



European Union
Delegation to the Republic of South Africa

EU Perspectives

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



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Top News

[Europe at work - priorities of the Danish Presidency \(18/01/12\)](#)

The Danish Presidency is determined to contribute to helping Europe out of the crisis and to getting it back on track. That was Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt's message on 18 January when she gave a presentation to the European Parliament on the Presidency's programme for the next six months.

[Statement by the President of the Eurogroup \(16/01/12\)](#)

'We take note and will examine the consequences of the decision announced by Standard and Poor's to downgrade the credit rating of the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) from AAA to AA+. This follows from the rating action of 13 January that concerned a group of euro area Member States. EFSF continues to be assigned the best possible credit rating by Moody's (Aaa) and Fitch (AAA), underlining its solidity'.

[Martin Schulz elected President of the European Parliament \(17/01/12\)](#)

MEPs elected Martin Schulz to be the new European Parliament president with 387 votes in favour out of 670 cast. The 56-year old German MEP will lead the European Parliament for two and half years, until the beginning of the next legislature in July 2014.

[Promoting social protection in EU development co-operation - public consultation until 24/02/2012](#)

The European Commission is preparing a Communication on Social Protection in EU Development Co-operation, which will be adopted in 2012. The Commission has published an Issues paper and a questionnaire and is welcoming contributions from citizens, public authorities and stakeholders in Europe and third countries.

[Public consultation](#)

[The EIB welcomes confirmation of its triple A rating by S&P \(17/01/12\)](#)

Rating agency Standard & Poor confirmed the European Investment Bank's triple A rating, but gave it a negative outlook. The triple A rating was reaffirmed on the basis of the EIB's "franchise value" and the "historical performance of its loan portfolio", which S&P described as of "very high" quality historically. S&P also expects the Bank's loan performance to "remain good" in 2012.

[Commissioner Georgieva calls for "smart aid" to Sahel \(18/01/12\)](#)

The European Commission is doubling its humanitarian aid to the African Sahel region to €95m in response to the food crisis. The announcement was made by Kristalina Georgieva, the European Union's humanitarian aid and crisis response commissioner, during her ongoing visit to Niger and Chad. The funding surge comes on top of the €10m that the Commission allocated to the looming drought crisis in the region last November.

[Remarks by High Representative Catherine Ashton at the end of her visit to India \(17/01/12\)](#)

'I came to India to further the relationship between the EU and India. And to do that I've been meeting with a number of different ministers...The relationship between the EU and India is in a good place, but there's more that we can do...Further progress can be achieved in the coming weeks, on the occasion of the next EU-India summit'.

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