



European Union
Delegation of the European Commission
in South Africa

**... this week
in review**

This publication seeks to provide information on EU activities of interest to SA readers.



7 – 13 January 2005

Headline News

Presidency Declaration on behalf of the EU on Sudan – Signing of Peace Agreement (11/01/2005)

The European Union warmly welcomes the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). This agreement puts an end to one of the longest and most deadly conflicts on the African continent, which has cost the lives of two million people, and opens the way to a comprehensive political process designed to promote peace and development in all the regions of Sudan. The European Union commends the parties to the conflict and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and its Mediator, General Lazarus Sumbeiywo, as well as all international observers, for this historic outcome. It congratulates the Kenyan Government for hosting and sustaining the negotiations.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=PESC/05/4&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Other News

EU-US Relations – Speech by Dr Benita Ferrero-Waldner (13/01/2005)



In an address to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner, EU Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, noted: "2005 marks the 10th anniversary year of the New Transatlantic Agenda, and that is as fitting a reason as any for talking about renewing our relations. As my colleague, President Barroso has said, "The relationship between the United States and Europe constitutes the world's strongest, most comprehensive and strategically most important partnership". Standing on this side of the Atlantic, it is easier to understand why US public opinion sometimes fails to appreciate the significance of the transatlantic link, just as European public opinion sometimes fails to appreciate the value of our partnership. But understanding why is not enough – we must both make more effort to communicate to our publics the significance and value of our relationship."

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/12&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

EC's satellite analysis supporting international Tsunami information gathering efforts (11/01/2005)

Since the earthquake of 26 December in Indian Ocean and subsequent devastating tsunami, the European Commission has been working closely with international and European organisations to use satellite analysis to measure the immediate extent and impact of the disaster. These regional, national and in-country analyses are being used to support international aid efforts, including today's donor pledging conference in Geneva, and the Jakarta international donor conference on 6 January. Extensive use has been made of satellite imagery, notably in the context of the activation of the International Chart on Space and Major Disasters.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/5&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Corbett/Mendez de Vigo report – Speech by Com Margot Wallström (11/01/2005)

In the opening address to the European Parliament Plenary Session, Margot Wallström, Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy, said: "The Constitution before us today would not have been possible without the European Parliament. The European Parliament has played a crucial role in strengthening the foundations of our common enterprise It would also not have been possible without the European Convention that provided such a dynamic, open and innovative way to negotiate our founding treaties. The involvement of the European Parliament in this unprecedented process culminates today with the adoption of this excellent report, which conveys a clear message about the benefits of the Constitution and the need for its ratification. So let me wholeheartedly congratulate you, and in particular the Committee of Constitutional Affairs and the two rapporteurs - Richard Corbett and Iñigo Mendez de Vigo. The Commission fully supports your resolution. We firmly believe that the Constitution allows the Union to make significant improvements.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/5&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Data protection: EC approves new standard clauses for data transfers to non-EU countries (07/01/2005)

The European Commission has approved a new set of standard contractual clauses which businesses can use to ensure adequate safeguards when personal data is transferred from the EU to non-EU countries. The new clauses, submitted by a business coalition, will be added to those already available under the Commission's June 2001 decision (see [IP/01/851](#)). Use of standard contractual clauses offers companies and other organisations a straightforward means of complying with their obligation, under the 1995 EU Data Protection Directive, to ensure "adequate protection" for personal data transferred outside the EU.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/12&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: **Standard contractual clauses for transfer of personal data to 3rd countries - frequently asked questions**
<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/3&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Proposed Visa Information System (VIS) enhances security and facilitates travelling in EU (07/01/2005)

The European Commission has adopted a proposal for a Regulation concerning the Visa Information System (VIS) and the exchange of data between Member States on short-stay visas. The VIS will be a system for the exchange of visa data between Member States and thus primarily an instrument to support the common visa policy. It will also facilitate checks at the external borders and within the Member States, the application of the 'Dublin'-Regulation determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application and the identification and return of illegal immigrants. The VIS shall be composed of a European central database, which will be connected to the national systems to enable consulates and other competent authorities of the Member States to enter and consult data on visa applications and the decisions taken thereto.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/10&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Ahead:

- **31/01-03/02/2005 – EU Parliamentarian Visit to South Africa**
- **31/01/2005 – Launch of the Civil Society Advocacy Programme, Constitution Hill**
- **03/02/2005 – Launch of the national Legislatures Support Programme**

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