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The Policy of the European Union towards African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries (ACP). Implications for Poland

Abstract: *The aim of the article is to present Polish foreign policy towards developing countries in the beginning of the 21st Century – its background, evolution, goals and forms. The author presents an analysis of political, economic, development and humanitarian cooperation between the two sides. The role and position of Poland in shaping EU policy outside Europe has been also presented. The author specifies the main challenges facing Polish foreign policy towards developing countries.*

The accession of Poland to the European Union created a new economic, political and social dimension, which demands a lot of changes to be made in a number of areas. One particularly important field in which transformations are to take place is that of Polish foreign policy towards developing countries.¹

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¹ Geographically, the notion of “developing countries” includes countries of Asia (except for Japan), Africa, Latin America and Oceania (with the exception of Australia and New Zealand). The principal criterion for distinguishing that group is the size of *per capita* national product. In 1992 the World Bank assumed the limit level of USD 8,355 recalculated *per capita*. Since this single condition is insufficient (for example, because countries exporting raw materials for production of energy sometimes have higher values of *per capita* national product whilst post-socialist countries, instead, feature low level thereof), some additional criteria are applied as well, of mainly economic (such as a structure of gross domestic product, place occupied in international commercial relations, *per capita* energy consumption or a level of internal savings) or social nature (for instance a ratio of infant mortality, percentage of illiterate persons, consumption of calories and proteins). Admittedly, the least developed countries, known as land-locked developing countries (LLDCs), recording *per capita* national product not exceeding USD 675, constitute yet another, separate group. At present as many as 49 States are regarded LLDCs. The list of LLDCs is annually updated and modified by the United Nations Economic and Social Council. More on the same subject – see: D.Heidrich, *Stosunki Unii*

Poland's membership in the EU and new mechanisms and forms of cooperation present a significant challenge, demanding from Warsaw serious and consistent involvement in the EU's policy EU towards developing countries, including, in particular, a group of States of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific *i.e.* those among all developing countries with which the EU has maintained most institutionalised and historically best cemented contacts.

The European Union's international involvement with the countries of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific stems from specific political and economic interests shared by the EU Member States. In many cases such activities are related to the colonial past of many of the ACP countries and aim at confirming the identity of integrated Europe as a global actor in international relations.² The ACP countries, on their part, in their relations with the European Union intend to develop a model of cooperation along the North-South axis that would lead to more active involvement of the African continent as well as of Caribbean and Pacific countries in the globalising economy and global politics.³

1. The European Union's policy towards countries of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific

Relations of both the European Communities and the European Union with the ACP countries have undergone an evolution over the years, adapting, to a larger or smaller degree, to prevalent political and economic conditions.

1.1. Origins and evolution

The earliest institutional relations between the Communities and developing countries (a group that at that time was in fact limited to Sub Saharan African

Europejskiej z państwami rozwijającymi się – problem pomocy rozwojowej (The European Union's Relations with Developing Countries – the Issue of Development Aid) in: *Unia Europejska. Nowy typ wspólnoty międzynarodowej (The European Union. A New Type of International Community)*, eds. E.Haliżak, S.Parzymies, Warszawa 2002, p.316-318; *Mały słownik stosunków międzynarodowych (Small Dictionary of International Relations)*, ed. G.Michałowska, Warszawa 1999, p.105-106.

² See more: D.Milczarek, *Unia Europejska we współczesnym świecie (The European Union in Contemporary World)*, Warszawa 2005; idem, *Pozycja i rola Unii Europejskiej w stosunkach międzynarodowych. Wybrane aspekty teoretyczne (Position and Role of the European Union in international relations. Selected Theoretical Aspects)*, Warszawa 2003.

³ See more: *Globalizacja a stosunki międzynarodowe (Globalisation and International Relations)*, eds. E.Haliżak, R.Kuźniar, J.Symonides, Bydgoszcz-Warszawa 2004; *Stosunki międzynarodowe. Geneza, struktura, dynamika (International Relations. Genesis, Structure, Dynamics)*, eds. E.Haliżak, R.Kuźniar, Warszawa 2005.

States) were established already in the Treaty of Rome in 1957. Provisions of Articles 131-136 of the Treaty (present articles 182-186) stipulated for the association of overseas countries and territories with the Community. After most colonial countries gained independence, the EC's relations with countries of Sub Saharan Africa were transformed into contractual relations, as manifested by the Yaoundé Conventions of 1963 and 1969,⁴ followed by the Lomé I (1975), Lomé II (1979), Lomé III (1984) and Lomé IV (1989) Conventions.⁵ Apart from Sub Saharan African States signatories of the Lomé Conventions also included some Caribbean and Pacific countries, so that all of them began to be regarded as a uniform group of African, Caribbean and Pacific States.⁶

The first agreements between the EC and the ACP countries were undeniably influenced by the political context of the Cold War. The European Communities focused upon economic aspects of cooperation, avoided involvement in issues of human rights, democracy or the rule of law in the context of international cooperation.⁷ This situation also stemmed from the sheer lack of readiness on the part of many ACP countries to adopt and effectively incorporate principles of democratic State of law or those of good governance. Provisions concerning respect for human rights were introduced as late as in the IV Convention of 1989 and in the Mauritius Agreement of 1995 that revised the Conventions.⁸

⁴ The Yaoundé conventions (of 1963 and 1969) were concluded with eighteen African countries (including Madagascar). That group of countries has been called the Association of African and Malagasy States (AAMS). K.Zajączkowski, *The Relations Between the European Union and the Countries of Sub-Saharan Africa Following the End of the Cold War*, "Hemispheres. Studies on Cultures and Societies" no. 20/2005, p.94.

⁵ See more: O.J., L 229, 17.8.1991; O.J., L 86, 31.3.1986; O.J., L 347, 22.12.1980; O.J., L 25, 30.1.1976.

⁶ The group of ACP States was formed in 1975 on the basis of the so-called Georgetown Agreement. The document was signed by representatives of 46 countries. At present the group of ACP numbers 77 States.

⁷ Moreover, the Lomé conventions constituted an agreed answer of a group of a couple of the world's wealthiest and several dozens of the world's poorest countries to challenges they were confronted with by the process of decolonisation. The conventions in question also resulted from the interest, on the part of the Community, in rapprochement and establishing closer relations with a group of ACP countries, especially after the energy and raw materials crisis experienced globally in 1970s. Additionally, the accession of the United Kingdom to the European Community brought the issue of extending the coverage of the convention to include the countries of the Commonwealth to the forum.

⁸ See: J.Zajączkowski, K.Zajączkowski, *Polityka Unii Europejskiej wobec Afryki Subsaharyjskiej (The European Union's Policy Towards Sub-Saharan Africa)*, "Afryka. Biuletyn Polskiego Towarzystwa Afrykanistycznego" no. 18(04)/2003, p.19-35.

As a result of changes occurring in international arrangement of power, the gradual decline of bipolar world and deep transformations in international economic relations, since mid 1990s' efforts have been undertaken to redefine the model of relations between the EU and the ACP countries.

Critics of the Lomé conventions mainly pointed out that they actually failed to stimulate development of the ACP countries or to stop the process of their serious marginalisation in the globalising world economy, which has been particularly evident when compared to the dynamic growth of economies of Asian countries. The Lomé Conventions did not contribute to any increase in the share of the ACP countries in trade exchange with the EU. In fact, that share decreased from 6.7% in 1976 to 3% in 1998. The share of African States in the inflow of direct investments amounted, in 2000, to *circa* USD 9 thousand million, accounting for 1% of the value of global direct foreign investments. Also, in the same year countries of Sub Saharan Africa recorded the lowest value of portfolio investments in the world (at just 2% on the global scale).⁹

The system of preferences applied by the EC/EU, adopted under the Lomé Conventions, was subject to a great deal of controversy as well, first in the light of provisions of the Uruguay Round of GATT and then in that of the World Trade Organization principles. Such controversies arose with respect to challenging, by the United States and a number of Latin American countries, the banana agreement between the EU and ACP guaranteeing preferential access for bananas from Africa and the Caribbean to the EU markets. A WTO panel considering the appeal questioned preferences based upon the Lomé Conventions as a whole, ruling that they constituted discrimination of other developing countries.¹⁰

The member states of the EU, as well as the EU itself, were also disappointed by the results of the Lomé Conventions, especially in regard to developmental aid for sub-Saharan Africa, as the effects were incomparably lesser than for other developing countries. Moreover, the amount of that aid became a burden for EU states in the context of financial restrictions imposed by the Maastricht Treaty adjustment criteria. In addition, the end of the East-West rivalry made ideological support for African nations on the part of the EC no longer necessary. They could not count on the EU's support only for political reasons.

⁹ See: *Global Development Finance*, The World Bank, 2001, p.62; A.Cafruny, P.Peters, *The Union and the World: The Political Economy of a Common European Foreign Policy*, The Hague 1998, p.39.

¹⁰ See: Ch.Stevens, *EU Policy for the Banana Market: The External Impact of Internal Policies* in: *Policy-Making in the European Union*, eds. H.Wallace, W.Wallace, Oxford University Press 1996.

It should also be mentioned that, despite having many things in common, the countries of ACP never formed anything like a monolith and that the establishment of the group on the basis of the 1975 agreement was largely an effect of aspiration of small Caribbean and Pacific countries to unite around African countries (which were seen as having greater negotiation strength) in order to acquire similar benefits as they did from their collaboration with the EEC.

In 1996 the European Commission published Green Paper on Relations between the European Union and the ACP Countries on the eve of the 21st Century.¹¹ In 1997, in a special document the Commission presented negotiation position of the EU and its Member States concerning future agreement between the EU and the ACP countries. Following 18 months of negotiation, on 23.06.2000 the Partnership Agreement Between 77 Members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the European Community and its Member States was signed in Cotonou (Benin).¹² The Agreement was signed for 20 years, with a possibility of five consecutive years' extension. The Agreement entered into force on 1.04.2003.

1.2. The Cotonou Agreement

The Cotonou Agreement focuses upon three areas: economic, development and political, acknowledging mutual interrelations between commercial exchange, provision of balanced development and political dialogue.

In line with the basic arrangement, its objective is to reduce poverty and to ensure social and economic development of the ACP countries. Moreover, the importance of political cooperation is emphasised, with such issues mentioned as working out means of mutual trust as well as prevention of conflicts and migration. One of the features of the Cotonou Agreement is its new attitude towards management of aid projects. Specifically, this is based upon evaluation of needs and abilities of individual ACP countries to absorb and use the assistance and financial resources provided, rather than applying stiffly defined criteria (as it used to be) such as levels of *per capita* GDP.

The Cotonou agreement stipulates that, starting in 2008, the ACP's best developed countries will liberalise their trade with the EU, signing the

¹¹ Green Paper on Relations between the European Union and the ACP Countries on the Eve of the 21st Century. Challenges and Options for a New Partnership, European Commission, Brussels, COM(96)570 final, November 1996.

¹² O.J., L 317, 15.12.2000, p. 3-353; More on the same subject – see: B.Martenczuk, *From Lomé to Cotonou: The ACP-EC Partnership Agreement in Legal Perspective*, "European Foreign Affairs Review" no. 4/2000, p.25-39; J.-R.Goulongana, *Together we must take up challenges of the Cotonou Agreement*, "The ACP-EU Courier", Supplement, September 2000, p.5.

so-called Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA). In practice these are going to be agreements providing for free trade among their signatories. As regards other countries, *i.e.* those with which no economic partnership agreements will enter into force in 2008, the EU is going to develop other mechanisms of trade exchange, consistent with rules of WTO and basing upon the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). Finally, the least developed countries will still benefit, after 2008, from the EU's trade preferences with no principle of mutuality.¹³

The agreement opens a new stage in relations between the EU and the ACP countries. It is still too early to judge the implementation of its provisions and the possibility of the achievement of its' aims. A serious obstacle undermining a newly-established system might be serious diversification among the ACP countries. It has to be remembered that they include, on the one hand, the world's poorest countries, such as Mozambique, Ethiopia or Sudan and, on the other hand, much more developed ones, such as South Africa.

One of the important problems for sub-Saharan Africa, not addressed by the Cotonou Agreement, is the access of their agricultural products to the EU markets. The obstacle in this regard are EU subsidies for the agricultural sector of their members, which could significantly limit free trade in agricultural goods between the EU and African countries. Moreover, contrary to the expectations of poorer countries, the EU has decided to maintain agricultural subsidies within the CAP until 2013. Many analysts stress the destructive effect of agricultural subsidies on the economies of developing countries, the amount of which is larger than the value of development aid provided to those countries, including the Cotonou Agreement (according to the OECD, the EU provided, through various channels, aid for its agricultural sector amounting to 93 billion dollars).

The Cotonou Agreement is consistent with the most recent trends in the area of international cooperation in development, and is based, among other things, upon responsibility of the beneficiary States for their own development (the principle of ownership), respect for rules of democracy and human rights and for those of good governance. Nevertheless, there are still such key issues to be addressed such as an amount of resources allocated by the EU to aid to the ACP countries, ensuring coordination of activities of individual aid agencies

¹³ See: P.Lamy, *Stepping Stones or Stumbling Blocks? The EU Approach Towards the Problem of Multilateralism vs. Regionalism in Trade Policy*, "The World Economy" no. 10/2002; K.Zajęzkowski, *Unia Europejska–Afryka Subsaharyjska: stosunki u progu XXI w. (European Union – Sub Saharan Africa: Relations at the Turn of the 21st Century)*, "Studia Europejskie" no. 4/2006, p.41-64.

as well as strengthening of consistence of these activities with the EU policies in other areas, such as trade or environment protection (*i.e.* policy coherence).

1.3. Development and humanitarian policy

It should be observed, in that context, that the European Union has been the world's largest donor of development aid.¹⁴ In total, the EU (understood as the EC and its Member States) allocates as much as 0.51% of its GDP for development aid in the world (compared to 0.15% in the case of USA or 0.32% in that of Japan). In 2000 the EU earmarked over EUR 27 thousand million for assistance given to developing countries, the amount that accounted for 47% of the total amount of this type of aid provided worldwide. For Africa alone the amount of EUR 8.1 thousand million was allocated, accounting for 67% of the whole international development aid granted to that continent.¹⁵

The principal sources of the Community development aid for the ACP countries include the EC budget and the European Development Fund (EDF),¹⁶ providing, at the beginning of the 21st Century, *circa* 75% and 20% of total funds, respectively. The remaining part is delivered by the European Investment Bank (EIB).¹⁷

It should be observed, however, that the EU/Community development policy is only meant as a supplement to activities of particular Member States in that respect. In fact, money coming directly from individual Member States of the EU have accounted for largest part of the aid provided to the ACP countries. In this context Member States intend to use their participation in the development policy not only to strengthen their political position within the

¹⁴ D.Milczarek, *The International Role of the European Union As a "Civilian Power"*, "The Polish Foreign Affairs Digest" no. 4/2003.

¹⁵ In 2002 the European Commission and Eritrea signed an agreement (known as Country Strategy Paper) which provided that in the years 2002–2007 the EU would allocate EUR 88 million for aid to Eritrea in reconstruction of the country. See more: M.Breuning, *Foreign Aid, Development Assistance, or Development Cooperation: What's in a Name?*, "International Politics" no. 3(39)/2002, p.369-377.

¹⁶ The European Development Fund (EDF) was established in 1958 on the basis of a special convention annexed to the Treaty of Rome of 1957. The EDF has been funded from membership contributions on the basis of mutual agreements. Specific shares of payments of the EU Member States to the EDF has reflected their share in the GDP as well as historical links. During the period of five initial years the EDF had the amount of ECU 581 million to disburse. In subsequent years the Fund's resources were growing much larger, amounting to EUR 14.6 thousand million in the period 1996–2000.

¹⁷ In the years 2002–2007 the EU's forecasts assumed development aid for the ACP countries in the amount of about EUR 23 thousand million. Moreover, EIB is going to grant preferential credits for the amount of EUR 1.7 thousand million.

EU, but to extend the scope of their international contacts and economic bonds with the ACP countries, as well.

The European Union has also been the world's largest provider of humanitarian aid. It delivers *circa* 30% of global humanitarian aid.¹⁸ In addition, its individual Member States provide further *c.* 25% of such aid.¹⁹ Since 1992 the role of the principal body coordinating the EU humanitarian aid has been entrusted to the Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), which cooperates with international organisations and agencies and with non-governmental organisations.²⁰ In 2000 ECHO provided to Africa EUR 183 million worth of humanitarian aid, which accounted for 37% of ECHO's total budget (EUR 492 million). In 2002 the EU allocated about EUR 50 million for fighting famine in Southern regions of Africa.²¹ In 2004 it delivered EUR 72 million for humanitarian aid for Darfur plunged in the civil war and in the spring of 2005 EUR 12 million for refugees in Chad.

1.4. The Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU

The European Union also runs an active policy towards the ACP countries under the EU 2nd pillar *i.e.* the Common Foreign and Security Policy, although it avoids direct involvement in military conflicts in the territory of ACP. Instead, it is the objective of the CFSP in the ACP regions to support preventive actions and provision of support to other international organisations in solving the conflicts. This relates, in particular, to activities of such organisations as United Nations, the African Union or sub-regional organisations.²²

The European Union has repeatedly expressed its readiness to cooperate with the ACP countries in the area of building peace in post-conflict stages. However, the EU and its Member States expect that the answer of developing countries – including, in particular, those in Africa – to the offer of aid, will be their true involvement in the process of democratic and economic reforms as well as respect for human rights and rule of law. Promotion of these values and creating conditions for their implementation is another significant

¹⁸ The basis for financing operations related with the European Union's humanitarian aid is found in Chapter B7–21 of budget of the European Commission as well as in appropriate provisions of the Cotonou Agreement.

¹⁹ *Human Development Report*, UNDP 2002.

²⁰ *Council Regulation No. 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 Concerning Humanitarian Aid*, O.J., L 163, 2.07.1996, p.0001-0006.

²¹ *World Food Program Says African Food Crisis Threatens 38 Million*, WFP, 5.12.2002; *Africa: Countries Facing Exceptional Food Shortages – December 2002*, WFP, 11.12.2002.

²² See: J.Zajączkowski, *Unia Europejska w stosunkach międzynarodowych (The European Union in International Relations)*, Warszawa 2006.

objective of the EU's activities in the ACP countries as well as the objective of the policies of many individual Member States.²³

The European Union also applies political and economic sanctions to those ACP – especially African – countries, in which principles of democracy and rule of law are seriously infringed. Such decisions were made, for example, with respect to Nigeria (1993),²⁴ Sudan (1994), Angola (1997)²⁵ or Sierra Leone (1997). It should be observed, in that context, that political and economic sanctions have proved to be the most effective manner of pursuing the CFSP objectives in relation to developing countries, especially with regard to African countries.

Instead, the European Union's preventive diplomacy has little chances of success in the African continent since, as unsupported by any kind of military actions, it usually proves rather ineffective. As an example, the lack of any positive effects of the EU actions undertaken in the region of Great Lakes or ineffectiveness of efforts of the EU Special Representative in the same region (since 25.03.1996 in the person of Aldo Ajelo) may be quoted.

2. Poland's foreign policy beyond the Euroatlantic sphere – conditions and premises

Foreign policy includes such issues as developing and regulating contacts with other actors of international relations in line with national interest of a given State.²⁶

²³ See: J.Starzyk, *Wspólna Polityka Zagraniczna i Bezpieczeństwa Unii Europejskiej (The European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy)*, Warszawa 2001, p.229-262.

²⁴ *Council Decision on the Common Position defined by the Council on the basis of Article J.2 of the Treaty on European Union on Nigeria*, O.J., L 298, 20.11.1995, 95/515/CFSP; *Council Decision on the Common Position defined by the Council on the basis of Article J.2 of the Treaty on European Union on Nigeria*, O.J., L 309, 4.12.1995, 95/544/CFSP.

²⁵ *Council Decision on the Common Position defined by the Council on the basis of Article J.2 of the Treaty on European Union with regard to Angola*, O.J., L 245, 2.10.1995, 95/413/CFSP.

²⁶ National interest is a set of objectives and values which, at a given time, are considered important for a country's development and efficient operation. More on the same subject – see: J.Kukułka, *Teoria stosunków międzynarodowych (The Theory of International Relations)*, Warszawa 2000, p.220-224; J.Stefanowicz, *Anatomia polityki międzynarodowej (The Anatomy of International Policy)*, Toruń 2001, p.79-91; *Understanding Foreign Policy. The Foreign Policy Systems Approach*, eds. M.Clarke, B.White, Aldershot 1989; E.L.Morse, *The Transformation of Foreign Policies in: Perspectives on World Politics. A Reader*, eds. R.Little, M.Smith, London 1991, p.170; *Polityka zagraniczna państwa (A State's Foreign Policy)*, eds. J.Kukułka, R.Zięba, Warszawa 1992; *Wstęp do teorii polityki zagranicznej państwa (Introduction to the Theory of a State's Foreign Policy)*, ed. R.Zięba, Warszawa 2004.

The aim of foreign policy, instead, may be defined as “such a vision of a future state of affairs and future configuration of conditions, that governments, acting through individual policy makers intend to cause through influence and pressures exerted externally as well as through either changing or maintaining other countries’ behaviours”.²⁷ In other words, objectives are an element that directs the activities of the State foreign policy aiming at satisfaction of needs and interests articulated in the internal system of that State and related with its participation in a given international environment.

There are four fundamental objectives of the State foreign policy that should be mentioned: to ensure security, to increase strength of the State, to improve international standing and prestige of the State, and to formulate and optimise the rules according to which international environment operates.

Objectives of foreign policy are sought and achieved by means of instruments of foreign policy. In literature such instruments of foreign policy are mostly classified according to areas of social life from which they originate. This way political, economic, military, psycho-social, normative and other instruments may be distinguished.²⁸

The last decade of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21st Century brought fundamental revaluation in Poland’s foreign policy as regards the objectives, means and directions of the activities. The participation in the Euroatlantic structures and the European integration processes have made Poland an active participant in the international arena. Poland successfully overcame the state of isolation, lasting for over a dozen years.²⁹ Moreover, in consequence of a processes of internationalisation the State began to depend more on cooperation with other countries and actors of international relations.³⁰

In that context the following priorities of Polish foreign policy may be distinguished:

- strengthening the position and role of Poland in the European Union,
- building friendly relations with all neighbours and supporting processes of democratisation,

²⁷ K.J.Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*, New York 1967, p.126; see also: J.Frankel, *The Making of Foreign Policy*, London 1963; W.Wallace, *Foreign Policy and Political Process*, London 1971.

²⁸ More on the same subject – see: *Stosunki międzynarodowe...*, op.cit., p.117-118.

²⁹ More on the same subject – see: *Polska polityka bezpieczeństwa 1989–2000 (Polish Security Policy 1989-2000)*, ed. R.Kuźniar, Warszawa 2001.

³⁰ See: *The Limits of State Autonomy. Societal Groups and Foreign Policy Formulation*, eds. D.Skidmore, V.M.Hudson, Boulder 1993; *Państwo we współczesnych stosunkach międzynarodowych (The State in Contemporary International Relations)*, eds. E.Halizak, I.Popiuk-Rysińska, Warszawa 1995; J.Kukulka, *Wstęp do nauki o stosunkach międzynarodowych (Preface to Science on International Relations)*, Warszawa 2003, in particular Chapter V.

- further participation in the development of all forms of regional cooperation,
- cooperation with international organisations (in political terms this means participation in activities of the United Nations and OSCE; in economic ones participation in the International Monetary Fund, in the World Bank and in the World Trade Organization is important),
- advancement of political and economic relations with the developing countries.

The above-mentioned priorities are treated as interdependent and are meant to support each other. Although Poland is situated in Europe, it wouldn't be justified for it to run Europe-centred policy. There are several reasons for Poland to intensify its non-European policy:

- processes of globalisation and integration and the unprecedented dynamics and scale of changes occurring in global politics and economy resulting therefrom demand a broader area of action for foreign policy and closer definition of its new directions;³¹
- most developing countries begin to play significantly more important roles in politics and in international economic relations (among other as a result of regional integration processes) revealing an impressive modernisation dynamics and considerable growth potential (increased demand for import, capital resources). Such tendencies provide positive premises for intensification of cooperation.

Taking into consideration above one should not however underestimate the impact of the EU accession on the Polish policy towards the developing countries outside the EU.

Relations with countries of the South are of primary importance for the EU, especially in early 21st Century, considering how they contribute to consolidation of the position and role of the EU as global actor of international relations. Accordingly, the European Union tends to integrate three crucial elements of its external relations, *i.e.* foreign policy, trade and development aid.

General framework of cooperation between Poland as the EU Member State and developing countries is defined, above all, by the following elements: the Barcelona Process and the "Wider Europe – New Neighbourhood" strategy, the Cotonou Agreement, the forum of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM),

³¹ More on the subject – see: *Globalizacja a stosunki międzynarodowe...*, op.cit.; *Świat-Europa-Dolny Śląsk. Wyzwania milenijne (The World-Europe-Lower Silesia. The Millenium Challenges)*, eds. T.Łoś-Nowak, M.S.Wolański, Wrocław 2002; J.E.Stiglitz, *Globalizacja (Globalisation)*, PWN Scientific Publishing, Warszawa 2004; *Gospodarka światowa. Handel zagraniczny i marketing. Wybrane problemy (Global Economy. Foreign Trade and Marketing. Selected Problems)*, ed. B.Mucha-Leszko, Lublin 2003; M.Dobroczyński, *Międzynarodowe związki gospodarki z polityką (International Relations of Economy and Policy)*, Toruń 2004.

dialogue between the EU and Latin America and Caribbean, between the EU and ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations), as well as EU – MERCOSUR (*Mercado Común del Sur*; Southern Common Market), EU – the Andes Community; standing consultation with individual countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, basing upon international agreements signed by the EU.³²

3. Poland's foreign policy towards countries of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific and the accession of Poland to the European Union

In the early 1990s' geographic directions of Poland's trade exchange with the other countries were reoriented and the State's relations with non-European countries lost some of their importance.³³ Nevertheless, increasing economic and political needs, further stimulated by the fact of the EU membership and by processes of globalisation, encourage Poland to intensify its foreign policy beyond the Euroatlantic zone at the outset of the 21st Century.

Poland, as a Member State of the European Union, will participate in making decisions about the ultimate model of cooperation between the EU and Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries.

Poland accepted the obligation to implement *acquis communautaire* in the area of 'external relations' on the day of its accession to the EU and did not apply for transition period in that area. This includes the obligation to adopt the EU legislation concerning agreements made with the third countries. At the same time, Poland has to apply the EU common customs tariffs. Similarly in the area of "foreign policy and security" Poland accepted its obligations from the moment of accession without any transitional periods.³⁴

³² More on the subject – see: K.Zajączkowski, *Ameryka Łacińska w polityce Unii Europejskiej (Latin America in the European Union's Policy)* in: *Ameryka Łacińska we współczesnym świecie (Latin America in Contemporary World)*, ed. M.F.Gawrycki, Warszawa 2006; idem, *Polityka rozwojowa i humanitarna jako instrument realizacji celów Unii Europejskiej w Ameryce Łacińskiej (Development and Humanitarian Policy as an Instrument of Achievement of the European Union's objectives in Latin America)* in: *Ameryka Łacińska wobec wyzwań globalizacji (Latin America and Challenges of Globalisation)*, ed. M.F.Gawrycki, Toruń 2006, p.237-258; P.J.Borkowski, *Partnerstwo Śródziemnomorskie (Mediterranean Partnership)*, Warszawa 2005, p.169.

³³ In spite of an unimpressive scale of mutual cooperation in 1970s and 80s Poland achieved quite a strong position in developing countries as a reliable partner in the field of export of goods and services and implementation of a number of significant investments, including large industrial and infrastructural projects.

³⁴ Z.Doliwa-Klepacki, *Integracja europejska (po zakończeniu negocjacji Polski z EU) (European Integration (after conclusion of Poland's negotiation with the EU))*, Białystok 2003, p.260.

3.1. Political dimension

Since 2003 the frequency of diplomatic contacts with the Asian, African and Latin American countries increased significantly. Poland, as a Member State of the European Union, became involved in the EU foreign policy within its structures of dialogue and cooperation. The first opportunity was found during the III Summit Meeting of Heads of State and Government of Latin America, Caribbean and the European Union held on 28.05.2004 in Guadalajara. The summit was attended by the President of the Republic of Poland Aleksander Kwaśniewski. Then, on 8–9.10.2004 the Prime Minister Marek Belka participated in the fifth meeting Europe-Asia (ASEM) in Hanoi (Vietnam). Meetings in Guadalajara and Hanoi proved that Poland, as a member of the European Union is going to be an active participant in determining the foreign policy of the EU, thus undermining the accusations of the opponents of European integration and Euro-sceptics, according to whom Poland, through the accession to the European Union, would lose its autonomy in formulating its foreign policy.

Despite objections put forth during the Intergovernmental Conference 2003/2004, Poland also managed to smoothly adapt to the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy. At the meeting of the EU Ministers of Defence on 6.04.2004 Warsaw expressed its interest in participating in creation of the EU's Battle Groups. After the humanitarian disaster of 2004 caused by the tsunami waves in South-Eastern Asia Warsaw began to favour re-modelling of a concept of such groups so they would also be capable of providing effective international aid in situations of natural disasters. As justified by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Adam Daniel Rotfeld in the Sejm of the Republic of Poland on 21.01.2005, the necessity to undertake such action also became evident in the wake of such events as those in Sudan. Rotfeld emphasised that, in consequence, it was a task for Poland *“to prepare a reasonable doctrine for international use of our military forces in similar operations”*.³⁵

In November 2004 Polish government adopted the ‘Polish Strategy towards Non-European Developing Countries’, which included a complex programme of re-animating cooperation with that group of countries.³⁶

³⁵ *Informacja Rządu na temat polskiej polityki zagranicznej przedstawiona na posiedzeniu Sejmu 21 stycznia 2005 roku przez Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych RP prof. Adama Daniela Rotfelda (The government information regarding Polish foreign policy presented at the session of the Sejm on 21 January 2005 by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Professor Adam Daniel Rotfeld).*

³⁶ As observed by B. Zaleski in his *Preface* to the document, the Strategy does not constitute any *“universal solution for all, often serious, detailed material and institutional problems. It should rather be treated as political signal defining fundamental directions and objectives of Polish non-European foreign policy (...)”*. *Strategia RP w odniesieniu do pozaeuropejskich*

Beyond the Euroatlantic zone, the principal direction on which Poland focuses in its diplomacy is Asia, and in particular the People's Republic of China (Pekin expresses growing interest in the Central and Eastern European countries, regarding them as a bridge through which to get access to best developed countries among the "top 27"), South Korea and Japan (initially the attitude of Tokyo towards Warsaw was rather reserved, which was a result of abolishment, by the London and Paris Clubs part of Polish debts).³⁷ At the same time, in the context of stimulating its relations with the developing countries, Poland has maintained lively political contacts with the African countries. Between 7–14.03.2004 the Minister of Foreign Affairs Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz's official visits in Nigeria, Angola, Namibia and Kenya took place; their aim being intensification of relations with selected countries of Sub Saharan Africa occupying significant political and economic position in the African continent and important partners of Poland. In each of the countries visited a revision of bi-lateral relations was made on the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and discussions were held concerning international and regional issues. Minister W.Cimoszewicz was accompanied by a group of Polish businessmen approved by the National Chamber of Commerce. On 13–14.09.2004 the Vice-President of South Africa Jacob Zuma visited Poland. This was the first meeting of representatives of both countries on such a high level in 12 years. Also in mid-September the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Burkina Faso – Youssouf Ouedraogo – paid an official visit to Poland.³⁸

krajów rozwijających się (The Polish Strategy towards Non-European Developing Countries), "Zeszyty Akademii Dyplomatycznej" no. 22/2005.

³⁷ The visit of President of the People's Republic of China Ju Jintao in Warsaw on 8-10.06.2004 – the first such visit in the history of Poland's bilateral relations with China – was major success of Polish diplomacy. The visit took place 7 years after President A.Kwaśniewski's travel to China and in 55th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between Poland and China. At a press conference held after the visit President Kwaśniewski said, among other things: "As a new Member State of the EU we are interested in developing strategic partnership between the European Union and China and therefore we intend to actively involve in building and promoting such partnership". During the visit of President Ro Mu Hjun in Warsaw, in December 2004, the subjects of debate between South Korea and Poland focused principally upon economic matters (among Asian countries, South Korea has been the biggest investor in Poland). Moreover, Poland provided political support to Seoul's efforts to alleviate tension that persists in the Korean Peninsula and to find solutions to North Korean nuclear weapon issue. The character of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland Marek Belka's visits in several Asian countries in January 2005 was mainly economic. See: "Rocznik Strategiczny" 2004/2005, Warszawa 2005, p.380.

³⁸ Ibidem, p.384.

The Cotonou Partnership Agreement regulates the issues of the accession of Central and Eastern European countries to the European Union in Article 94(3) which provides that each new EU Member State becomes a party to the Agreement from the moment of its accession. This is either done by means of a special provision made in the treaty of accession or – when such a clause is missing – through deposition of the act of accession in the General Secretariat of the Council (with a certified copy submitted to the ACP Secretariat).

In the context of its accession to the EU Poland undertook actions which aimed at finding more effective solutions to global problems (such as, among other things, environment pollution, terrorism, international indebtedness, migration)³⁹ that might negatively influence the European Union's social and economic development and political stabilisation in the future. It is in Africa that most serious conflict and global problems occur. This situation prompts Poland to take active part in international programmes of efforts aiming at giving systemic solutions to problems of that continent.

The 'Polish Strategy towards Non-European Developing Countries' announces participation of Poland in all initiatives and actions of the EU and the Transatlantic Community the aim of which is to find solutions to global problems. The document underlines that Polish government should also prepare in advance to cooperation with the European External Action Service which is meant to support the EU Minister of Foreign Affairs (after potential appointment of one). Instead, in the area of aid policy the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, acting in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, will endeavour to improve methods and procedures of providing the EU aid to non-European countries in such fields as health protection, education, ensuring access to drinking water, building of infrastructure, consolidation of local structures and supporting democratic institutions.⁴⁰

Important elements of Polish strategy towards the ACP countries include propagation of positive effects of the process of the EU enlargement. This was quite relevant considering that ACP countries were afraid that the accession of Central and Eastern European countries to the European Union will result in reduced level of the EU aid for their own development. Such fears on their part were manifested, among other things, by the adoption by some ACP countries of the Nadi Declaration on 19.07.2002, in which it was regarded

³⁹ Z.Cesarz, E.Stadtmüller, *Problemy polityczne współczesnego świata (Political Problems of Contemporary World)*, Wrocław 2002; E.Cziomer, L.W.Zybkiewicz, *Zarys współczesnych stosunków międzynarodowych (The Outline of Contemporary International Relations)*, PWN Scientific Publishing, Warszawa–Kraków 2000; *Terroryzm w świecie współczesnym (Terrorism in Contemporary World)*, eds. E.Haliżak, W.Lizak, L.Lukaszuk, E.Śliwka, Warszawa–Pieniężno 2004.

⁴⁰ *Strategia RP... (The Polish Strategy towards Non-European...)*, op.cit., p.30-34.

necessary to increase expenditure on the part of the wealthy North for the poor South.⁴¹ This will probably prompt leaders of the EU Member States and high officials of the European Commission to exert pressure upon new members to involve more in the aid provided to countries of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific.

The Cotonou Agreement is a political and economic arrangement and not a simple commercial agreement. This political aspect of the agreement (rule of law, respect for human rights, allowing legal opposition, building civil society) should prove especially interesting to Poland, a country that could share its experience of profound transformation with ACP countries and contribute new qualities in the EU relations with countries of the South.⁴²

3.2. Economic aspects

The presence of Poland in the European structures is related with a duty to accept certain obligations and, in consequences, to accept some restrictions imposed by the Common Trade Policy. As a consequence, Polish trade policy towards countries of Asia, Africa and America lost its purely national nature as the area of devising the instruments of that policy belongs now to competencies of appropriate EU institutions (with some exceptions as regards support for export). Accordingly, Poland – before the accession to the Communities, had to dissolve more than 110 bilateral agreements regulating commercial cooperation with individual developing countries (due to unregulated financial settlements Poland maintained agreements with the following countries: Iraq, Libya, Mongolia, North Korea and Syria). Moreover, Poland was obliged, on the basis of the Act of Accession, to become member of international agreements, including those concerning relations with developing countries, concluded or transitionally applied by other Member States and the EU as the whole. In economic terms this implies, among other things, the obligation to introduce preferential conditions of access to Polish market – treated as a part of the Community market. Yet, it is pointed out that despite this situation “*the present treaty base regulating commercial relations between Poland as the EU Member State and developing countries largely secures Polish economic interests*”.⁴³

⁴¹ See: V.Michaux, *L'élargissement de l' Union: une menace pour le développement?*, “Le Courier ACP–EU” July-August 2002, p.18-19.

⁴² See: J.Zajączkowski, K.Zajączkowski, *Poland's Role in the European Union Cooperation with West African Countries* in: *Poland's Relations with West Africa*, ed. Z.Łazowski, Warszawa 2004, p.63-70.

⁴³ *Strategia RP... (The Polish Strategy towards Non-European...)*, op.cit., p.26.

With the day of accession Poland became automatically a party to the Cotonou Agreement, which in practice translates into quite good opportunity to increase commercial exchange with the ACP countries. In 2003 the balance of Poland's mutual trade relations with African countries was negative and amounted to USD 117 million. Over the recent years almost all of Polish trade exchange with Africa (over 90%) was distributed among 5 countries constituting the African Mediterranean Zone (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt and Libya) as well as South Africa, Nigeria and the Ivory Coast.⁴⁴

In reality, the actual commercial exchange with ACP countries is larger, since many transactions are concluded and made through third-country intermediaries, mainly from Germany, Switzerland or Austria, thus seriously distorting official statistics.

At the same time, since 2006 Poland is obliged to provide aid funds to the ACP countries under the subsequent edition of the European Development Fund. Moreover, since mid 2004 a part of Polish premium payment to the EU budget constitutes financial contribution to the European Investment Bank and is allocated to the EU humanitarian aid for developing countries.

Considering the example of the European Union's aid to the ACP countries it should be underlined that the EU assistance may become a stimulating factor for the expansion of export, not only of goods but also of various services from donor countries. However, as an essential condition for such an opportunity to be taken is historical, political, economic and cultural presence in the beneficiary countries. This is relatively simple for former colonial countries (and at present the principal donors, such as France or Belgium) or acknowledged economic powers (as Germany or Sweden). The same condition is, on the other hand, more difficult to be fulfilled by the new EU Member States, which have neither colonial past nor economic position and no real expertise in trade with the Third World countries. Experiences of State-owned foreign trade enterprises which traded with political regimes friendly to former socialist countries became totally irrelevant now. As a consequence, the initial task for the newly-adopted countries is to become present on public procurement markets in the ACP countries.

However, as one evaluates the level of dynamism of Polish enterprises in competition for a share in the cake of aid provided to ACP countries, the very

⁴⁴ In 2004 significant items in Polish export to Africa included: vessels and vehicles – 22%, products of animal origin – 17%, machinery and equipment – 12%, mineral products – 10%, metal goods – 9%, ready food products – 7%, products of plant origin, paper, plastics – 4%. In the same year import from Africa to Poland included mainly: products of plant origin and ready food products – over 30% (natural rubber, cocoa, coffee, tea, tobacco, fruits, alcohol), mineral products (iron, manganese and chromium ore) – over 30%; vehicles and vessels – 20%, textile products – 8%.

weak position of Polish companies in terms of their lobbying in Brussels is evident⁴⁵. If Warsaw is scarcely visible in Brussels, then it is going to be difficult to gain significant presence upon public procurement market in the ACP countries. Moreover, the issue of lobbying still remains underrated by business circles and institutions that should promote Polish presence world-wide.

The Cotonou Agreement and its commercial terms present no threat for Polish economy. Firstly, goods originating from ACP countries either benefit from customs-free import due to their nature (they are mostly raw materials) or from highly preferential treatment of their country of origin, resulting from the provisions of The Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). Secondly, in the remaining cases interests of Poland fit well into those of the EU as the whole or of its other individual Member States so they will be protected during negotiations concerning the introduction of free trade principles in the form of derogations and exclusions. Thirdly, a margin of preferences for the ACP countries will be reduced proportionally to liberalisation of customs tariffs under the agreements of the Uruguay Round and processes initiated by the WTO in the framework of the negotiation basing upon the Doha Agreement. Fourthly, in effect of the ACP countries' very low share in international trade (1.12%) and their little diversified export, supply of industrial goods from those countries presents no major threat to the Polish market.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ See more: M.Clamen, *Le lobbying et ses secrets*, Paris 2000, p.22-23; see also: J.Zajączkowski, K.Zajączkowski, *Działalność polskiego lobby rolnego w procesie negocjacji Traktatu Akcesyjnego (The Activity of Polish Agricultural Lobby in the Process of Negotiation of the Accession Treaty)* in: *Polityka zagraniczna i wewnętrzna państwa w procesie integracji europejskiej (Foreign and Home State Policy in the process of European Integration)*, ed. E.Haliżak, Bydgoszcz-Warszawa 2004, p.315-342; K.Jasiecki, M.Mołęda-Zdziech, U.Kurczewska, *Lobbying. Sztuka skutecznego wywierania wpływu (Lobbying. The Art of Exerting Effective Influence)*, Kraków 2000; *Lobbying w Unii Europejskiej (Lobbying in the European Union)*, eds. M.Mołęda-Zdziech, U.Kurczewska, Warszawa 2002; K.Rud, *Lobbying międzynarodowy – próba definicji (International Lobbying. An Attempt of Definition)*, "Stosunki międzynarodowe" no. 3-4/2001, p.201; T.Łoś-Nowak, *Grupy nacisku w stosunkach międzynarodowych (Pressure Groups in International Relations)*, "Stosunki międzynarodowe" no. 1-2/2003, p.66; J.Greenwood, *Representing Interest in the European Union*, London 1997, p.18-20.

⁴⁶ M.Paszyński, *Od Traktatu Rzymskiego do Porozumienia w Cotonou (From the Treaty of Rome to the Cotonou Agreement)* in: *Pomoc Unii Europejskiej dla krajów Afryki, Karaibów i Pacyfiku. Szansa dla polskich przedsiębiorstw? (The European Union's Aid for countries of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific. An Opportunity for Polish Enterprises?)*, ed. T.Koziej, Warszawa 2004, p.43.

The only regulations contained in the Cotonou Agreement that may have negative influence upon Polish market are those regarding import of sugar and bananas. They will result, firstly, in lower quality and secondly, in higher prices of imported bananas that have previously been imported from Latin American producers. Import of sugar, instead, is going to affect Poland's position as the producer and net exporter of that commodity, including export to the EU. According to Central Statistical Office (Główny Urząd Statystyczny – GUS), in 2001 Poland imported USD 19 thousands worth of sugar (including for USD 12 thousand to the EU), compared to the value of its export amounting to USD 82 thousand (including for USD 17 thousand to the EU).⁴⁷ On a positive side, the accession to the European Union and to the Cotonou Agreement enables Poland to gain access to African fisheries.

Polish government assumed an explicit attitude towards negotiations in the World Trade Organization on liberalisation of trade, in particular, as regards agriculture. Poland has been vividly interested in protection of its agriculture due to a couple of reasons. Firstly, in recent years Polish export of agricultural products and food was quickly increasing. Secondly, the EU direct payments for farmers are of advantage to Polish budget and for settlements with Brussels. Poland prepared a list of 35 sensitive agricultural products, including butter, powdered milk, tobacco, pork, poultry, soft fruits, apple juice concentrate or sugar and sweets. Poland desires to protect its domestic products from the application of high tariffs or import quotas and is interested in having a reduction of intervention prices extended over as long a period as possible.

Poland also emphasised, in mid 2005, that commitments of the Commission made on the WTO forum must not infringe the principles of the Common Agricultural Policy. It was Warsaw's reply to proposals of the Commissioner P. Mandelson, who declared – acting on behalf of the EU countries – that it was possible to decrease payments for farmers by 70 per cent. Admittedly, Poland was not the only Member State to react with much determination against that proposal – its attitude was shared by twelve other countries, especially by France (Jacques Chirac, the President of France declared that his country was ready to put its veto on any agreement regarding liberalisation of agriculture trade that will undermine interests of his country, thus manifesting once more that agricultural lobby in France proved as powerful this time as ever).

⁴⁷ "Rocznik Statystyczny Handlu Zagranicznego" 2002, Central Statistical Office, Warszawa 2002.

Conclusions

- Bilateral and multilateral agreements and programmes signed by the European Union with third countries consolidate the position of Poland in developing countries.
- A new challenge that emerges for Poland is that of developing an optimum formula for participation in those activities. Accordingly, Poland should, among other things, co-operate with other EU Member States in order to gain real influence upon the way the EU policy towards non-European countries is shaped, including, in particular, Common Trade Policy (for example Poland, as the EU Member State, participates in activities of the 133 Committee – established on the virtue of Article 133 of the EC Treaty. Tasks of the Committee include discussion of issues concerning the EU policy on the forum of the WTO. Warsaw's economic policy towards extra-European countries should make better use of existing mechanisms and instruments of the Community trade policy that this has been done by now.
- The place of Poland in the European Union largely depends on a level of its cooperation with individual countries and regions as well as upon involvement of Warsaw in global politics and economy, including the ACP countries.
- Poland's economic cooperation with developing countries has been subject to the same market rules and economic principles as its cooperation with the country's other economic partners. Further growth of competitiveness of Polish export offer addressed to countries of the South, including ACP, is going to be a very important factor, determining an increase of export to developing countries.⁴⁸
- An active participation of Warsaw in political dialogue between the EU and the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries should become an important instrument of Polish foreign policy towards developing countries (in that respect one should take some objective difficulties into account – situation in many developing countries has been unstable and a possibility of abrupt aggravation of such negative phenomena as civil wars or terrorism should always be reckoned with).

⁴⁸ *Strategia RP... (The Polish Strategy towards Non-European...)*, op.cit., p.133.