



European Union

Delegation of the European Commission
to South Africa

... **this week**
in review

*This publication seeks
to provide information
on EU activities of
interest to SA readers.*

For more on any covered issue/s, please
'click' on the blue headlines and / or text



18 February – 2 March 2008

Headline News

[Trade Commissioner Mandelson - speech to Trade Ministers from Least Developed Countries](#)

In a speech to Trade Ministers from Least Developed Countries in Lesotho, EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson said that the Doha Round of world trade talks was now "facing a high risk of failure", unless negotiators can restore balance to the different strands of the negotiation and close a deal before a change of US President made negotiating a deal difficult. Mandelson said that the poorest have the most to lose if the concessions already on table in the Doha Round, which include a "paradigm shift" in global farm subsidies, are lost. Committing the EU to a constructive role in the endgame, Mandelson said: "We will not ask for more than others can do. But nor can we settle for less than what others can afford".

[General Pierre-Michel Joana appointed as Special Advisor for African peacekeeping capabilities](#)

Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), in a statement on the appointment of Pierre-Michel Joana as Special Advisor for African peacekeeping capabilities, said: "The EU attaches great importance to strengthening the partnership between Africa and the EU in the field of African capabilities for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. This is in line with the EU-Africa joint strategy adopted last December in Lisbon, of which peace and security is a key dimension"

[Development Commissioner Michel welcomes coalition government for Kenya](#)

European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel, welcomed a power-sharing agreement between Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga. Commissioner Michel praised the two leaders for recognising that political compromise offered the only durable solution to the post-election situation, stating; "This is a great day for Kenya and its people. In the last few days, Kenya found itself at a crossroads. I am delighted that Kenya's political leaders, both President Kibaki and Mr Odinga, have shown the wisdom and vision to choose the path of compromise and reconciliation. This power-sharing deal means that once again Kenya is back on a path of peace and mutual understanding. The Kenyan people have had their faith in the political process restored and can once again look forward to building together their future."

[EU-CARIFORUM Economic Partnership Agreement finalised](#)

In December 2007, the European Commission initialled an Economic Partnership Agreement with Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago, (the CARIFORUM countries), covering all areas under negotiation. This comprehensive trade and development agreement covers goods trade, services and investment, as well as a wide range of trade-related areas. Sustainable development and regional integration are major themes running through this agreement, which includes development cooperation provisions and links into the EU Aid for Trade Strategy. CARIFORUM and the EU have now finalised the technical corrections and legal formatting of the agreement.

[Text of the Agreement](#)

Other News

[EU and China make progress on new High Level Trade Mechanism](#)

In a series of meetings in Beijing, EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson, and new Chinese Minister of Commerce Mr. Chen Deming, made progress on the establishment of the new EU-China High Level Economic and Trade Mechanism. They exchanged views on how the mechanism should work, with the goal of launching it in April 2008 and also discussed a number of issues in EU-China trade, as well as the current status of global trade talks. Speaking following his meetings with Minister Chen, Commissioner Mandelson said: "We have laid the foundations for a constructive and strong personal relationship, and provided the basis to advance a positive EU-China trade agenda. The High Level Mechanism is not a quick-

fix - it will map out the long term strategic direction of our economic and trade relationship, and help smooth out issues we encounter along the way". Europe's imports from China have grown by around 27% per year for the last five years. In 2006, the EU imported €191 billion worth of goods from China. China is Europe's biggest source of manufactured imports. At the same time, China is Europe's fastest growing export market. Europe exported €63 billion worth of goods to China in 2006.

Council adopts a revised Accession Partnership with Turkey

The Council adopted a decision identifying renewed priorities for Turkish membership of the EU. The main priorities for Turkey relate in particular to its capacity to meet the political criteria set for EU accession by the European Council at Copenhagen in 1993 and the requirements of the negotiating framework adopted by the Council on 3 October 2005. Short-term priorities include the following issues: democracy and the rule of law; human rights, civil and political rights, economic and social rights, minority rights, cultural rights, and the protection of minorities; economic criteria, and; the ability to assume the *acquis* in the different negotiating chapters. Medium-term priorities relate to economic criteria and the ability to assume the obligations of membership.

Egypt plays host to EP President Pötering

European Parliament's President Hans-Gert Pötering, on a two-day visit to Egypt, praised Cairo for liberalising its telecommunications industry and for acting to improve the position of women in society. He also stressed the need for peaceful cohabitation between all faiths in this, the European year of intercultural dialogue. During the visit, Mr Pötering held talks with Dr Fathi Sorour, Speaker of the People's Assembly and with MPs from the Human Rights, Foreign Affairs and General Affairs Committees. He also met members of Egypt's civil society and laid a wreath on the Tomb of assassinated Egyptian leader Anwar Al-Sadat.

European Commission earmarks €2 million in humanitarian aid for flood victims in Bolivia

Following the deployment of experts to assess the situation in flood-hit Bolivia, the European Commission has launched a humanitarian decision for €2 million. The funds, managed by the Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO), under the responsibility of Commissioner Louis Michel, will target around 110,000 people living in the worst affected areas of the country. "Bolivia has made a great effort to respond to what are the worst floods in many decades," said Commissioner Michel. "But the sheer scale of the catastrophe and the fact that the situation is still deteriorating has put an enormous strain on local capacity, causing President Morales to officially declare a state of national disaster. Since the beginning, we have monitored closely the humanitarian situation through our own assessment missions and those of our operational partners present in the field. We can now take a decision based on identified needs. The partners we have selected are already working in the field."

European Commission imposes €899 million penalty on Microsoft for non-compliance

The European Commission imposed a substantial fine of €899 million on Microsoft for its non-compliance up until 22 October 2007. The decision finds that, prior to 22 October 2007, Microsoft charged unreasonable prices for access to indispensable interoperability information. This is the third time in four years that the Commission has had to impose fines or penalty payments on Microsoft.

European Parliament calls for sharper focus on Europe's cultural heritage

The European Parliament's Culture Committee said that although EU programmes in the cultural sector contributed to cohesion, real convergence, economic growth, sustainable development, innovation employment and competitiveness, the Committee believed that the existing programmes did not fully reflect the implications of Europe's common cultural heritage. The committee therefore called on the Commission to propose specific programmes to preserve Europe's cultural heritage, as well as a "European Heritage" label, to emphasise the European dimension of cultural goods, monuments, memorial sites and places of remembrance.

The winning design of the new euro coin

EU citizens have selected the winning design of the new commemorative euro coin, celebrating 10 years of Economic and Monetary Union and the creation of the euro. Commemorative coins bearing this design will be issued by all euro-area Member States from January 2009. The winning design was created by Mr George Stamatopoulos, a sculpture at the Central Bank of Greece.

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

