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CHALLENGES FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION'S POLICY WITH AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC GROUP OF STATES

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The article highlights the peculiarities of cooperation between the EU and the ACP. The key challenges of European policy in the ACP are analyzed.

The attention is focused on problems that were not resolved after the negotiations on new agreements between the EU and the ACP Organization and can become challenges for further EU-ACP relations, including the risk of money laundering, terrorist financing, the problem of illegal migration and the continent's need for peace, security and creation jobs. The tasks that have been developed to promote a multi-stakeholder approach to poverty eradication and the priorities for the 2030 Agenda are analyzed. The principles of modern ACP-EU relations are also mentioned. The advantages of an integrated approach and the factors hindering cooperation are determined: 1) unforeseen consequences for the ACP countries; 2) loss of efficiency due to inadequate coordination between the member states themselves and between the member states and the EU; 3) the lack of a common position towards the ACP states on the part of European countries. The differences in the views of the ACP states, which were not resolved by agreements, are outlined.

The main attention is paid to consideration of potential ways of further relations' development between the EU and the ACP. It is mentioned that the EU can help the ACP states to open their markets for the development of trade with the Union by changing the framework of cooperation. As part of the issue of revitalizing the partnership, it is proposed to strengthen its political dimension in several aspects. It is noted that it is necessary to put on the agenda the solution of such issues as the introduction of preventive diplomacy, agreements on wider political cooperation and permanent political analysis.

It was concluded that it is necessary to satisfy the problems of the Europeans by making a long-term political choice, as well as to strengthen the political dimension of ACP-EU relations in order to give them a new impetus. Cooperation frameworks should be opened up to offer a European response that is better adapted to the current needs of ACP States, their private sectors and civil society. It is important to put more emphasis on consistency at the European level and on monitoring by the EU.

Key words: ACP, the EU, partnership, policy, negotiation, agreement, challenge.

The relevance of the topic. The 79-member African, Caribbean and Pacific Group was established in 1975 to partner with the European Economic Community, now the European Union, to promote the sustainable development of African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and integrate them into the global economy on fairer terms. During the existence of EU-ACP relations a paradigm shift took place: economic, social and cultural development gave way to political partnership with the ACP gaining the status of an international organization. Despite the long history of this cooperation, the differences in the views of the members of the ACP Organization, the development gap and continuous illegal migration still remain challenges facing the EU policy in the region. The EU's gradual loss of momentum for aid policy in the ACP region and greater

interest in other regions call into question the Union's vision for the development of relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific states and make this issue relevant.

The analysis of current research works and publications. The peculiarities of cooperation between African, Caribbean and Pacific group of states and the EU member-states were covered in the studies of some Ukrainian and foreign scholars, in particular modern Ukrainian researcher S. Tolstov, who considered the main aspects of EU policy towards African countries, which include multilateral political dialogue, promotion of development, migration control and negotiations on the conclusion of new type of economic agreements [1] and L. Lanovyuk, who described the current problems of international relations in the regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America [2] K.Arts analyses the changes in the ACP-EC development cooperation regime [3]. S. Wolf described why these countries' situations have not improved despite the Agreements and why their share of total EC imports from developing countries has fallen in spite of the tariff preferences they are granted [4]. A particular impact on the issue studies has been made by the representors of African and European media, such as African news [5], Deutsche Welle [6] and European interest [7].

The purpose of this article is to study the challenges and tasks of the European Union in the ACP region.

The current ACP-EU relationship is based on international partnership, not the development assistance based on the principles of "partnership" and "equality" in the postcolonial era, as originally was conceived. Modernization of cooperation requires the parties to jointly confront significant challenges at the international, regional and domestic levels, as well as problems related to migration, differences in the views of the ACP states, which were not resolved by the new 2021 agreement.

The challenges that have emerged in ACP-EU relations at the global level have become the diminishing influence of the US and EU on the international stage as emerging economies such as China and India gain more economic and political power. As the EU's influence is not as significant as it was when the Cotonou Agreement was signed more than twenty years ago, multipolarity may provide ACP countries with an opportunity to diversify their partnerships and forge new relationships with non-EU countries. Another significant shift was the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The development has been reshaped through 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 related targets that have been designed to promote a multi-stakeholder approach to eradicating poverty. A priority for the 2030 Agenda is to ensure that "no one is left behind" and the future ACP-EU relationship should be redefined in a way that reinforces the spirit of the SDGs [8].

Changes at the EU level have also disrupted relations. The EU has expanded significantly since the Cotonou Treaty, and closer links between EU domestic and foreign policy were established under the 2009 Lisbon Treaty. In addition, to coincide with the 2030 Agenda, a number of significant changes were made to the EU's domestic and foreign policies.

In the Global Strategy and the new Development Consensus (2017), EU values are explicitly included in the 2030 Agenda, and future ACP-EU relations will be guided by these values. The new European External Investment Plan is expected to have a positive impact on growth in Africa, while many ACP countries benefit from the strategic advantages of "Aid for Trade" initiatives [9]. However, economic partnership agreements have disrupted existing regional groupings in the ACP region, adding complexity to future relations.

After the negotiation of the new agreement between the EU and the ACP Organization, several unresolved issues remained that will pose challenges for the future of EU-ACP relations. Issues related to international taxation and the EU/OECD+ approach to non-cooperative tax

jurisdictions have been of pressing concern to many Caribbean countries and others. The topic of financial services became even more controversial when the EU published a new so-called "blacklist" of third countries with a high risk for money laundering and terrorist financing, including some members of the ACP Organization. The latter believed that the publication of the list and its timing were forced and protested accordingly. They demanded space for bilateral consultations and other forms of interaction. Failure in resolving this issue has made EU-ACP relations tense.

An important and sensitive issue for both sides, especially for African countries, is the problem of illegal migration of Africans fleeing their homelands due to circumstances that range from armed conflict and instability to the effects of climate change, poverty and unemployment. The continent's need for peace, security and job creation is clear. The fact that Africa's population will almost double by 2050 raises the possibility of an increase in irregular migration, which Europe wants to avoid. For the EU irregular migration is closely linked to its security. It has also been repeatedly used by populists across the Union to create internal political problems and tensions. Disagreements within the bloc over the new migration policy have exacerbated simmering tensions between those states on its external borders, such as Hungary, Greece, Italy and Spain, and the rest of Europe. The EU's insistence on fulfilling its commitments, on the part of the ACP countries, and on the EU's development funding using its own institutions and efforts on contentious issues such as migration, including threats to cut visas for ACP officials, was not perceived well in the negotiations for a new agreement in 2021. The issue of return and readmission of migrants, deemed to be in an irregular situation, as well as the use of EU transit documentation to ensure return, met with strong resistance. Finding common ground to reach an agreement proved elusive. On the EU side, there was a realization that this issue was politically and socially too important for EU member states to simply ignore. Proposals by the ACP Organization to discuss the issue bilaterally were considered unrealistic by the EU as too fragmented. At one point, EU negotiators seemed to suggest that African member states could use consensus on the issue to obtain greater financial commitments from the EU. The issue still remained controversial [10, p. 11].

Although the principle of return and readmission of irregular migrants has been actively debated and the use of EU travel documents to facilitate deportation has been resisted, the EU has supported both Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire with pilot biometric projects designed to help to identify citizens. This is an initiative that could also be used to support migration objectives in the future. Funds were provided under the EU Trust Fund for Africa, with €60 million allocated for the development of systems in two countries [10, p. 19-20]. In addition, migration issues were discussed at the AU-EU summit later in 2021, as the EU seeks compatibility between the agreements provided by both the ACP Basic Agreement and the African Protocol, as well as decisions taken at the EU-AU summit.

An important challenge is also to strengthen the role of the African Union (AU) rather than the ACP in Africa's relations with Europe, which remain a source of contention for some EU and AU member states and officials. Some remain ambivalent about the ACP Organization and show a clear preference for engaging directly with the AU on African issues, as well as with the Caribbean and Pacific regions through their regional organizations. There is also a perception that the involvement of Africa in EU-ACP relations is somehow hostile to AU-EU relations and an obstacle to a comprehensive EU strategy in Africa. Representatives of the European Commission disagree, holding the view that the two negotiation processes are complementary, as the EU strives to modernize relations with both groups [10, p. 19].

Others argue that several African countries have stated that they prefer to work through the AU rather than cooperate with the ACP Organization. While this may be true, the sense of a

binary choice is based on a false premise. The fact is that the sustainable, long-term, future role of the ACP Organization has yet to be specifically defined by its members.

During the negotiations on the successor to the Cotonou Agreement, separate roles for the ACP Organization and the AU were discussed, and all African countries that were a part of the Cotonou Agreement participated in the completed negotiations on the new agreement. It is also clear that African member states have not yet reached an agreement on the primary role and political powers that they wish to transfer to the AU. In the meantime, African countries will continue to be members of both organizations and shape them until it becomes clear that the usefulness of either organization has been exhausted.

From the very beginning the EU's relations with the ACP states were guided by the desire of a global approach to the extent that the main instruments of the Union's actions – trade policy and aid – were combined into a single institutional structure. The provisions on respect for human rights, the rule of law, good governance, and the principle of political dialogue have been included in the cooperation agreement since 1990 [11].

The advantage of an integrated approach is that it encourages the consistent use of various instruments of assistance and dialogue. Nevertheless, the scope of European cooperation is hampered by three factors that are the result of the EU's own actions: 1) the consequences for ACP countries, which were not systematically foreseen, of Union or Member State policies other than development cooperation; 2) the loss of efficiency and difficulties faced by recipient countries as a result of inadequate coordination among Member States themselves and between Member States and the EU; and 3) the lack of a common voice and common ground approach to ACP countries by European countries, which is increasingly felt in the current international context.

The ACP-EU relationship is so long-standing that it has created a "culture" that needs to be protected. This culture is largely based on the existence of a special partnership between each ACP country and the European Union. Given the new international backdrop, this partnership should be strengthened, not weakened, enhancing its value as a mutual political commitment.

The partnership implemented under the Lomé Convention has faced a number of difficulties [12, p. 8].

Indeed, it has proved difficult to realize the original intentions based on the principle of equal partners due to the institutional weakness of recipient countries, their dependence on aid, the growing imposition of conditions and the tendency of the EU, as well as other donors, to take the place of their failed partners. A trend driven by a growing concern for efficiency has seriously undermined the principle of partnership.

Given the existing challenges in relations between the European Union and the ACP countries, the foundations for further partnership should be laid. The EU plays a leading role in the international arena, in particular in the WTO, IMF and World Bank, and is the largest trading partner (accounting for 20% of world trade and one third of its imports coming from developing countries). In the political arena the European Union is trying to strengthen its ability to act. For a long time, the EU has also been a major source of development assistance, and its contribution to international aid has increased in recent years, especially in light of the significant reduction of the United States in this area.

The European Union has the means to help close the development gap, and it is up to it to implement an active and coherent development policy to this end. The ACP-EU relationship is a part of the international community's overall strategy to reduce global poverty. In addition to the main motives of European development policy, which are an integral part of the EU's identity, the Union has objective interests. They are of particular importance when it comes to ACP countries, and among them, sub-Saharan Africa.

The EU has an interest in promoting peace and stability by preventing the development or perpetuation of areas of instability in the world. Cooperation, which should not stop, can and should contribute to the preservation and development of the rule of law in all countries, as well as to maintaining a satisfactory level of social cohesion, more effective international cooperation to manage global threats. Europeans are increasingly concerned about the growing migration pressure, which is mainly a consequence of development gaps and requires a thoughtful political response. The spread of terrorism, the problem of preventing illicit trafficking, and limiting pandemics are also important areas that the EU cannot address and control unilaterally. The European Union should make efforts to ensure as many countries as possible to assume their responsibilities and participate in solving global interdependencies and challenges.

The EU can help countries that are currently outside the international economic system to develop their internal potential and provide the basic conditions for sustainable development of the ACP countries. It can monitor the development process in more developed countries, accelerate the pace of economic and social development, and facilitate their smooth integration into the global economy.

The enormous challenges faced by some ACP countries are reason enough to preserve the specific qualities of the cooperation relationship, including its predictability and contractual nature. But from now on, this "contract" should be accompanied by clearer and more realistic mutual political commitments.

Thus, revitalizing the partnership requires strengthening its political dimension in two ways:

1) The foundations of the political dimension were laid by the introduction of a respect for human rights clause in Lomé IV and the revised Convention, together with a provision allowing for the suspension of the Convention in case of violation [13].

This clause also refers to democratic principles, consolidation of the rule of law and good governance. The Convention provides for a consultation procedure if one of these obligations is not fulfilled. This approach follows the general framework of the Community's policy on human rights and fundamental freedoms, which is an important element of the dialogue with different partners on which partnership with third countries is based. From a formal point of view, the current provisions look quite comprehensive. However, the practical implementation of this political component raises a number of questions about the criteria to be applied and the consequences that political judgment will have on the management of cooperation – apart from extreme cases leading to the suspension of European cooperation;

2) In the context of a constant upsurge in organized violence and the increase in armed conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa, with all their humanitarian, social, economic and environmental consequences and the challenges they pose to any development policy. In addition to the development of a European policy on conflict prevention and resolution, issues such as the introduction of preventive diplomacy, agreements on broader political cooperation, and continuous political analysis should be put on the agenda. The ultimate goal should be to ensure "structural stability," an idea that encompasses the goals of sustainable economic and social development, democracy and human rights, the creation of viable political structures and the ability to manage change without resorting to violence.

It should be possible to develop stronger political relations between the EU and ACP states in these two areas, either globally with all these countries or separately with sub-regional blocs or other groups of countries.

Cooperation that can be expanded and intensified in other areas is also important. In this case, the ultimate goal for European and ACP partners is to reduce aid dependence and develop

other forms of cooperation. In areas such as science and technology, education and training, industrial and economic cooperation, it is about identifying mutual interests and encouraging the exchange of experience. The EU is uniquely positioned to offer a wide range of areas and instruments for cooperation. It is also necessary to continue cooperation in traditional areas, particularly in the cultural sphere, which is already well-established. However, such an expansion cannot hide the fact that the poorest countries will need foreign aid for a long time.

There are several options for improving the coordination of the European partnership. In addition to coordination efforts that should be carried out at the operational and sectoral policy levels and in international organizations, the European Union could: 1) develop a global European strategy on ACP states that would bind both member states in their national activities and the whole Union. This would no longer be a matter of adopting a more community-oriented approach to the development cooperation, but rather a matter of harmonizing strategies. The search for greater complementarity between different national and European interventions, a principle enshrined in the Treaty, will be facilitated by a common system of references; 2) include in the new 2021 cooperation agreement an annex on a system of information, monitoring and coordination in key areas of Member State and EU intervention. This would take the form of an EU commitment to improve coordination.

The aim of these two options would not be to standardize European cooperation policy, whose existence and diversity of experience reflects pluralism. The aim would be to improve the impact and effectiveness of European development operations and to achieve critical mass, as well as to assume more clearly the corresponding political responsibility. Improved European coordination would have a positive impact on the development of the ACP region.

The EU can help ACP countries to open their markets to trade with the Union by changing the framework of cooperation: 1) differentiation: the situation differs so much from one ACP country to another that there should be the possibility for adjustments in EU cooperation. Not all ACP countries are currently in a position to launch a standard political and economic partnership with the EU, despite the fact that they are all members of the same organization. An effective partnership can only be a result of mutual interests, common goals and priorities, and mutual rights and obligations that are strictly respected. For reasons of effectiveness, differentiated cooperation policies and procedures have become important; 2) strengthening political dialogue: European and ACP partners should explore ways to reconcile the two requirements of recipient country ownership and accountability to European citizens for the use of cooperation resources.

The EU can only commit itself to supporting economic and social models of organization that contribute to the achievement of its cooperation policy objectives and are consistent with the political and social values it intends to promote. These priorities and objectives formulated by the EU are not incompatible with the aspirations of the ACP peoples, or with the formulation of the development strategies inherent in the ACP states. However, agreement on priority reforms and the adoption of necessary socio-political changes is possible only if the Euro-ACP dialogue on economic and social policies is intensified and local capacity for analysing and implementing development policies is improved.

A more effective dialogue would mean that Community monitoring could focus on the results of cooperation and the progress made sector by sector, rather than on the means used. Such an approach would have to be gradual and would require time and resources. However, it seems to be the only alternative to traditional aid operations that would be effective in the long run.

Conclusion. The ACP Organization may remain on the institutional landscape, strengthening the regional dimensions of the relationship between the EU and the ACP regions. However, the long-term viability of the ACP Organization, beyond its role in any new agreement,

remains to be seen. At some point, its members will decide whether the amended Georgetown Agreement provides a compelling framework for the future development of the ACP region beyond engagement with Europe. Hard questions will be asked about the cost-benefit ratio of the ACP Organization. With each region now having its own programs and funding mechanisms, some may question the added value of the structure of the association.

It is necessary to state that in order to improve relations between the EU and the ACP states and overcome the existing challenges and problems, a number of recommendations were proposed. First of all, it is necessary to arbitrate the concerns of Europeans by making long term political choices, as well as to strengthen the political dimension of ACP-EU relations in order to give them a new impetus. The framework for cooperation should be opened up to offer a European response that is better tailored to the current needs of ACP states, their private sectors and civil society. It is important to focus on coherence at the European level and on EU monitoring.

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ВИКЛИКИ ДЛЯ ПОЛІТИКИ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОГО СОЮЗУ У КРАЇНАХ АФРИКИ, КАРИБСЬКОГО БАСЕЙНУ І ТИХООКЕАНСЬКОГО РЕГІОНУ

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У статті висвітлено особливості співпраці ЄС та АКТ. Проаналізовано ключові виклики європейської політики в АКТ.

Акцентовано увагу на проблемах, що не були вирішені після переговорів щодо нових угод між ЄС та Організацією АКТ та стануть викликами для подальших відносин ЄС-АКТ, серед яких ризик відмивання грошей, фінансування тероризму, проблема нелегальної міграції та потреба континенту в мирі, безпеці та створенні робочих місць. Проаналізовано завдання, які були розроблені для сприяння підходу багатьох зацікавлених сторін до викорінення бідності, та пріоритети для Порядку денного на період до 2030 року. Також було зазначено про принципи сучасних відносин АКТ-ЄС. Визначено переваги інтегрованого підходу та фактори, що перешкоджають співробітництву: 1) непередбачені наслідки для країн АКТ; 2) втрата ефективності внаслідок неадекватної координації між самими державами-членами та між державами-членами та ЄС; 3) відсутність спільної позиції до держав АКТ з боку країн Європи. Окреслено розбіжності у поглядах держав АКТ, які не були вирішені угодами.

Основна увага приділена розгляду потенційних шляхів подальшого розвитку відносин між ЄС та АКТ. Вважається, що ЄС може допомогти державам АКТ відкрити свої ринки для розвитку торгівлі із Союзом, змінивши рамки співпраці. У рамках питання поглиблення партнерства пропонується зміцнення його політичного виміру у декількох аспектах. Зазначається, що необхідним є внесення на порядок денний вирішення таких питань, як запровадження превентивної дипломатії, домовленості про ширшу політичну співпрацю та постійний політичний аналіз.

Зроблено висновок про те, що необхідно задовольнити проблеми європейців шляхом прийняття довгострокового політичного вибору, а також зміцнити політичний вимір відносин АКТ-ЄС з метою надання їм нового імпульсу. Необхідно відкрити рамки співпраці, щоб запропонувати європейську відповідь, яка краще пристосована до поточних потреб держав АКТ, їхніх приватних секторів та громадянського суспільства. Важливо робити більший акцент на послідовності на європейському рівні та на моніторингу з боку ЄС.

Ключові слова: АКТ, ЄС, партнерство, політика, переговори, угода, виклик.