

Global Changes, emerging players and evolving ACP- EU relations: towards a common agenda for action?

ECDDPM 25th Anniversary Seminar

1. Background

Rapid and fundamental changes are taking place at a global level. The multitude of global challenges and the rapid rise of emerging players in the global economy and diplomacy are fundamentally affecting international relations. They require an equally substantial rethinking of development cooperation strategies and modes of operation. At the same time, the EU and the ACP Group are also changing. The implementation of the Lisbon Treaty triggers major shifts in the EU with the aim of reinforcing its role as a global player with the EU reconsidering its various partnership agreements on a geopolitical basis and along regional lines. As a result growing doubts are expressed in relation to the continuing relevance of the ACP-EU framework and its capacity to accommodate new global challenges. On the ACP side, internal reflections have also begun to redefine the place and role of the ACP Group in a multi-polar world and in a Post Lisbon EU.

These major changes will have profound implications for the longstanding ACP-EU Partnership existing since 1975 and currently covered by the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (2000-2020). However, such implications are as yet far from clear. There is an increasing pressure to engage in innovative and strategic thinking on how the ACP and the EU see their common future in this rapidly changing world.

Against this background, the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) will organise on 30th June and 1st July 2011 in Maastricht, an international seminar that will assess the future of the ACP-EU partnership in the light of the new global challenges, the growing role and impact of emerging economies and the ongoing change processes within both the ACP Group and the EU.

The seminar involving a select group of key players and stakeholders from different backgrounds is organised on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of ECDPM. The independent foundation, based in Maastricht, was created in June 1986 with the aim to be a non-partisan broker in facilitating and strengthening ACP-EU relations and cooperation.

2. Aim and Objectives

The overall aim of the seminar is to critically assess the political implications of the new global, European and ACP landscape for the future of ACP-EU relations and the future of the ACP group.

The specific **objectives** of the seminar are fourfold:

- (i) to analyse to what extent the ACP-EU partnership provides a suitable political and institutional framework to deal with current global challenges;
- (ii) to assess the role of the emerging players in the ACP (and in Africa in particular), and the implications for the ACP-EU partnership;
- (iii) to identify current and new common interests that could revitalize ACP-EU relations (taking into account the Post Lisbon Treaty reforms and change processes within the ACP Group);
- (iv) To redefine, on the basis of the above, the potential relevance and added value of the ACP-EU framework and of the ACP group in a changing world.

3. Focus and methodology of the seminar

The multi-stakeholder seminar in Maastricht will take place on 30th June and 1st of July.

On Day 1 (Thursday 30th June), a high level panel discussion will be organised in the afternoon, involving key representatives from the ACP, the EEAS, the EC, the AU, EU member states and some emerging countries. The high-level speakers will be asked to address each of the topics that will be discussed during the following day.

On Day 2 (Friday 1st of July), a full day seminar will be facilitated by ECDPM with a mix of some 50 policy makers, practitioners and civil society organizations for in-depth discussions during 4 subsequent sessions of 1,5 hour each:

- Session I: **The expanding global agenda and emerging economies: what impact on ACP-EU relations?**
- Session II: **What common interests could ensure an effective partnership between the EU and the ACP as a group and as separate regions?**
- Session III: **How could the ACP Group be remodelled to deliver concrete added value in the global landscape?**

A background document will be written and shared to the participants ahead of the meeting. Discussions will be interactive, based on the Chatham House rule. After the seminar, a report will be produced with practical outcomes of the meeting.

4. Participants

Participants to the seminar include the following:

ACP Ambassadors & high-level officials from the ACP Secretariat In Brussels
AU representatives & other (sub) regional organisations
EU member states including the 2011 EU Presidencies
EU institutions (EEAS, Commission, EP, EIB...)
Civil society organisations and policy research institutes
Representatives from emerging countries (BRICs)
International organisations and foundations
ECDPM Board and staff members

5. Practical organisation

The seminar will be organised in Maastricht. It will start on Thursday 30 June with an informal lunch at 13h00. Between 14h30 and 17h00, the high level panel discussion will take place in the recently renovated ECDPM building (Onze Lieve Vrouweplein 21, Maastricht). This will be followed by a reception to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of ECDPM and the inauguration of the ECDPM building by His Royal Highness Prince Constantijn of the Netherlands. Following the reception, a dinner will be hosted by ECDPM for all seminar participants.

On Friday 1 July, the seminar will be held at the European Institute of Public Administration (Onze Lieve Vrouweplein, 22, Maastricht).

A full programme and detailed logistics note will be made available in due course.

For information on the seminar: Sabine Mertens, ECDPM <sm@ecdpm.org>

info@ecdpm.org
www.ecdpm.org
KvK 41077447

HEAD OFFICE
SIÈGE
Onze Lieve Vrouweplein 21
6211 HE Maastricht
The Netherlands Pays Bas
Tel +31 (0)43 350 29 00
Fax +31 (0)43 350 29 02

BRUSSELS OFFICE
BUREAU DE BRUXELLES
Rue Archimède 5
1000 Brussels *Bruxelles*
Belgium Belgique
Tel +32 (0)2 237 43 10
Fax +32 (0)2 237 43 19

