



European Union

Delegation to the Republic of South Africa
Head of Delegation

EU Perspectives

*Regular publication that seeks to provide information
on EU-related activities of interest to SA readers*



19 July – 1 August 2010

Headline News

[Commissioner Piebalgs pushes for tangible results on maternal and child health at the African Union Summit](#)

European Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, addressed the 15th African Union (AU) Summit in Kampala, Uganda. Maternal, infant and child health was the core theme of the meeting gathering the 53 African Union Member States. The EU Commissioner stressed the need for concrete progress in these areas. Among the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), child and maternal health (MDGs 4 and 5) are those where many developing countries are most off track. This is important, as both Africa and the EU are preparing for the High Level Summit on MDGs that will take place in New York on 20-22 September. Ahead of his trip, Commissioner Piebalgs said: "Today 11 million children under the age of 5 and more than half a million pregnant woman die in the world every year. Saving these children, protecting the mothers and promoting the right to health for everybody are priority objectives for the EU. We are all committed to reducing these shocking rates by two thirds by 2015, but progress is too slow. I am pleased that the African Union puts the health of the most vulnerable children and women at the centre of this Summit and that we can speed up the process to meet the relevant Millennium Development Goals on time."

[Commission allocates €15m to address ongoing humanitarian needs in Zimbabwe](#)

The European Commission has adopted a €15m aid package to support the reestablishment of essential health and water supply services and to provide food assistance, short term food security and livelihood support in Zimbabwe. This new Commission funding decision will address these humanitarian concerns via a wide range of interventions including support to primary health care, the provision and distribution of vital and essential medicines and medical supplies, and support to the water, sanitation and health emergency response units. Part of the money will also be used in pilot livelihood support activities including cash transfers and voucher systems. The Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, Kristalina Georgieva, stated: "Despite recent improvements by the Government of National Unity, the road to recovery is still a long one. If we want Zimbabwe to get back on the path towards longer-term development, we will need to carry on with our efforts to provide clean water and sanitation facilities to the population, alongside our food assistance programmes."

[EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht to open 'Trade Days' at Shanghai World Expo](#)

EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht will open 'Trade Days' in the European Pavilion at Expo 2010 in Shanghai on Thursday 22nd July. The two-day event will show-case the importance of developing trade links between the EU and China. Leading European business people and international academics will exchange viewpoints on EU-China trade relations and host a tasting of quality traditional food products from Europe. "I see enormous possibilities for European businesses in China but bringing these to life is not a given" said Commissioner De Gucht. "I want to dismantle the barriers to greater economic integration and to realise the opportunities that trade can bring. In today's world, Europe and China are inter-dependent so partnership and a shared responsibility must go hand in hand." The Commissioner will give a keynote speech in which he will emphasise the potential of doing business with China and the issues that need to be addressed to sustain business in the long term. The other keynote speaker is the Vice-Minister of Commerce of People's Republic of China Go Hucheng. Other speakers include high-level representatives of leading European companies doing business in China and professors from the most prominent European and Chinese universities and business schools.

Other News

[European Commission allocates €35 million for victims of conflict and natural disasters in Somalia](#)

The European Commission adopted a €35m funding decision to support humanitarian activities in Somalia. It is estimated that approximately 3,200,000 people, about 42% of the population of Somalia, would need emergency humanitarian assistance and/or livelihood support in the first half of 2010; at the same time field assessments suggest that the situation is unlikely to improve in the second half of this year. The €35m Decision adopted will address a wide range of relief interventions in the following sectors; health, nutrition, food aid/food security, water and sanitation, non-food items/shelter, disaster risk reduction, logistics, security, and the coordination of partner operations. Kristalina Georgieva, Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, said: "Somalian people are the first victims of the deadly combination of continuous fighting and adverse climatic conditions. Their extreme resilience has been stretched to the limit. Many Somali die in silence for lack of food, medical and sanitary care. We cannot let them down however difficult and dangerous the conditions are for our relief-work. The Commission as leading humanitarian donor will continue its long-standing commitment to address the main humanitarian needs of the Somali population."

[Commission allocates €15m to prevent hunger, malnutrition and epidemics in Ethiopia](#)

The European Commission adopted a €15m aid package to address a critical food security situation in Ethiopia, where an estimated 5.2m people will be requiring food assistance this year. The main bulk of the Commission's funding will go towards providing appropriate and adequate food assistance to the disaster affected population, including food aid, nutrition and short-term food security. Support will also be given to the agricultural and livestock sectors, to safeguard livelihoods and improve food security. The Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, Kristalina Georgieva, stated: "The majority of the population in Ethiopia still live far below the poverty line, and is extremely vulnerable to severe changes in weather patterns, droughts, epidemics and protracted internal conflicts. With our multiple interventions we aim not only to provide for a speedy recovery but also to help to communities strengthen their own coping mechanisms."

[Commission allocates €5m for short-term food assistance in four countries of south-east Africa](#)

The European Commission allocated €5m to support the protection of livelihoods of vulnerable populations in the disaster-prone regions of south-east African and south-west Indian Ocean. This aid will promote disaster preparedness by providing short-term food security, short-term livelihood support, and other support activities in Comoros, Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique. The principal objective of this new Decision is to link disaster risk reduction to food security actions, with short-term livelihood support and short-term food-security, in order to decrease the vulnerability of communities exposed to the risk of natural catastrophes. Assistance will be provided through multiple interventions such as seeds, tools and livestock support and capacity building activities at household and community level.

[Presidents of Commission, Parliament and Council discuss the fight against poverty with European faith leaders](#)

About twenty senior representatives from the Christian, Jewish, Muslim religions, as well as from the Sikh and Hindu communities, met in Brussels on the invitation of President José Manuel Barroso and co-chaired by Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament and Herman van Rompuy, President of the European Council. They discussed effective ways of combating poverty and social exclusion as an imperative for European governance. This was the sixth in a series of annual meetings launched by President Barroso in 2005. For the first time the meeting takes place in the new context of the Lisbon Treaty, which foresees that the Union maintains an "open, transparent and regular dialogue" with religion, churches and communities of conviction. José Manuel Barroso, the Commission President said: "In Europe, several million citizens live at the edge of social exclusion. A poor testimony for one of the richest regions of the world! As Europe recovers from this crisis, I want to see a generation of growth which integrates the most vulnerable into main stream society." He added: "Churches and religious communities are important providers of social services in EU member states. If we want to combat poverty effectively, it is essential to draw from their long standing and wide ranging experience."

[Results of the 2010 Call for Proposals for the Special Action for Third Countries](#)

A record-high 16 projects received funding for cultural co-operation projects between European and Third Country partners. By the deadline 5 May 2010, 60 applications had been submitted from 30 participating countries for projects, involving third country partners in fields such as visual arts, cultural heritage, performing arts, literature, books and reading, architecture, design and applied arts, multi-media and new technologies and interdisciplinary areas. The eligible third countries for 2010 were: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Jordan, Moldova, occupied Palestinian Territory, Tunisia and Ukraine. Azerbaijan and Ukraine were added as from 1 March 2010, in light of their ratification of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in early 2010. Each year the Special Action for Third Countries enables one or more countries to be the subject of a call for proposals. The call enables grants to be given for cooperation projects, which correspond to the objectives of the Culture Programme. For 2011, the United States of Mexico has been selected the eligible Third Country.

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