



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.



8 – 14 August 2003

Headline News:

EU signs R4.3 billion Development Programme with South Africa (14/08/2003)

Today the European Commission and the South African Government sign their 3rd Cooperation Strategy with a Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP), covering development cooperation for the years 2003 to 2006. This €515 million Programme builds on the experience and successes of nearly a decade of support for social development, poverty reduction, economic growth and democratic governance in South Africa. The jointly developed strategy complements the bilateral Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and South Africa and is consistent with the principles laid down in the Cotonou Agreement. Commenting just prior to the event, European Commission Ambassador Michael Lake noted: "We are proud of the contribution we make through the European Programme for Reconstruction and Development (EPRD). This unique partnership with the South African Government and our local civil society associates has allowed us, and will continue to do so in the future, to pinpoint areas of real need, target priority sectors and implemented large-scale programmes of tailored assistance to communities throughout the country."

See: <http://www.eusa.org.za/Content/Development/TheEPRD.html>

EC and US propose a framework for a joint approach on agricultural questions in WTO (13/08/2003)

Today the EU and the US presented a joint framework to relaunch agricultural negotiations. We have agreed that it is necessary for the two largest trading powers to develop a joint approach to the major issues dividing the WTO membership. It focuses on three areas, domestic support, market access and export competition. The joint paper reflects the great importance the EU and the US attach to their responsibility to pave the way for a successful and ambitious conclusion in Cancun and to provide added impetus to the cycle of trade negotiations.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/1160|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

EU, US and Canada submit paper on WTO negotiations on non-agricultural market access (13/08/2003)

The EU and the US, joined by Canada, have tabled in the WTO a joint paper to facilitate negotiations on market access tariffs and non-tariff barriers for industrial goods. The paper proposes that WTO Members agree on the use of a single mathematical formula to reduce all tariff rates, simple to apply and to understand, geared to producing ambitious tariff cuts and to reduce differences in tariff rates across WTO Members. This approach includes measures for granting developing countries special and differential treatment, as well as flexibility to manage their tariffs on the basis of their economic needs. In particular, the joint paper proposes a system of "credits" that allows developing countries to cut their tariff less than developed countries would do, when justified by their economic situation. Additional flexibility should also be granted to the poorest developing countries.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/1158|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

Other News:

Democratic Republic of Congo: Commission adopts €4 million in humanitarian aid (14/08/2003)

The European Commission has approved a €4 million humanitarian aid package to support food and nutrition programmes for vulnerable groups affected by the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The funds will contribute to the World Food Programme Emergency Operation launched in June in response to the deterioration of the situation in Eastern Congo. This decision is managed by the Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office, which comes under the supervision of Commissioner Poul Nielson.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/1162|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

Climate change: Commission tackles fluorinated gases (12/08/2003)

The European Commission has adopted a proposal for a Regulation to reduce emissions of fluorinated greenhouse gases. The proposal represents a further step towards fulfilling the EU's obligations under the Kyoto Protocol to reduce emissions of all gases contributing to global warming. Fluorinated gases are extremely powerful and long-lived greenhouse gases. Their emissions are forecast to increase rapidly in the coming years if no action is taken. The gases are used in refrigeration, air

conditioning, fire-fighting equipment and various industry processes. The Commission's proposal is expected to reduce by almost a quarter the projected emissions of these gases by 2010.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/1155|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

EU Humanitarian aid - focus on "forgotten" crises (11/08/2003)

Helping people who are most in need, irrespective of their nationality, religion or ethnic origin, is a key principle of the European Union's humanitarian aid policy. This is reflected in the support channelled by the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), which falls under the responsibility of Commissioner Poul Nielson, to crisis zones that have slipped out of the international media spotlight. ECHO is one of the world's largest donors of relief assistance, with an overall budget of €538 million in 2002. According to Mr Nielson: "Humanitarian aid for victims of natural or man made catastrophes should not depend on media coverage or political interests but on the needs of the people affected. ECHO is deeply concerned by the problem of the so-called 'forgotten crises', and we take great care to ensure that they are not forgotten by the European Union".

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/03/162|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

European population trends in 2002 (08/08/2003)

The EU's population was up by 0.3% in 2002 to 379 million. The EU accounts for 2% of world population growth. On 1st January 2003 the population of the EU was 379.0 million and that of the euro zone 305.6 million, far behind China (1 283 million) and India (1 042 million) but in front of the US (289.0 million). The EU population increased by 1 290 000 in 2002, an annual rate of 0.3%.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=STAT/03/92|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Ahead:

- **Handing over EU funded all-terrain vehicle fleet to the South African Police Service in Eastern Cape, 25/08/2003**
SA Police facility, Bisho
- **Plenary session of the European Parliament, 1-4/09/2003**
See: http://www.europarl.eu.int/plenary/default_en.htm
- **5th WTO Ministerial Conference, Cancún, Mexico, 10-14/09/2003**
See: http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_e/min03_e/min03_e.htm

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EU support helps turn Rubbish into Rands ...

At the recent launch of the Moses Kotane Community Based Refuse Removal Project (13/08/2003) Ambassador Michael Lake said: "Our support for the Environmental and Waste Management Programme, initially under the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality, and now extended to the Moses Kotane Local Municipality as the first of six local authorities, is a further EU commitment to making a positive difference. We are encouraged not only by the environmental impact the programme is likely to achieve, but by the economic empowerment objectives underlying it. I recall the Programme's marvellously crafted glassware that was available to visitors to the Ubuntu Village at the EU stand throughout the World Summit on Sustainable Development last year. How good it felt to have such an important initiative in our fold – an initiative that literally turned rubbish into rands."

For more on this project please contact Vuokko Laurila: vuokko@mweb.co.za