



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.



13 – 19 June 2003

Headline News:

Situation in Middle East – Speech by Chris Patten, Commissioner for External Relations (18/06/2003)

" ... We, the European Union, - and much more so the peoples in the Middle East - cannot afford losing the opportunity for peace created by the Roadmap, small though it may be. Now more than ever it is crucial that the Roadmap be implemented without being taken hostage by extremists who do not want peace. Despite the violence of last week I hope that Palestinians and Israelis, with the support from the international community, will generate sufficient confidence that will allow them to move forward. We also need to reflect now on how we - the EU - could help on this... ".

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/03/312|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

WTO case on GMOs – the European Union stands its ground (17/06/2003)

The EU dismisses the decision to take the GMO issue to WTO dispute settlement as legally misguided, economically unfounded and politically unhelpful. The treatment of genetically-modified material is a multi-faceted matter of high social, economic and political concern all throughout the world. Trying to depict this issue as a mere commercial matter is clearly a reduction of a complex situation to a single question. Each WTO Member has the legitimate right to strike the right balance between the different interests at stake. The US and the other complainants must not seek to influence the sovereign decisions of other countries the way they do... See: http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/goods/agri/pr170603_en.htm

Commissioner Nielson signs €7.3 mil for the water sector in Southern Africa (17/06/2003)

Poul Nielson, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, has signed a Financing Agreement of €7.3 million with South Africa to support the water sector in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. The object of the project is to support sustainable integrated planning and management of water resources in the SADC region. See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/852|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Other News:

EU involvement in dialogue on Reform of State Owned Enterprises in developing countries (19/0/2003)

The European Commission (EC) has adopted a Communication on the Reform of State Owned Enterprises in developing countries with focus on public utilities. The Communication outlines a more active role for the EU in assisting partner governments in developing countries in their design of State Owned Enterprise Reform. ... When decisions on SOE Reform are taken by partner countries the EU should mobilise its appropriate development policy instruments in support of its implementation. See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/863|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Republic of Sierra Leone: Commission adopts its co-operation strategy for 2003-2007(19/0/2003)

The EC has adopted a five-year strategy paper (2003-2007) for its co-operation with Sierra Leone. The Country Strategy Paper (CSP) serves as a framework for relations with Sierra Leone, covering all aspects of assistance to that country. Priority will be given to the rehabilitation of infrastructure and to good governance. €220 million will be made available from the 9th European Development Fund to finance the implementation of the strategy.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/864|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

EU unveils vision for the energy source of the 21st century: hydrogen & fuel cell technology (16/06/2003)

Could most people in Europe be driving cars fuelled by hydrogen in just a few decades time? Does hydrogen represent the new frontier of global energy and transport? The report on "Hydrogen and fuel cells a vision for our future" presented by a high-level expert group to the Commission, sets out scenarios for the widespread use of this clean technology of the future.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/848|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

See also: *Hydrogen - bridge to sustainable energy* - Speech by Margot Wallström, Brussels (17/06/2003)

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/03/308|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

EU among first to sign Convention on Tobacco Control (16/06/2003)

Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner David Byrne and the Greek Council Presidency are among the first to sign in Geneva today the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) on behalf of the European Union. As soon as 40 countries ratify the Convention, it becomes law in those countries and for all other countries that sign thereafter.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/847|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Persistent Organic Pollutants: Commission urges EU to ratify the international agreements (16/03/2003)

The EC has proposed that the European Union ratifies two international agreements on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). These international agreements, the Stockholm Convention and the UNECE Protocol on POPs aim at phasing out the world's most toxic chemicals by controlling their production, use, import, export, emissions and disposal.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/842|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

For Diversity - Against Discrimination - EC to boost awareness of anti-discrimination rules (16/06/2003)

Would you know your rights if you were discriminated against? According to a new Eurobarometer survey on attitudes towards discrimination, only 1 in 3 Europeans would. Raising awareness of rights is one of the key aims of a new 5-year EU-wide campaign to combat discrimination on the grounds of racial and ethnic origin, religion and belief, age, disability and sexual orientation. The campaign was launched in Brussels by Employment and Social Affairs Commissioner, Anna Diamantopoulou. The launch comes on the eve of the entry into force of two new EU Directives on anti-discrimination.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/840|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

The European Project in the World: between Values and Politics – Speech by Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission (Don Tonino Bello Foundation, 13/06/2003)

"... Europe boasts a priceless heritage of ideas, institutions and cultural assets. Indeed, Europe is probably identified and recognised by the rest of the world above all for its culture and the models and values it promotes. Our models of coexistence, freedom, solidarity and human dignity serve as our passport in the rest of the world." On the North-South divide: "The cry of pain from the poorest countries in the South is becoming ever more deafening. The South is also the mirror of our policy. And the image it is reflecting should set us thinking and acting in different ways."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/03/303|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Ahead:

- **EU Trade Commissioner, Pascal Lamy, in the Middle East for trade talks, 21-22/06/2003**

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/862|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

- **EU-Western Balkans Summit, 21/06/2003** See: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/index.htm

- **Special Olympics World Games, Ireland, 21-29/06/2003**

See: <http://www.2003specialolympics.com/en/>



Special Olympics

- **EU-US Summit, 25/06/2003** See: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/us/intro/index.htm

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... we talk to the media

In a recent interview with John Fraser of Business Day, Ambassador Michael Lake announced the European Investment Bank's intention to set up a regional office in Pretoria later this year. Also covered were current discussions between the European Union (represented by Greece, Italy and the European Commission) and South Africa on increased regional interaction on both political and economic level. See: [Business Day, 17/06/2003, page 2](#)