

**ADDRESS BY
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poverty. This objective, coupled with the promotion of sustainable development, is also at the heart of our Cotonou Partnership with the EU, which interlocks 103 countries and represents the most advanced and innovative North-South formalised development cooperation arrangement.

Today, we are gathered here at a time when the global community faces numerous challenges, together with related effects and transformations at continental, regional and country levels. In a global partnership centred on human dignity and mutual respect, issues of Asylum, Migration and Mobility are central to the development of our countries, and indeed are cross-cutting issues to almost all the Millennium Development Goals.

Processes of regional integration around the world are putting the value and usefulness of state borders increasingly into question. Yet migration issues are still largely framed in Westphalian terms. While a liberal trade agenda is being pushed forcefully, the liberalisation of the movement of persons is still highly controversial. At the same time, we claim that liberalising trade is supposed to benefit (and reduce the poverty of) persons. The processes of globalisation and regional integration challenge us to think outside of the Westphalian paradigm of state borders and to think in terms of persons. This is what the concept of 'human security', in contrast to 'state security' is all about, yet we still need to apply it to our thinking on migration and mobility.

These movements have contradictory effects: The existence of large numbers of migration workers brings socio-economic benefits to the host or countries of origin, but the presence of large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers indexes to the existence of political instability in the countries of origin. The ACP Group is committed to deal with all these migratory forms, especially within the framework of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, and notwithstanding the current trend in developed countries for articulating policies aimed at preventing the flow of people from ACP States.

Migration will continue to play a dominant role in the development process of ACP States. However, ACP States have to address the following challenges, and we need to:

- ensure that people are able to freely and safely exercise their right to move legally between places;
- fight against the phenomenon of illegal immigration;
- engage actively in political dialogue to address the challenges of population mobility;
- ensure the mobility of students and human resources to enhance capacity building for sustainable development in our States;

- identify solutions to the negative impact of brain drain; and
- enhance intra-ACP cooperation on issues related to migration and mobility.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In addressing the afore-mentioned challenges, the ACP Group can

The ACP Group held the 1st Meeting of ACP Ministers responsible for Asylum, Migration and Mobility in Brussels on 13 April 2006. The main objective of this meeting was to formulate concrete ACP policies on Asylum, Migration and Mobility. To this end, ACP Ministers issued a substantive Brussels Declaration on Asylum, Migration and Mobility and a Plan of Action for its implementation. The 2nd ACP Civil Society Forum, which took place in Brussels during the period 19 – 21 April 2006, complemented the ACP position on Migration and Mobility issues, and underscored the importance of Non-State Actor involvement in the global debate on migration. Furthermore, the outcome of the Ministerial meeting will serve as a basis for the preparation of the ACP participation at the UN High-Level Meeting, and the ACP-EC Council of Ministers, held in Port Moresby on 01 and 02 June 2006, endorsed the presentation of a joint ACP-EU position on Migration at the UN-level.

I would also like to urge the organizers and the participants to collaborate closely with one of the joint institutions of the ACP-EU Partnership, the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. The relevance of the Parliamentary debate on the issues at hand being

discussed, cannot be over-emphasized. To this end, the 11th Session of the JPA, which was held in Vienna during the period 19 – 22 June 2006, agreed to compile a comprehensive report and Resolution on Migration and Development that will be adopted during its 2007 Session in Germany. I encourage the involvement of Parliamentarians in the implementation of the recommendations that we will draw from the global debate on Migrati

are most of us. Therefore, we should all endeavour to develop policies and programmes that are focussed on the well-being of our peoples. This is why the focus of the global debate on Migration and Development is so important - to look at possible solutions in a new, innovative and, overall, **positive** way. Let us join hands, and together formulate concrete policies and programmes on migration and mobility that will complement efforts to effectively address poverty and the challenges of sustainable development.

**Madam Chairperson,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

All these activities manifest the commitment of the ACP Group in addressing the critical issues of migration in relation to sustainable development, and by implication addressing the MDGs. We are convinced that our close collaboration with the EU, will result in policies and programmes that are in the interest of all parties involved, and most importantly, our peoples

I thank you for your attention.

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