



European Union

Delegation to South Africa
Head of Delegation

EU Perspectives

*Regular publication that seeks to provide information
on EU-related activities of interest to SA readers*



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Headline News

[Joint Communiqué from the 10th EU-SA Ministerial Political Dialogue Meeting, Brussels, Belgium](#)

Within the framework of the SA-EU Strategic Partnership, a Political Dialogue meeting at Ministerial level was held in Brussels, Belgium, on 11 May 2010. The meeting was co-chaired by Baroness Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, and H.E. Ms. Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa. South Africa and the EU stressed their continued commitment to the EU-SA Strategic Partnership and to the joint promotion of peace, security and stability in the world, and in Africa in particular. The Parties noted the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009 and the holding of this meeting at Ministerial level under the new institutional arrangements established on the EU side and looked forward to the ongoing consolidation of relations at all levels.

[High Representative Ashton launches Human Rights Report](#)

The latest Human Rights Report, 'Human Rights and Democracy in the World – a Report on EU action between July 2008 and December 2009', was presented to foreign affairs ministers on 10 May by Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and chair of the Foreign Affairs Council. The report gives an overview of the wide range of EU activities to promote human rights worldwide, covering the period from July 2008 to December 2009. Human rights, democracy and the rule of law are core values of the European Union. Not only are they part of the EU's identity, but the Union also has a vocation to bring them to its external relations. The report covers thematic issues, such as freedom of thought and human rights of women, as well as the Union's action on human rights in various countries.

[The EU supports development dimension of the future Economic Partnership Agreement with West Africa](#)

European Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, praised the EU's political commitment to fund an ambitious programme of aid for trade and economic integration in West Africa (PAPED). This programme is an essential element of the future Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with West Africa, currently under negotiation, and would ensure that the region made the most of this agreement. Funds available to provide support to PAPED for the next five years are around €6.5bn. Commissioner Piebalgs made the following statement: "The commitment to make available €6.5bn will ensure that West Africa makes the most of the opportunities provided by the future EPA for that region. What we need now is a joint effort to conclude an ambitious EPA to generate reform, growth and regional integration. We are very close to reaching a fair and balanced agreement. Europe is not only the largest donor in the world – it also intends to provide the economic support to its partners to create the conditions necessary to achieve the Millennium Development Goals."

Other News

[Joint Communiqué on Sixth AU-EU Human Rights Dialogue, Brussels](#)

The 6th AU-EU Human Rights Dialogue took place in Brussels in a constructive atmosphere, allowing an exchange of views on a number of human rights issues of concern to both sides such as the death penalty, freedom of expression and association, right to development, fight against discrimination, as well as rights of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. The two sides took note of positive developments, such as the harmonisation of the rules of procedure between the African Court and Commission on Human and People's Rights, the progress made with regard to the African Human Rights

Strategy, the constructive Africa-EU cooperation during the 13th session of the Human Rights Council, and the reinforcement of the EU human rights framework through the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, including the EU's accession to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

[EU African Union Newsletter April 2010 edition](#)

This edition focuses on Human Rights and includes interviews with Julia Dolly Joiner, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, and with African Commission on Human and People's Rights Chairperson, Reine Alapini-Gansou, who explains that the ACHPR has been making judgments in human rights cases for over 20 years. Previous editions of the newsletter can be found at:

<http://www.eusa.org.za/en/Political/NEPAD.htm>

[EU Election Observation Mission to observe elections in Burundi](#)

On the invitation of the government of Republic of Burundi, the European Union will deploy an Election Observation Mission to observe the electoral cycle in the country, starting on May 21 2010. The Election Observation Mission of the European Union (EOM EU) will be led by a Chief Observer, Renate Weber, Member of the European Parliament, and will be made up of 82 observers. Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and Vice-president of the European Commission, said: "The upcoming election cycle will be of particular importance for Burundi since it represents an opportunity to confirm institutional stability and democratic progress in the country. In recognition of this, and complementing our other cooperation programmes with Burundi, I have decided to deploy an EU EOM to follow the elections. I am grateful that Mrs Renate Weber, who has experience with other international observation missions, has accepted my invitation to lead this mission"

[African Financing Partnership Launched by leading Development Financial Institutions](#)

Eight development finance institutions, which last year invested over USD 8.8bn in projects across the African continent, formally launched the African Financing Partnership. This collaboration will enable greater cooperation and co-financing, and work towards improving joint assessment and evaluation of private sector projects across the continent. This marks a significant development for effective use of donor resources in Africa and aim to attract greater private sector investment for private sector projects on the continent with strong development outcomes. The eight participating institutions with strong experience of operating in Africa are the European Investment Bank (EIB); African Development Bank; Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA); Deutsche Investitions-und Entwicklungsgesellschaft (DEG); Netherlands Development Finance Company FMO; Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa; IFC, a member of the World Bank Group; and Proparco.

[EU calls on trading partners to remove protectionist barriers](#)

Almost 280 trade restrictive measures have been put in place by the European Union's major trade partners during the economic crisis over the last 18 months, according to a new report published by the European Commission. Contrary to the G20 commitment, hardly any measures have been removed, despite signs of economic recovery in most countries. The European Commission called on trading partners to remove these restrictions in order to give a much needed boost to the recovery. EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht said: "There is a risk that trade restrictive measures introduced by our partners during the crisis will become part of the trade regime even when the economy picks up speed. What we need now is an exit strategy from protectionism."

[World Biodiversity Day: Thousands connect with nature through EU campaign](#)

The EU celebrated World Biodiversity Day on 22 May. Despite efforts around the globe, studies show that biodiversity, the rich variety of life on this planet, is diminishing at a startling rate. The Commission marked World Biodiversity Day with a series of events in six focus countries: Spain, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland and Italy. The innovative campaign engaged thousands of people across the European Union and beyond. The campaign website received more than half a million visits, while over 56,000 people showed their support for the campaign on Facebook. Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik said: "It is good to see how this campaign is capturing people's imagination. We must keep up the momentum and translate this interest into real action and real policies to safeguard the rich variety of life on Earth."

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