



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.



19 – 25 March 2004

Headline News

President Prodi hosts the African Union Commission in Brussels (24/03/2004)

The European Commission welcomed its African counterpart, the African Union Commission (AUC), for a day-long meeting in Brussels. The first of its kind, this occasion was an important contribution to the emerging strategic partnership between the two continental institutions. During the seminar, Commissioners shared experiences in driving their respective processes of regional integration and explore ways of strengthening and deepening the ties between the two institutions. There was also an exchange of views on issues of common interest relating to the EU-Africa dialogue, including the peace and security agenda, regional integration, the on-going negotiations for Economic and Partnership agreements between the EU and African regions and co-operation issues such as water, energy and commodities.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/384|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

See also: **Q&A - EU / African Union strategic partnership (24/03/2004)**

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/04/71|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

What role for fair trade in EU Policies? – Statement by Pascal Lamy (23/03/2004)

During the recent Conference on Fair Trade - a Contribution to Sustainable Development at the European Parliament in Brussels, EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy stated: "Two questions hang in the air: "Is fair trade a contribution to Sustainable Development?" and "What role for fair trade in EU policies?" Slightly leading in nature: let me first join the dots in the way the organisers surely intended. Of course fair trade makes an important contribution to sustainable development. Of course, given the central role that the principle of sustainable development plays in EU policies, fair trade has an important position. That acknowledgement confirmed by the funds we continue to put into fair trade projects it was €16 million into €30 million worth of projects between 1997 and 2002 alone, on 66 projects, bearing some evocative names. ... And of course we shall go on offering support for relevant projects..."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/04/146|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

See also: **Fair Trade: A Contribution to Sustainable Development & Poverty Reduction – by P Nielson (23/03/2004)**

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/04/155|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=



Other News

Commission continues to fight landmines (25/03/2004)

The European Commission has adopted its 2004 Annual Work Programme for antipersonnel landmines with a budget of €11,26 million. The general objective of this programme is to assist countries suffering the consequences of antipersonnel landmines to create the conditions necessary for their economic and social development. The focus countries in 2004 are Bosnia Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia/Abkhazia, Ukraine, Tajikistan, Mozambique, Somalia, Sudan, Angola, Eritrea and Peru/Ecuador. A further €7,2 million will be approved by the Commission later in the year to support specific targeted projects. See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/388|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Civil Protection: EC wants to upgrade the EU's capacity to respond to major disasters (25/03/2004)

Two weeks after the bomb attacks in Madrid, and on the eve of the European Council which will discuss Europe's response to terrorism, the European Commission has set out its ideas on how to reinforce Europe's civil protection capacities. Not only terrorist attacks, but also recent natural disasters like floods and forest fires in Europe, and the earthquakes in Algeria, Iran and Morocco, have shown the need for a more concerted and focused EU-wide approach to civil protection. No Member State can respond effectively on its own to every disaster. Therefore the European civil protection capacity to respond to natural disasters as well as terrorist attacks must be improved. In a Communication, the Commission suggests action on three fronts. See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/385|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

See also: **Questions and Answers on the EU and Civil Protection (25/03/2004)**

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/04/73|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Commission concludes on Microsoft investigation, imposes conduct remedies and a fine (24/03/2004)

The European Commission has concluded, after a five-year investigation, that Microsoft Corporation broke European Union competition law by leveraging its near monopoly in the market for PC operating systems (OS) onto the markets for work group server operating systems and for media players. Because the illegal behaviour is still ongoing, the Commission has ordered Microsoft to disclose to competitors, within 120 days, the interfaces required for their products to be able to 'talk' with the ubiquitous Windows OS. Microsoft is also required, within 90 days, to offer a version of its Windows OS without Windows Media Player to PC manufacturers (or when selling directly to end users). In addition, Microsoft is fined €497 million for abusing its market power in the EU.



See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/382|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

See also: **Microsoft - Questions and Answers on Commission Decision (24/03/2004)**

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/04/70|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

Europe gives €32 million for vaccines to stop tuberculosis (24/03/2004)

The European Commission launched the largest-ever collaborative tuberculosis (TB) initiative for World TB-day, March 24. Fifty-two research teams from academia and industry from 15 European and African countries are joining forces with the European Commission to help eradicate TB. Globally, TB kills 2 million people a year, with one-third of the world's population currently infected with the bacillus, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (Mtb). While most cases and deaths occur in developing countries, resistant Mtb strains are mainly found among the poorest people in developed countries, as incomplete treatment increases drug resistance. The European Union is confronting the re-emerging threat of TB by investing €32 million in two overlapping research projects. This cash will be used in an accelerated effort to develop new, effective vaccines to fight TB.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/381|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

EU decides to better protect dolphins (23/03/2004)

The Council of Ministers took a decision to better protect dolphins and harbour porpoises in EU waters. The measures, originally proposed by the Commission in July 2003, relate to a step by step reduction of the use of driftnets from 01/01/2005 until complete prohibition by 01/01/2008, the compulsory use of acoustic deterrent devices ("pingers") on fishing nets and the monitoring of by-catches through an observer scheme. "This decision will better protect dolphins and porpoises against being accidentally trapped in fishing gear. Dolphins are not the only ones to benefit. Biodiversity will be strengthened and reduced by-catches of dolphins and porpoises will be positive for the image of the fishing sector, as fishermen never want to catch them in the first place", commented Franz Fischler, Commissioner responsible for Agriculture, Rural Affairs and Fisheries.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/378|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

World Water Day: new Water Facility to boost access to clean water and sanitation (22/03/2004)

The European Union agreed on World Water Day to set up a special Water Facility to promote access to clean water and sanitation for people in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. The facility, originally proposed by President Prodi in 2003, could in a first phase be worth up to €500 million and is designed to have an important catalytic effect in generating additional funds for water and sanitation. Following the decision by EU foreign ministers, Romano Prodi, Commission President, Poul Nielson, Commissioner for development and humanitarian aid and Margot Wallström, Commissioner for Environment said: "We strongly welcome this bold and timely decision by member states which, on World Water Day, sends a strong signal that the EU remains prepared to stand by its commitments and alongside its partners to ensure that halving the number of people without clean water and sanitation becomes more than just a goal but a reality."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/375|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

Promotion of EU agricultural products outside the EU (22/03/2004)

The European Commission has approved measures to provide information on, and to promote, agricultural products outside the EU. Member States have submitted 6 promotion and information programmes to the Commission to be examined. The 5 programmes that have been accepted are targeted at the USA, Canada, Japan, Switzerland, Russia, Brazil and China. The products covered are wine, fruit, olive oil, cheese and organic products. The estimated expenditure for the EU is €3 million.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/374|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

See also: **Agriculture / Fisheries Council of 22-23/03/2004 - Outcome**

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/04/69|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

Commission allocates €22 million in humanitarian aid to vulnerable populations in Africa (19/03/2004)

The Commission has adopted three humanitarian aid packages totalling €22 million for the victims of crises in Uganda (€6 Million), Somalia (€8 Million) and the Republic of Angola (€8 Million). These funds are managed by the Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) under the responsibility of Commissioner Poul Nielson. They will help pay for better access to healthcare and nutrition programmes, improve food and water supplies and sanitation systems and facilitate the return and resettlement of displaced people. See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/367|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

See also: **EC grants €25 million for a 2nd post-crisis emergency rehabilitation programme in Ivory Coast (19/03/2004)**

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/366|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

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