



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 July 2007

Headline News

EU reaction to recent Doha trade proposal (17/7)

Following publication of the latest draft Doha proposals by WTO facilitators in Geneva, EU Trade Spokesman Peter Power and EU Agriculture Spokesman Michael Mann issued the following statement: "The texts represent a useful step forward. We will consult Member States and give our considered view next week in Geneva. Our first reaction is that the texts provide a basis for further work in the Doha round, though there are points on which we have important concerns and other significant issues in the negotiations that are not included in these texts".

Declaration by the Presidency on the launch of the National Reconciliation Congress in Somalia (19/7)

"The European Union welcomes the launching of the National Reconciliation Congress in Mogadishu, Somalia, on 15 July and commends the National Governance and Reconciliation Committee and the delegates for their efforts. The European Union hopes that substantive deliberations to achieve national reconciliation can start as soon as possible. The European Union encourages all Somali actors to renounce violence and participate constructively in the Congress".

Review of the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (17/7)

An expert group, asked to review the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP), the only research programme so far established which combines EU and Member States' national funds, has said that any future programmes needed a much stronger up-front commitment from Member States. The EDCTP was established in 2003 by 15 European countries to develop new clinical interventions in the areas of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. A grant of €200m was allocated from the 6th Research Framework Programme, which was to be matched by €200m from the Member States. However a number of administrative and management problems mean that to date only €40m has been allocated from the EU budget, with €37m coming from Member States. The full report is available from:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/poverty-diseases/doc/final_ier_report_12july2007_en.pdf

Other News

Water scarcity and droughts in Europe: Commission addresses key challenge (18/7)

The European Commission presented a communication on ways the EU can address future water scarcity and droughts. The Communication presents an initial set of policy options and raises issues to be taken into account to ensure the availability of water for all human, economic and social activities. The Commission will report back on the progress of these issues in 2008. Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas said: "Access to water in sufficient quantity is fundamental to the daily lives of human beings and many economic activities. The major impacts of water scarcity and droughts are expected to be made worse by climate change. We thus need an integrated approach on water because sustainable water use is absolutely vital if we are to ensure that enough water is available to all European citizens and for economic activities."

The Communication and its accompanying document are available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/quantity/scarcity_en.htm

Creating a European digital library (17/7)

The European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education is backing a European Commission plan to set up a European digital library to promote, safeguard and disseminate as widely as possible the wealth and diversity of Europe's cultural heritage. The long term aim of the initiative will establish a tool that covers all categories of cultural material - not only books, but also audiovisual material. In the initial phase, however, focus would be put on text material free of copyright.

Industry Committee endorses EU co-ordinators for key energy projects (17/7)

The European Parliament's Industry, Research and Energy Committee approved the nomination of four project co-ordinators in the field of energy. The co-ordinators, nominated by the European Commission, will be responsible for monitoring several priority energy infrastructure projects. "I am very pleased that the ITRE Committee has approved by an overwhelming majority the proposal of the European Commission to nominate four European Co-ordinators on four very important energy network projects", said the Chairwoman of the ITRE Committee, Mrs Angelika Niebler. "I am very confident that the nominated European Co-ordinators will be a good choice and that they will make these important European energy infrastructure projects a success", she added. The projects are the Northern European Powerlink, an offshore wind project, the France-Spain power connection and the Nabucco gas pipeline project.

European Commission takes further steps to improve nuclear safety (17/7)

The European Commission has decided to establish a High Level Group on Nuclear Safety and Waste Management. The Group will develop a common understanding and reinforce common approaches in the safety of nuclear installations. "The aim of the Group is to swiftly identify relevant safety issues, ensure coherent action by the Member States authorities and make recommendations on whether any course of action should be taken at EU level – I am confident this will reinforce the safety of Europe's nuclear installations", said Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs.



<http://bookshop.europa.eu>

Europe in Figures — Eurostat yearbook 2006-07 (12.05 MG)

Including some 400 tables, graphs and maps, 'Europe in Figures' presents statistics on population, education, health, economy, science, environment, and several other areas — the spotlight this year being on energy. The graphs and maps are accompanied by information on related European policies and explanations of statistical concepts.

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

