

COOPERATION EU-ACP: THE POLITICAL DIMENSION OF AGREEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

This work analyzes one of the sides of the cooperation established between European Union (EU) and the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, more specifically, the political dimension of the agreements signed between these two groups of States.

The main aspects of the EU-ACP partnership, from the own cooperation concept, passing for the general principles of the community policy on development cooperation, by the inevitable globalization of the economy and by a historical briefing of this same cooperation, serve of reference frame to the study object of this dissertation.

Subsequently, the more detailed approach concerning the Lomé Conventions and the Cotonou Agreement allows to emphasize, especially, the most important characteristic traces from the political component of these agreements, suggesting a gradual reinforcement of the political EU-ACP partnership.

In fact, the historical evolution of this relationship can be only understood if we take into account the context of decolonisation (Association of Overseas Countries and Territories and Yaoundé Conventions), the new international economic order (Lomé model), the end of the Cold War (Lomé revisited) and the effects of globalization (Green Paper and Cotonou Agreement).

The last forty years have thus seen a progression from a mainly economic and commercial partnership to cooperation at a more global level within which political issues are addressed.

Some of the aspects of this political dimension of the EU-ACP relationship are related with the existence of a strengthened political dialogue, “essential elements” (namely the respect for the human rights, the democratic principles and the rule of law), a “fundamental element” (the «good governance») and a partnership based on the performance, aiming the effectiveness of the foreign aid, the elimination and reduction of poverty, the integration of ACP countries into the international economy and, finally, the sustainable economic and social development.

Key words: cooperation agreements, European Union, ACP countries, sustainable development, foreign aid, economic integration and globalization.