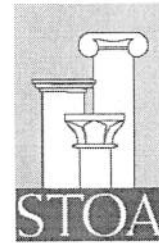




Institut de recherche  
pour le développement



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT  
Science and Technology  
Options Assessment

## BRIEFING NOTE

### **STOA - IRD conference**

(with the contribution of the Committee on Development and  
the European Parliamentary Technology Assessment network)

*What role does co-operation between the EU and Developing Countries  
in the field of Science and Technology have to play in the  
socio-economic development of Developing Countries'*

#### **Conference**

The Science and Technological Options Assessment (STOA) Panel of the European Parliament, in conjunction with the French public Institute of Scientific Research for Development (*Institut de Recherche pour le Développement - IRD*) plan to jointly organise a conference on 4 March 2009 at the European Parliament in Brussels. The topic of the conference will be: *Science and knowledge as prerequisites for sustainable development - Co-operation in the field of Science and Technology between EU Member States and Developing third Countries* (with a particular reference to African countries, due to the EU's special relationship with Africa, through its ACP agreements). The key objective of the conference will be to demonstrate that co-operation in the area of S&T, including: research, capacity building, innovation and technology transfer between the EU and Developing Countries is a highly useful tool in the process of socio-economic development in Developing Countries.

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This conference will emphasise the point that, whilst there already is some scientific co-operation between the EU and Developing Countries, such as the European Commission's EDCTP (EU and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Programme), and other projects supported by the European Development Fund and the Research Framework Programme, the co-operation can still be quantitatively and qualitatively improved.

### **Road Map/ Non-binding Resolution**

It is also suggested that in order to progress with the important goal of raising awareness about the mutually-beneficial outcomes of joint EU-Developing Country scientific collaborative programmes, a short road-map/non-binding political resolution should be drafted for the purposes of the conference and put to the conference audience for approval, modification with amendments, or rejection. It is felt that such a concrete step, even if it is not politically binding, will nonetheless help raise political and societal awareness regarding the necessity of such scientific collaborative programmes, and regarding the need to reduce the usual distinction made between Scientific and Development policies. It will also provide interested stakeholders with a concrete document (which has received a certain degree of political and stakeholder support) to be used by these stakeholders in the process of securing the means by which to implement the policy recommendations outlined at this conference and in the non-binding resolution/road-map. This resolution is to be adopted at the end of the one-day conference, in quorum, by a simple majority of delegates.

### **Key Questions that this Conference and Resolution should address**

#### *a) Stock-taking*

What is currently going on at the EU-level? What is currently going on at the Member State level? How can we ensure that research grants do not overlap because S&T aid is distributed bilaterally (between each Member State and each Developing Country) rather than multilaterally? Without shading the geopolitical traits of the Members States' bilateral policies, what and how can the EU level contribute to upscale the effective impact of that dispersed bilateral support to S&T in Developing Countries? The European Joint Programming structure which should be effective within one year, could be the place to identify specific S&T themes and actions for pooling between the Member States and the Commission. There are already many examples of Member State reinforced S&T cooperation under the EU umbrella: S&T infrastructures, Joint Technological Initiatives and projects such as the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES).

What has been going on in each Member State up to date? Examples should be given of current best practices and recommendations should be given as to what currently works and what should be remedied in the future.

What do stakeholders see as the key challenges and how can we overcome such challenges (political, financial)?

## *b) Looking towards the future*

What do stakeholders from Europe and from the Developing Countries want to achieve and what do they hope for?

What problems do stakeholders foresee? Given the very different situations among Developing Countries: Are the Developing Countries in a position to participate in frontier S&T research? Are the Developing Countries in a position to concretely use basic knowledge to fulfill their development priorities? What is the S&T awareness of the populations and civil societies of Developing Countries? How far are S&T considered as key support for current and future development by stakeholders from Developing Countries?

What can the various actors do to pre-empt problems? The Joint African Union/European Union strategic agreement and the implementation of its action plan (2008-2010) can be considered a first major concrete challenge to be tackled by the road-map/non-binding political resolution of the present conference.

Thus that agreement includes a specific priority for S&T, which clearly needs to find ways and means for a reinforced cooperation and coordination between the multiple bilateral Member State efforts to support S&T and the diverse European Commission instruments and support to S&T.

### **Target Audience**

- Both national and European-level politicians from Member States, in particular those with an interest in either development or science and research issues.
- Politicians from Developing Countries, in particular from African countries, as well as members of the African Union (AU Commission).
- Representatives from Member State permanent representations to the EU.
- European Commissioners and EU officials working in the area of development, as well as that of science and research.
- Representatives from Developing Country permanent representations to the EU.
- Organisations representing both European and Developing Country researchers.
- Organisations representing private sector actors with an interest in development and/or science and research.
- EU and Developing Country media.
- Researchers from Developing Countries, as well as researchers from the EU.
- NGOs working in the fields of development and/or science and research.

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