



European Union
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to South Africa

EU Perspectives

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



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Headline News

[Speech of Commission President Barroso at the opening session of European Development Days](#)

"On behalf of the European Commission, I am delighted to welcome you to European Development Days 2009, which we are organising with the Swedish Presidency. The timing of this year's event is especially relevant. I hope and believe that we are on the cusp of ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, a Treaty which more than anything else will encourage Europe to look outwards to the rest of the world once again. And as we do so, development policy is one of the key vectors, one of the key instruments. I believe in an Europe that is open and committed to the values of development, freedom and solidarity. There are three values I want to highlight in my remarks this morning as being at the heart of European development policy. First, solidarity with our partners in developing countries. Second, governance, and in particular how we can re-shape globalisation based on values that should be considered universal. And third, respect for the environment: it is no surprise that a major theme of this year's edition is going to be climate change, and is indeed the most important subject that we have to face in the immediate future".

[European Commission urges urgent implementation of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement \(GPA\)](#)

European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Karel De Gucht, once again outlined the absolute necessity for all parties to implement the Global Political Agreement (GPA) without further delay. He noted with concern Prime Minister Tsvangirai's recent statement that, seven months after the formation of the inclusive government, sticking-points remain over the issues of the appointments of provincial governors, the Reserve Bank Governor and the Attorney-General. In addition, there is a lack of movement on the democratisation of the media, the constitutional process, the land audit and rule of law issues. The European Commission encourages key regional bodies, such as the African Union and in particular the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which played a vital role in the elaboration of the GPA, to do all that they can to assist the different parties to the GPA to resolve their differences for the benefit of the Zimbabwean people.

[Statement by Commissioner Vladimír Špidla on the International Day Against Poverty](#)

"Ahead of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on 17 October, I would like to reiterate the European Commission's commitment to tackling poverty and social exclusion across the EU and beyond. In three months from now, the EU will launch the 2010 European Year against poverty and social exclusion. This year-long campaign will better acknowledge the right of people living in poverty to play a full part in society and reinforce partnerships between actors working to fight poverty and social exclusion. The general goal is to generate new impetus in the struggle against poverty and social exclusion in order to build together a society for all".

[World Food Day 2009: EU leading the global fight against hunger](#)

The 2009 World Food Day on 16 October was marked by an EU stronger than ever in its commitment to improve access to food around the world. With the commitment made at the G8 meeting in Aquila for more than €2bn, in addition to the 'EU €1bn Food Facility', the EU is the world's biggest contributor to global food security. "World Food Day must serve to remind each and every one of us that we must do everything we can to prevent more than a billion people from going hungry. To meet the challenge, the EU's €1bn Food Facility is delivering fast and tangible results by giving small-scale farmers across developing countries the seeds and fertilizers needed to boost their agricultural production. We will build on the experience we have gained in implementing the Food Facility to ensure the new pledge made at the G8 summit in Aquila is just as effective in battling global hunger" said Karel De Gucht, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid.

Other News

[EU remains leading activist in efforts to achieve universal abolition of death penalty](#)

10 October was the World and European Day against the Death Penalty. The abolition of the death penalty is one of the thematic priorities in the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), with over 30 projects supported so far worldwide. Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner said: "Achieving the adoption of the Resolution on a moratorium on the death penalty in the UN General Assembly was an important step in our global efforts to strengthen the trend towards a global abolition of the death penalty. But there is no reason for complacency. We must use all available means – diplomatic channels and raising public awareness in working towards our goal. Through its Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights the Commission is the major donor in this field, currently supporting 16 projects. With more than 8,800 people sentenced to death in 52 countries in 2008 alone, our work is far from done."

[European Parliament adopts resolution on G20 summit](#)

An EU Parliament resolution on the Pittsburgh G20 summit said the EU needed a stronger financial supervisory architecture with a single financial supervisory authority. MEPs also stressed the need for long-term fiscal sustainability, so as to avoid imposing too heavy a burden on future generations. However, the priorities now must be to create jobs and protect people from the impact of the crisis. In the resolution, adopted by a show of hands, Parliament welcomed the G20 summit conclusions, including the commitment to avoid any premature withdrawal of support measures used to stabilise financial markets. The resolution said the work on exit strategies should start immediately, so as to implement them as soon as the recovery permits.

[Commission launches new website to help improve development co-operation](#)

The European Commission has launched Capacity4dev.eu, an interactive website aimed at improving Europe's development co-operation. The website will allow the development community at large to meet and exchange best practices on the European Commission's reform of how it provides know-how through training, research, consultancy or technical support. The goal of the reform is to ensure our aid for developing countries happens faster and better. "If we want to have a real impact on the eradication of poverty in the world, we have to go beyond 'business as usual'. The European Commission engaged last year in an ambitious reform on how it works with technical cooperation making it more partner-led, more results-oriented, and more in line with international agreements on aid effectiveness. But the European Commission cannot make this change happen alone. We need to open up, listen and engage with the development community at large and explore innovative ways to work together and the Capacity4dev.eu website will help us to achieve that goal" stated Karel De Gucht, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid.

[Nine out of ten Europeans still strongly support development aid despite the downturn](#)

A Special Eurobarometer on "Development Aid in time of economic turmoil" showed that the crisis affecting European countries has not affected public support for development aid, which still remains high. Around 90% of Europeans still believe development is important and 72% of Europeans are in favour of honouring or going beyond existing aid commitments to the developing world. "This poll clearly shows that citizens expect their governments and the EU Commission to dig deep for development financing" said EU Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Karel De Gucht. "Even in the context of the economic crisis, I appeal again to the EU Member States to stick to their commitments to increase development aid up to € 69bn by 2010 to meet the mid term target of the Millennium Development Goals". EC Vice-President and Commissioner for Communication Strategy, Margot Wallström said: " Europeans understand better and better why development is important. They ask for more coverage on development issues by national media".

[EU Bookshop Digital Library goes live - All the EU publications in one place](#)

12 million scanned pages in more than 110 000 EU publications are now available free of charge for download in the EU Bookshop Digital Library. Launched at the Frankfurt Book Fair on the 16 October, it offers all publications edited by the Publications Office on behalf of the EU institutions, agencies and other bodies since 1952. The Publications Office's archives have long represented a veritable treasure trove of European history. Publications such as the address delivered by Mr Jean Monnet, President of the High Authority before the Common Assembly at the first session of September 1952 or the General Report on the activities of the Community in French from 1953 can once again see the virtual light of day through the Publications Office Digital Library. New publications are added every day. In the words of Leonard Orban, Commissioner for multilingualism: "The digital library frees the memory of the European Union tied to paper since its beginning. The millions of pages now accessible to everyone in the 23 official languages demonstrate the continued commitment of the European Union to preserve and encourage the history of the Union in its linguistic diversity".

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