



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.



16 - 22 January 2004

Headline News

Developing Countries, WTO and Agriculture – Speech by Franz Fischler (21/01/2004)

In a briefing to the European Parliament Development Committee Commissioner Fischler (Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries) observed: "The current 'on-again, off-again' phase in the negotiations of the Doha Round seems to be moving back to an 'on again' stage. This in itself is good news. We cannot let 2004 pass without any progress. ... One important way of progressing is to intensify direct contacts and multilateral talks at political level. This point was repeatedly made in my bilateral meetings with a series of agricultural ministers from around the world during the recent World Food Summit in Rome...." See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/04/28|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

WTO: the Road Ahead – Speech by Pascal Lamy (19/01/2004)

While on a visit to India EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy noted: "... One of my New Year's resolutions is to set to one side the analysis of what happened in Cancun. One of the advantages of our meeting in Geneva on 15 December 2003 is that we are now officially out of the post-Cancun era, and perhaps we are now in the pre-Hong Kong era, the site of the next WTO Ministerial I hope later this year. So let me move straight into "what next?" For our part, the EU spent some time in serious reflection and soul-searching, consulting our constituencies in the Member States and European Parliament on some fundamental questions, including even on whether multilateralism should remain our first preference...."



See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/04/24|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

See also: **Multilateral Trade Regime in post-Cancun Perspective – Speech by Pascal Lamy (18/01/2004)**

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/04/25|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Other News

Commission focuses on human tissue engineering potential (22/01/2004)

The European Commission published a report on prospects for commercial and research activities in the field of human tissue engineering (regeneration of tissues). Tissue engineering is an emerging, multidisciplinary, biotechnology sector. It promises to change medical practice profoundly, regenerating diseased tissues and organs instead of just repairing them. The development of this novel biotechnology is connected to new treatment possibilities, better quality of life of patients and, not least, the ability to gradually overcome the constant shortage of donor organs for transplantation. The first products include artificial skin, cartilage and bone.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/85|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

EU gives itself new merger control rules for 21st century (20/01/2004)

The Council of ministers gave its final approval to a new merger control law which will come into force in May at the same time as the European Union's enlargement. "The new law will equip the European Union with a modern, more flexible and efficient legislation to cater for the interests of 450 million consumers from 1 May," said Competition Commissioner Mario Monti. See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/70|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

See also: **New Merger Regulation frequently asked questions (20/01/2004)**

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/04/9|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Egypt: €70 million for environment in Cairo (19/01/2004)

The European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Union's long-term financing institution, is providing a loan of €70 million for the modernisation and extension of wastewater collection and treatment facilities of the Abu Rawash Wastewater Treatment Plant, Northwest of Cairo. The funds for this priority environmental investment to be commissioned end 2007, are advanced to Cairo Wastewater Organisation (CWO) and Cairo General Organisation for Sanitary Drainage (CGOSD).

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=BEI/04/6|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Europe: adding value, changing quickly – Speech by President Romano Prodi (19/01/2004)

In an address to the London School of Economics, European Commission President Romano Prodi said: "I find it interesting that the debate about the European Union here so often starts by asking whether this is essentially an economic or political

enterprise. ... it is clear that the Europe of the single market and the single currency has assumed a stronger political dimension, as a broad area of shared principles and values, and it will assure a more and more political dimension....”

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/04/23/0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

See also: **Commission sets priorities for catching up with Lisbon agenda (21/01/2004)**

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/74/0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

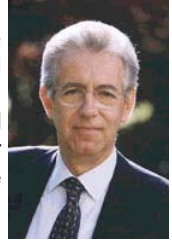
Commission reports on progress towards meeting 'Johannesburg' commitments (16/01/2003)

The European Commission has reported on the implementation of its commitments to eradicate poverty, protect natural resources and achieve sustainable patterns of consumption and production, made at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in August / September 2002. The Commission's report takes stock of progress achieved so far and outlines the actions undertaken by the EU both inside and outside the Union.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/04/6/0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

The New EU Policy on Technology Transfer Agreements – Speech by Commissioner Monti (16/01/2004)

In a speech at the Ecole des Mines in Paris, European Commissioner for Competition Policy Mario Monti stated: “It is of course a longstanding topic of debate in economic and legal circles how to marry the innovation bride and the competition groom. In the past some have argued that such a marriage will unavoidably lead to divorce because of conflicting aims of IPR (intellectual property rights) law and competition law. But I think that by now most will agree that for a dynamic and prosperous society we need both innovation and competition. Contrary to what some might think, competition is a necessary stimulus for innovation. IPR law and competition law have a complementary role to play in promoting innovation to the benefit of consumers. I therefore firmly believe in this marriage and, like in all good marriages, the real question is how to achieve a good balance between both policies.



See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/04/19/0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

Commission offers help in Avian Influenza crisis to Vietnam (16/01/2004)

The European Commission offered assistance to the Vietnam Government in dealing with all aspects of the Avian Influenza crisis in the country in response to the WHO appeal for support.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/64/0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

Presidency Declaration on behalf of the EU on the Moroni Agreement in the Comoros (15/01/2004)



The European Union welcomes the conclusion on 20 December 2003 of the Moroni Agreement, an essential stage in the process of reconciliation in the Comoros. It salutes the spirit of compromise shown by the Comoran parties in concluding this Agreement. The EU pays tribute to the role played by the African Union and the decisive contribution made by South Africa in the conclusion of the Agreement. The EU is determined to lend its full support to the successful implementation of the Moroni Agreement.

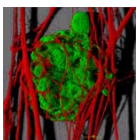
See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=PESC/04/10/0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

Ahead:

-  **28/01/2004, Launch of eThekweni Area Based Management Programme, Durban**
- **02-03/02/2003, ACP-EU Parliamentary visit, Cape Town**

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

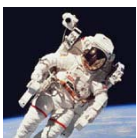
Stay Informed:



Making new connections: neurons in the inner ear have regrown and penetrated the hair cell cluster. © Source: Bionic Ear project

Help for the hard of hearing

'Bionic Ear' is the EU-backed project whose revolutionary discoveries about hair cell regeneration in the inner ear could one day mean a cure for deafness. Loss of hearing of this nature affects a staggering 10% of the 'active' population – more than 30% among the elderly – and had previously been considered an irreversible condition. With the discovery that new stem cell growth in the inner ear is possible in adult mice, millions of people worldwide may in future have their hearing repair itself. But there is still much work to be done before this 'self-repairing' mechanism can be translated from a positive result in animals to a cure for humans. See: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/headlines/news/article_04_01_26_en.html



Finding a treatment for cancer – in space?

New hope for cancer patients sickened by chemo- and radiation therapy could be around the corner, Dutch scientists report. Inspiration for the project came from an unusual source... the European Space Agency (ESA). See: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/headlines/index_en.cfm

