

091007 pc trade

**International Relations  
Section**

Presentation to the  
Portfolio Committee on  
Trade and Industry

**Engaging the EU:  
Parliament of South  
Africa's Relationship with  
the European Parliament**

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**PARLIAMENT**  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## Mechanisms for International Participation

Parliament of South Africa engages in international relations through two primary mechanisms:

### **(1) Committee System i.e. Portfolio and Select Committees**

- Oversee executive action
- Pass legislation
- Ratify international agreements into S231
- Traditional mechanism for international engagement

### **(2) Parliamentary Group on International Relations**

- Oversee bilateral relations with foreign parliaments
- Oversee multilateral relations with international organisations
- Facilitates parliamentary diplomacy: parallel mechanism

## Participation in Multilateral Forums

Parliament of South Africa has relations with seven multilateral bodies:

- African, Caribbean, Pacific – European Union (ACP-EU) Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA)
- South Africa – European Union Inter-Parliamentary Meeting (SA-EU)
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)
- Pan-African Parliament (PAP)
- Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF)
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
- Association of Senates, Shoora, and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab World (ASSECA)

# Current Parliamentary Relations with the European Parliament

## **African, Caribbean, Pacific – European Union (ACP-EU) Joint Parliamentary Assembly**

- Legal basis: Cotonou Agreement
- Meets four times a year
- Headed by Mr B Manamela + two MPs
- Primary focus: Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), monitors political developments in ACP and EU countries

## **South Africa – European Union (SA-EU) Inter-Parliamentary Meetings**

- Legal basis: Trade Development Cooperation Agreement and Declaration of Understanding
- Meets twice a year
- Headed by Ms J Fubbs + 7 MPs
- Primary focus: Strengthen relations between two parliaments, monitor political and economic developments in respective regions

## Recommendations

1. Parliament has to develop the necessary political will to challenge its marginalisation from the foreign policy development process
2. The parliamentary diplomacy activities that Parliament currently engages in have to be re-evaluated and consolidated
3. Develop mechanisms to facilitate public participation in the foreign policy process
4. Develop stronger links between Committees (traditional mechanism) and PGIR (parallel mechanism)
5. Strengthen Parliament's International Relations Section