



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.



15 – 21 April 2005



Headline News

Growing pains and trading gains: the WTO after 10 years – Speech by José Manuel Barroso (20/04/2005)

In an address to the WTO Public Symposium in Geneva José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, said: "...the WTO has been one of the best ambassadors of effective multilateralism, which lies at the heart of the EU's own vision for international action. Multilateralism is the most effective and the most legitimate means to address the global challenges we all face. ... We have seen a high participation rate from developing countries, confirming that the multilateral approach protects all members, not just the large and strong. The alternative is unilateralism and the law of the jungle."

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/243&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: **European Commission presents revised offer on services for Doha Development Round (20/04/2005)**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/451&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Economic Partnership Agreements: progressive trade policy - Speech by Peter Mandelson (19/04/2005)

In his speech to the 9th ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in Mali, EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson argues that the Economic Partnership Agreements that the EU is currently negotiating with ACP regions will be "both trade and development deals". They will provide for even greater market access into EU markets for ACP exports, encourage South/South market opening as a priority before any South-to-North liberalisation, and allow the EU to support financially the integration processes in the ACP regions.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/241&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: **Cotton and the WTO – Speech by Peter Mandelson (19/04/2005)**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/238&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

EC & WB - an intensified partnership to support Africa's push towards achieving the MDGs (18/04/2005)

The Commission and World Bank said they will work more closely to support African countries' development priorities after a meeting between Commissioner Louis Michel (Development & Humanitarian Aid) and Gobind Nankani, Vice President for the Africa Region at the World Bank. The EU and WB together account for more than half of the new resources committed each year for Africa's development. The discussions are grounded in the strong working partnership between the two institutions, and followed consultations in January laying the groundwork for enhanced collaboration in Africa.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/442&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Other News

Post tsunami: the Commission reinforces its disaster response capacity (20/04/2005)

The EC adopted proposals for a package of measures to reinforce the EU's disaster response capacity. The package will fund new specialist planning teams to speed up the effective delivery of long term aid; reinforce the Union's capacity to provide specialised civil expertise units and equipment; and strengthen the Union's capacity to deliver humanitarian aid. The Communication also provides a detailed progress report of how the €450 million pledged by the EU after the disaster is being spent. See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/460&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: **Actions Undertaken by the Commission in Response to the Tsunami (20/04/2005)**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/135&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Message from the EC President on the election of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI (19/04/2004)

"Most Holy Father, On the occasion of the election of Your Holiness to the high responsibilities of Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church and Head of the State of the Vatican, I have the honour to present to You the most respectful congratulations of the European Commission. On behalf of the European Commission may I express our fervent desire for a long and happy pontificate that will allow Your Holiness to work for dialogue between religions and universal values and for the defence of human rights and the dignity of the human person. I rejoice personally in the choice of the conclave and remain convinced that Your Holiness will continue with steadfastness and strength the work of his illustrious predecessor John Paul II in promoting understanding between peoples and peace throughout the world. I have the honour to remain Your Holiness's most humble servant."

Meeting the Climate Change Challenge – Speech by Stavros Dimas (18/04/2005)

In his speech at the Brookings Institute in Washington European Commissioner for the Environment, Stavros Dimas, observed: "Climate change touches on all aspects of our society. It is a threat not only to the environment, but also to our economies and, in the end, our security. Internationally, the EU has pushed for a multilateral framework to address the issue since climate change is a global problem and no country can achieve much on its own. This is why we consider that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change remains the appropriate context for dealing with climate change, and why we believe that the Kyoto Protocol, in spite of some weaknesses, has been a step in the right direction."

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/239&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: **Commissioner Dimas hopeful about new phase in EU-US relations on climate change (20/04/2005)**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/463&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Register of existing GM food and feed products published (18/04/2005)

The Commission has published a list of 26 genetically modified (GM) products which have been legally on the EU market since before the new legislative framework for authorising GM food and feed had entered into effect. They have been added to a specific section of the Community register of genetically modified (GM) food and feed in order to clarify exactly which GM products are legally permitted to be sold in the EU and to have full information on these products.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/439&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: **Questions & answers on GMO 'existing products' register (18/04/2005)**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/130&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Louis Michel emphasises importance of EC - World Bank partnership for development (16/04/2005)

The European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel, and the next President of the World Bank, Paul Wolfowitz, had a first exchange of views on development issues. Meeting in Washington, Commissioner Michel congratulated Mr Wolfowitz for his recent nomination and stressed the importance of an increased collaboration between the two institutions. He highlighted Africa's development as a priority for this partnership.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/440&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Sustainable development – Speech by José Manuel Barroso (15/04/2005)

In the concluding speech to the Stakeholder Forum on Sustainable Development in Brussels, EC President José Manuel Barroso said: "Like synergy and empowerment, sustainable development has become one of the buzz words of the 21st century. Everyone seems to have heard of the word, but very few have looked past the jargon to think about what it really means in practice. ... The Commission is working on the 2005 review of its Sustainable Development Strategy. We have already taken a number of steps in this review process. From the very beginning the Commission made clear that it wants to involve, to the maximum extent possible, citizens, non-governmental organisations, businesses, trade unions and others."



See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/232&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: **Sustainable Development in the Commission's policy agenda – Speech by Stavros Dimas (15/04/2005)**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/231&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

For further information please contact Frank Oberholzer at 012-452-5200



The Delegation Responds:

regarding the recent article ***Ostrich farmers hang on and hope for better days***, by Clare Nullis (<http://www.busrep.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=561&fSetId=262&fArticleId=2473381>) published in Business Report of 7 April 2005, the delegation provides the following response:

An EU import ban, which is taken on account of the occurrence of an infectious agent that can be transmitted through live birds and meat, is a normal measure to protect both our industry and our consumers, and is entirely consistent with the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) rules. However, it must be highlighted that the outbreak of avian influenza in the Eastern Cape was *detected by the South African authorities* (early August 2004) *who in response*, and in line with OIE procedures, *introduced an immediate ban on South African exports of ostrich meat*. As a consequence the South African authorities informed all their trading partners to take appropriate action to contain the disease – resulting in the said ban on imports of South African ostrich meat into the EU.

Subsequent to the outbreak in the Eastern Cape, South Africa's National Directorate of Animal Health issued an instruction to all Provinces to conduct a national survey on avian influenza. We have been informed that during this countrywide survey, a number of suspicious results were found in ostriches from 39 farms in the Western Cape Province and accordingly all affected farms were placed under quarantine. In terms of the OIE rules, South Africa may only commence exports from the whole country 6 months after the last infected animal has been culled and after "disinfection" of the affected farms has been completed. Such dates have at present not been determined and in response the EU has extended its ban on ostrich meat imports from South Africa until the end of June.

It is, however, our understanding that the threat of avian influenza from the Eastern Cape has indeed been successfully dealt with. Therefore, should South Africa request the EU to apply its regionalisation criteria and if it would be willing to comply with the relevant regulations, the EU could amend its legislation to allow exports from "safe" regions while retaining a relevant ban on affected areas. The EU can revise its import ban at any time through its Standing Committee on Food Chain and Animal Health (SCFAH), either by lifting the restrictions on the whole country or by applying regionalisation measures.