



**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 May 2003

### Headline News:

#### **Commission reaction to earthquake in Algeria (22/05/2003)**

The President of the European Commission Romano Prodi today sent a message of condolence to the President of Algeria Abdelaziz Bouteflika, following the severe earthquake which struck yesterday killing hundreds and injuring thousands more. He said: "It is with great sadness that I have learned of the catastrophe that hit Algeria and the surrounding region yesterday causing the loss of so many lives. I would like to convey both my very sincere personal condolences and those of the European Commission in these tragic circumstances".

See: [http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p\\_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/734|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=](http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/734|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=)

#### **"Putting the Partnership into NEPAD" Workshop, Pretoria, 22-23 May. (22/05/2003)**

A Commission sponsored workshop aiming to identify and clarify the fundamental questions and crucial issues concerning partnerships in the context of NEPAD is currently being held in Pretoria. Senior role players and representatives from government, the private sector, the African Union, the European Union and G8 countries, as well as non-governmental organisations are participating. In his opening address EU Ambassador Michael Lake said: "We believe that the success of NePAD, and of the AU as Africa's overarching institution giving direction to the process, will be measured by the degree of African ownership. NePAD is by Africans for Africans." See: <http://www.eusa.org.za/Content/Background/TheEUandtheWorld.html>

#### **EU welcomes WTO green light for Kimberley System to block blood diamonds (15/05/2003)**

The WTO gave its green light to the Certification Scheme for rough diamonds implemented under the auspices of the Kimberley process. A number of Kimberley participants, to which the EU had associated itself, had requested the WTO to grant a waiver, ensuring the full compatibility between the Kimberley system to block trade in blood diamonds and WTO rules. EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy noted: "The WTO green light should be welcomed as a clear demonstration of coherence among international rules. It shows that WTO rules are sufficiently flexible to accommodate the implementation of a UN mandated activity. Carefully drafted trade measures can and do support development".

See: [http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p\\_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/694|0|RAPID&lq=EN;](http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/694|0|RAPID&lq=EN;)

### Other News:

#### **Commission sets out its objectives for the UN World Summit on Information Society (22/05/2003)**

The European Commission has adopted a Communication on the forthcoming World Summit on Information Society setting out the main objectives for the EU at this Summit. This Summit, the first world-wide event in the field, is under the patronage of the United Nations and will be held in Geneva in December 2003, continuing in Tunis in November 2005.

See: [http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p\\_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/731|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=](http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/731|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=)

#### **EC welcomes adoption by World Health Assembly of the Convention on Tobacco Control (22/05/2003)**

The World Health Assembly unanimously adopted in Geneva a global Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner David Byrne welcomed the adoption as an historic moment and the first ever international treaty for public health. He said: "This is a ground breaking first and signals the commitment of governments all over the world to fight the tobacco scourge and protect their citizens from the worst excesses of a powerful global industry." The now adopted Convention represents the outcome of three years of negotiation.

See: [http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p\\_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/722|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=](http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/722|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=)

#### **EU space policy takes off: EU decision-makers discuss the future of space technology (21/05/2003)**

Key decision-makers responsible for shaping Europe's future in space gathered in London, to discuss how to enhance Europe's leading position in developing space technology. Philippe Busquin, European Research Commissioner, Lord Sainsbury, UK Minister for Science and Innovation, and Antonio Rodotà, Director-General of the European Space Agency, addressed over 350 representatives from government, industry and research. This meeting was part of a series of consultation events on European space policy, following the publication of the EU Green Paper on Space.

See: [http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p\\_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/720|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=](http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/720|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=)

### **Commission adopts Action Plan to combat illegal logging and the trade in illegal timber (21/05/2003)**

The European Commission unveiled an Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) to combat the growing problem of illegal logging and the related trade in illegally harvested timber. Measures set out in this Plan include support for improved governance in wood-producing countries, voluntary partnerships with wood-producing countries to ensure only legally harvested timber enters the EU market, and efforts to develop international collaboration to combat the trade in illegally harvested timber.

See: [http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p\\_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/718|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=](http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/718|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=)

### **Romano Prodi condemns the terrorist attacks in Casablanca (17/05/2003)**

The President of the European Commission Romano Prodi condemned without reserves the terrorist attacks carried out in Casablanca this night and which caused loss of innocent peoples' life. The President made known his regret on this futile attempt to hamper the development of a democratic Arab country and he expresses his solidarity to H. M. the King, the Moroccan people and the families of the victims.

See: [http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p\\_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/704|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=](http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/704|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=)

### **Angola: EC earmarks €5 mil in humanitarian aid for resettlement of returning populations (16/05/2003)**

The European Commission (EC) has adopted a decision to provide continuing humanitarian support for the resettlement of populations affected by the war in Angola. €5 million will be channelled by the Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), a service of the European Commission under the responsibility of Poul Nielson, through partner organisations and international agencies operating in the country, and in neighbouring countries hosting Angolan refugees.

See: [http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p\\_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/696|0|RAPID&lg=EN;](http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/696|0|RAPID&lg=EN;)

### **Maritime safety: agreement for new levels of oil pollution compensation (16/05/2003)**

Loyola de Palacio, European Commission vice-president in charge of transport and energy welcomed the International Maritime Organisation's approval of a notable increase in the level of the IOPC Fund (International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund). The new Protocol establishes a five-fold increase of the compensation available to victims, up to 750 million SDR (today around € 900 million). The new Fund is open to any member of the existing International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund. This level of increase was what the European Commission asked in its original proposal.

See: [http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p\\_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/701|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=](http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/701|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=)

*Ahead:*

**Euromed (Mid-term Ministerial Conference), Heraklion, 24-27/0/2003**

**G8 Summit – Evian-les-Bains, France, 01-03/06/2003** See: <http://www.g8.fr/evian/english/home.html>

**EU Green Week 2003, 02-05/06/2003** See: [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/greenweek/index\\_en.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/greenweek/index_en.htm)

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**Great news for all fans of European films – the EU Film Festival is back.**  
One year after record audiences made it clear that this feature on the country's cultural calendar was a must, the EU again presents a film festival that will showcase films from all across the European Union.

Spokesman for the European Commission Delegation in South Africa, Frank Oberholzer said, "We are particularly pleased that the festival, for the third year running, has expanded in size and this year will be run in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban. We feel that increased local exposure to the many European cultures is important, particularly in the light of the European Union and its Member States remaining not only South Africa's largest trading partner but also by far the country's biggest development partner."

**Cape Town:** Cavendish Square 23-29 May; **Durban:** Gateway 06-12 June

For film reviews & festival schedule, see: <http://www.sterkinekor.com/festivals/EuropeanUnionff/listing.asp>

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