democratic strength, leadership and governance, and mutual accountability in development cooperation.
- There is a lack of knowledge and interaction about the Cotonou Agreement, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) amongst African and European parliamentarians.
- Opportunities for dialogue amongst parliamentary colleagues on issues which relate development to the everyday lives of communities, are infrequent.
- The level of political will and commitment to Africa is not sufficient among European policy-makers, commensurate with the scale of the overwhelming crises on the continent, despite international commitments made.

3. Focus of the Seminar

The seminar will focus on three key thematic areas of parliamentary responsibility:

- Informing the African and European parliamentarians on the Cotonou Agreement, the new ODA targets, and especially the new EU Strategy for Africa
- Strengthening European and African parliamentary oversight of commitments in support of NEPAD, the attainment of the MDGs and on development cooperation policies
- As part of the MDGs, a special session on mobilizing parliamentarians to scale up their efforts and that of other key decision makers for Children and AIDS responses. AWEPA addresses this issue as part of its joint multi-annual campaign on Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) in cooperation with UNICEF.

The delegates will agree a statement identifying priorities for action. The statement will call on parliamentarians and parliamentary networks to ensure they fulfil their roles in holding governments to account on the commitments made to development in Africa or in their respective countries. It will also call for a report back involving parliamentarians on progress made. A report of the seminar recommendations will be produced and sent to all delegates and their respective parliamentary institutions as listed below.

4. Seminar Participants

The Seminar will offer a platform for approximately 50 African and 30 European participants consisting of representatives from the following:

- Parliamentarians from Austria
- Parliamentarians from other (new) EU member states, candidate countries and the European Parliament. In principle the Chairs of the relevant parliamentary Committees that deal with development cooperation will be invited.
- Parliamentarians from African countries (from the priority and cooperation countries of Austria's development cooperation, e.g. Mozambique, South Africa, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya), Tanzania, DRC, Somalia and from Africa's regional parliaments (e.g. SADC Parliamentary Forum, East African Legislative Assembly, ECOWAS Parliament, Pan African Parliament)
- Representatives from the European Commission, ACP-EU Secretariat, the UN and other international organisations
- Representatives from private sector partners, political academies, and civil society organisations

5. Seminar Organisation

The Seminar will be a two-day event and take place in Cape Town on 25 and 26 May 2006, with time available in addition for African delegations to interact with Austrian and other European parliamentarians, partners and development NGOs. The Seminar will be organised by AWEPA in cooperation with the Austrian parliament with assistance from AWEPA's section in the Austrian parliament.