

cont. from previous page ► for Lithuania, noted that the new member states had no historical and geographical ties with Africa, and that they target neighbouring countries as they see co-operation benefits. However, like Ms. Deresz mentioned, the new member states have faced similar problems to African countries and could exchange transition experiences. Unfortunately, most new EU states “are not even close to meeting the development contribution targets”. •



About AWEPA

The Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) works in cooperation with African Parliaments to strengthen parliamentary democracy in Africa, keep Africa high on the political agenda in Europe, and facilitate African-European Parliamentary dialogue. It has some 1500 current and former parliamentarians as members from the European Parliament and European national parliaments. AWEPA works in Africa through capacity building programmes to strengthen the core functions of parliaments: oversight, representation and legislation. In Europe, AWEPA members work to increase the commitment among parliamentarians and other political leaders towards important issues in Africa. •

Programme Descriptions

EU Presidency Seminars on Africa

In conjunction with the rotating chairs of the EU, AWEPA organises twice a year an EU Presidency Seminar on Africa. The main objectives of these seminars are:

- To keep African priorities, in the context of NEPAD/MDGs, on the political agenda of the EU and the EU member states;
- To promote partnerships between European and African parliamentarians to strengthen parliamentary democracy;
- To promote dialogue and networking amongst African parliamentarians and European counterparts to exchange experiences and stimulate action to achieve the MDGs.

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In addition, the seminar falls under the institutional capacity building programme in partnership with the Pan-African Parliament, funded by the Belgium Cooperation Agency (DGOS). In addition, IAVI and SID have contributed to the initiative.

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About AWEPA sections

AWEPA works to intensify its efforts to keep Africa on the political agenda in Europe and to promote a North-South dialogue. In this regard, AWEPA has built up a broad member network of current and former European parliamentarians, grouped in so-called sections. A section consists of a group of European parliamentarians in the concerned parliament who are interested in African-European affairs, and who like to be briefed on developments in Africa and participate in AWEPA programmes.

By enabling existing and new Sections to perform advocacy and support functions in an effective and efficient way, AWEPA can help to develop a more coherent and visible European development policy towards Africa.

High on AWEPA's agenda in Europe are the following topics:

- HIV/AIDS with a special focus on Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)
- NEPAD related themes, such as Agriculture and Climate Change
- The Paris Declaration and Parliamentary Tracking of ODA. •

The Way Forward

AWEPA organises twice a year international parliamentary seminars under the auspices of the rotating EU Presidency to strengthen African-European partnerships. The next Presidency of the EU will go to France. From 20-22 November 2008, in close association with the 8th Annual Conference of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank (PNoWB) in Paris, AWEPA has organised its EU Presidency Seminar. In tandem with the Parliamentary Network of the World Bank, AWEPA has brought together key experts to debate such issues as climate change, food security and aid effectiveness. •

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Slovenian EU Presidency Seminar on Africa “The Role of New EU Member States in EU-Africa Development Policy”

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, 27-28 FEBRUARY 2008



Parliamentarians mobilise for Joint Africa-EU Strategy Action Plan and call for new EU member states to play a prominent role in African development policy.

At the moment, Slovenia – similar to most of the 12 new Member States – directs its development aid to the neighbourhood (Western Balkan countries). But it is willing – in accordance with European values and development policy – to enhance its activities as well as resources in Africa to contribute to reaching the Millennium Development Goals. (Anton Kokalj, Member of the Slovenian Parliament and Chair of the Committee on EU Affairs)

To mark the Presidency of Slovenia, European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) in cooperation with the European Parliament, International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) and the Society for International Development (SID) organised an EU Presidency Seminar on Africa, entitled “The Role of New EU Member States in EU-Africa Development Policy”. The seminar took place at the European Parliament in Brussels in February 2008, with the participation of over 70 parliamentarians from 16 European and African countries, African regional parliamentary organisations and civil society organisations.

During the seminar, participants discussed the capacity of new EU member states to act as donors, and explored how to equip these new donors to play a significant role in African development. Three key areas of parliamentary responsibility were highlighted at the seminar, including: the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and NEPAD/MDG developments; parliamentary oversight of Official Development Assistance (ODA); and MDG # 6, the fight against AIDS as a critical part of the global health agenda. •



Mr. Pär Granstedt, AWEPA Secretary General and Hon. Anton Kokalj, Member of the Slovenian Parliament

Results

JOINT AFRICA-EU STRATEGY

As holder of the first “post-Lisbon EU Presidency,” Slovenia promised to promote the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and its Action Plan, adopted at the EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon. The Strategy, a new strategic partnership between Africa and the EU, poses a particular challenge for the new EU member states, since most new members earmark development aid for neighborhood countries. However, many new EU member states have confronted development problems comparable to those African countries face. New EU members, therefore, have valuable insights to exchange with African counterparts. This has significant added value for EU-Africa development policy. •

OVERSIGHT OF AID

Seminar participants agreed that parliaments must play a more substantial role in monitoring effective aid disbursement. It became clear that appropriate aid allocation and identification of political objectives require parliamentary oversight of ODA. Participants agreed upon a set of parliamentary recommendations on ODA monitoring, which a parliamentary delegation subsequently introduced at the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra, in September 2008.

In light of this, Hon. Johan van Hecke, Member of the European Parliament and head of the AWEPA section in the EP, drafted a Report and Amendments on the “Follow-up to the Paris Declaration of

2005 on Aid Effectiveness” (March and April 2008). •

FIGHT AGAINST AIDS

MDG #6, the fight against AIDS, was addressed during the seminar with specific attention to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC). Participants were encouraged to support the UNICEF Global Campaign “Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS”. A discussion ensued which acknowledged the importance of the development of new health technologies, like AIDS vaccines. Attendees adopted specific parliamentary recommendations, related to MDG #6 and the global health perspective. •

Key areas of parliamentary responsibility: the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, Oversight of ODA, NEPAD, the MDGs and the fight against AIDS

JOINT AFRICA-EU STRATEGY

At the EU-Africa Heads of State and Government Summit in Lisbon, December 2007, parliamentarians adopted the strategic framework for future relations of the EU with Africa, the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and an Action Plan for its implementation. These frameworks support open Africa-EU dialogue on an equal footing to address development issues. The Strategy aims to establish more balanced partnerships and consistency of EU policy towards Africa. African and European parliamentarians have identified shared priorities for Africa's development, and recognised that parliaments have an important role to play in monitoring development policy. Slovenia has committed itself to advancing the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan. However, all EU actors involved in the Strategy must contribute significant political will to establish the necessary coordination structures and procedures. •

NEPAD AND THE MDGS

The New Partnership for Africa's Development constitutes a vision and strategic framework for Africa's renewal. It arose from a mandate, which the Organisation of African Unity (OAU, now African Union) gave to the five founding Heads of State (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa), to develop an integrated socio-economic development

framework for Africa.

AWEPA developed a five year parliamentary support programme called "Mobilising Parliaments for NEPAD – Towards the Millennium Development Goals", aimed at facilitating greater involvement of African and European Parliaments in the NEPAD process, by raising awareness and promoting action in diverse areas of development. •

PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT OF ODA

Governments in Africa and Europe require greater transparency in how they allocate ODA and in how ODA relates to political objectives. Since donors and recipients endorsed the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, governments can measure progress towards attainment of aid delivery targets. African and European parliamentarians have a crucial role to play in exercising systematic oversight and monitoring of ODA agreements.

New EU donors, especially, must push to prioritise on the political agenda debate and awareness-raising on aid effectiveness. The results of the Paris Declaration monitoring and evaluation process were reported at the 3rd High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra in September 2008. •

FIGHT AGAINST AIDS

Attainment of MDG #6, combating HIV and AIDS, requires greater political engagement to reverse the



disastrous impact of this disease. National parliaments must mobilise to eradicate AIDS with special attention to the plight of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) affected and infected by the epidemic. In 2005, UNICEF started a campaign "Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS" to increase resource flows, scale up action and step up advocacy and communication work in five main areas, known as the "Five Ps": PMTCT Plus, Paediatric treatment, Protection, Prevention and Partnership. In the long run, containment of the epidemic requires the development of safe, effective, accessible and preventive HIV vaccines for use throughout the world. The EU plays a leadership role in helping accelerate vaccine research and development, and to ensure a central role for issues related to HIV and AIDS in development policy. •

Recommendations

Participants at the EU Presidency Seminar on Africa appealed to the parliamentarians from Europe and Africa to carry out the following recommendations:

Monitoring ODA:

- Promote debate and participate in implementation and monitoring of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and Paris Declaration;
- Prepare for participation in the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, in Ghana on 2-4 September 2008;
- Conduct forensic examination of Official Development Assistance (ODA) by accountants and auditors reporting to parliaments;

- Undertake action to hold EU governments to account on international commitments, to exercise parliamentary oversight and to stimulate parliamentary questions and debates about the level, distribution and effectiveness of European ODA;
- Undertake joint visits of parliamentary delegations from donor and recipient Parliaments to exchange experiences as part of comprehensive review and (re-)prioritisation process;
- Promote political debate and public information on development cooperation between Africa and Europe, particularly in new EU members with emerging ODA policies and the southern EU member states.

Eradicating AIDS:

- Encourage EU parliaments to participate in and support the UNICEF

Global Campaign "Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS";

- Encourage their governments to support financing mechanisms and incentives that stimulate the private sector to contribute to access to new health technologies, like AIDS vaccines and microbicides, through which women and girls in particular can protect themselves better;
- Develop national AIDS vaccine plans within national AIDS strategies, including supporting infrastructure development around trial sites;
- Promote support for product development public-private partnership (PPPs) organisations;
- Request governments to create a specific budget line for children's rights and child specific projects. •

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Hon. Anton Kokalj, Member of the Slovenian Parliament and Chair of the Committee on EU Affairs, opened the seminar by stating that Slovenia, as the first "post-Lisbon EU Presidency," would take forward the Africa-EU Joint Strategy and its Action Plan, adopted at the EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon. **Dr. Jan Nico Scholten**, President of AWEPA, mentioned that this seminar coincides with the first Presidency of one of the new EU member states. He stressed that since the new member states confront similar transition problems to those which African countries face, an exchange of experiences and lessons learned is of added value to African-European cooperation. **Mr. Hadj Diao El Kanté**, Chair of the International Relations Committee of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), described relations between the EU and Africa as "at a crossroads after 50 years of African independence and 50 years of EU cooperation". He said that the EP and the PAP identify shared priorities for development and should work together to ensure that their parliaments take part actively in the implementation of the Africa-EU strategy. **Mr. Pär Granstedt**, Secretary-General of AWEPA, stressed that parliaments should be put at the centre of development. The role of parliaments is becoming more important in relations between Africa and Europe. •

THE JOINT AFRICA-EU STRATEGY

Hon. Maria Martens, MEP the Netherlands, said that in order to prevent a failure of the Africa-EU Strategy, the new Strategy should pursue two main issues, namely focus on a "joint" rather than an exclusively "European" perspective, and the involvement of parliamentary bodies and civil society. **Hon. Johan van Hecke**, MEP, head of the AWEPA section in the European Parliament, stressed that national parliaments have a crucial role to play in monitoring the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. Since parliaments play a major role in the budget, a greater role has to be played by them in improving aid effectiveness. •

PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT OF ODA

"Aid is also a matter from people to people, not only from government to government" said **Professor Ben Turok**, Member of Parliament in South Africa and Chair of the NEPAD Contact Group of African Parliamentarians. Professor Turok emphasised that aid must be a public vehicle for public discourse, otherwise aid becomes an instrument of political

manipulation or a partnership between two ministers of finance. **Hon. Thijs Berman**, Member of the European Parliament for the Netherlands and Vice-Chair of the Committee on Development, stressed the need for oversight and scrutiny of aid if we aim to achieve fair globalisation.

Mr. Joe Frans of the AWEPA section in Sweden mentioned three main necessities regarding development expenditure, namely: harmonisation of donor activities, resource management and mutual accountability. **Mr. Alfä - Niaky Barry**, Secretary-General of the NEPAD Forum for African Parliamentarians, appealed to the European Parliament, Commission, Council and national parliaments to be more transparent about how they use and disburse development aid. •

FIGHT AGAINST AIDS

According to **Mr. Prince N. Bahati**, Senior Program Manager of IAVI, parliaments should encourage their governments to support financing mechanisms and incentives that stimulate the private sector to contribute to access to new health technologies, like AIDS vaccines and microbicides, so that women and girls in particular can protect themselves better. **Mrs. Margaret Wachenfeld**, Senior Policy Advisor UNICEF Brussels, stressed the need to strengthen the health sector

response to ensure adequate health care for children affected by AIDS. **Dr. Silvia Ferazzi**, Donor Relations Manager of Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, mentioned the importance of national ownership in the prevention and treatment process concerning the AIDS pandemic. •

THE NEW EU MEMBER STATES AND DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Hon. Szymanek Derez, Member of Parliament in Poland and Vice-Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the Polish Parliament, said that Poland received very positive feedback from governments of countries with which it has cultural and historical links, like Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. These countries considered the sharing of Polish experiences and best practices in state transformation processes as necessary and useful. Poland could also share its experiences with African partners. **Dr. Danute Budreikaite**, Member of the European Parliament

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Hon. Johan van Hecke



Dr. Jan Nico Scholten



Professor Ben Turok



Mr. Hadj Diao El Kanté



Mrs. Margaret Wachenfeld