



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.



2 – 8 July 2004

Headline News

Commissioners Nielson & Hübner to visit southern Africa, 05-13/07/2004



Poul Nielson, European Commissioner for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid [photo right], and his trade counterpart, Commissioner Danuta Hübner [photo left], will visit southern Africa. Both Commissioners will attend the launch of the EU-SADC negotiations on an Economic Partnership Agreement in Windhoek, Namibia, on 08/07/2003. While in South Africa Commissioner Nielson will get the opportunity to get a first hand appreciation of development activities financed by the EC and to reflect on future co-operation with South Africa in meetings with various key role players. In South



Africa Commissioner Hübner will take the opportunity to review trade relations with South Africa and will be briefed by a number of stakeholders.

EU-ACP: Launch of trade negotiations with Southern African region (07/07/2004)

The EU and seven Southern African countries have decided to join forces and promote trade and development by launching negotiations for a region-to-region Economic and Partnership Agreement (EPA). The opening ceremony will take place on 8 in Windhoek, Namibia. By opening up trade between both regions and setting up clear rules for trade, the EPA will contribute to the economic integration of the region. Tearing down barriers to trade among themselves is the necessary complement to the almost full access to the EU market already enjoyed by these countries.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/858&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: **EU-South African Development Community (SADC): Facts and Figures (07/07/2004)**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/04/171&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Presidency Declaration on behalf of the EU on Africa and the AU, 06-08/07/2004

On the occasion of the AU Summit in Ethiopia: "The European Union congratulates the African Union with the considerable progress made in achieving its objectives and in implementing its programmes and activities and reconfirms the European commitment to strengthen its relationship with the African Union in the broadest sense possible. Twenty-five European nations are now looking forward to further develop their relations with Africa ..."

See: http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/cfsp/81352.pdf

Netherlands' Prime Minister: Jan
Peter Balkenende



Other News

EU action against HIV/AIDS (08/07/2004)

The framework for the European Community's approach to the three major communicable diseases (HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis [TB]) in third countries is the EC Programme for Action on Communicable Diseases, which is based on the September 2000 Communication "Accelerated Action targeted at major communicable diseases within the context of poverty reduction". The Programme establishes for 2001-2006 and as part of an expanded international effort, a broad and coherent Community response to the global emergency caused by HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB. The three diseases kill more than 6 million people per year, affect the poorest populations most and undermine global health and sustainable development.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/04/174&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Developing countries: EC unveils system of trade preferences for next 10 years (07/07/2004)

The Commission has adopted a Communication setting out the principles that will guide the EU system of trade preferences for developing countries (Generalised System of Preferences - GSP) for the next ten years. The GSP is a key instrument to help developing countries reduce poverty by generating revenue through international trade. The EC proposes to improve the current system in a number of areas: simplification (cutting back the five separate arrangements which exist at present); focusing the benefits on those developing countries most in need, fostering regional cooperation and strengthening the focus for additional GSP benefits on sustainable development.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/860&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

EU-Africa Cotton Forum: Pascal Lamy proposes a joint strategy for African countries (05/07/2004)

Meeting in Paris today, the EU-Africa Cotton Forum aims to launch a joint strategy for supporting African cotton producers. Speaking at the Forum, European Commissioner for International Trade Pascal Lamy commented: "We are very aware of the essential role played by cotton in the economic development of African countries, which are among the poorest in the world. We are also conscious that the fall in cotton prices has directly and negatively affected millions of small producers. It was crucial to begin with a test case, and cotton has given some real impetus to a general trade strategy for agricultural products. This is one reason for the establishment of this European-African cotton partnership."

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/851&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: **EU-Africa Forum on cotton – Speech by Pascal Lamy (05/07/2004)**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/04/350&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Cotton: EU-Africa Forum to outline roadmap supporting African Cotton (02/07/2004)

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/847&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Health in developing countries - EC and WHO join forces to deliver on development goals (02/07/2004)

The European Commission and the World Health Organisation agreed on a strategic partnership to reinforce their joint efforts to reduce poverty and improve health conditions in developing countries. Particular attention will be given to: (i) improving the health of mothers; (ii) reversing the advance of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; and (iii) strengthening systems for generating information about the performance of health systems. On signing the partnership European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Poul Nielson, said "The EC places a high priority on improving health in developing countries, and recognises that this is an essential pre-requisite for development. The WHO is uniquely placed as the global leader in health to support countries in putting in place a basic set of mostly simple but highly effective interventions ..."

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/844&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Undeclared work: Commission unveils new study with EU-wide data (02/07/2004)

The EC has published a study that provides estimates for the first time of the extent of undeclared labour in the EU 25. Today's report on "Undeclared work in an enlarged Union" indicates that it varies greatly across the EU, from an estimated 1.5% of GDP in Austria and 2% in the UK to 16-17%, 18% in Hungary and Latvia and over 20% in Greece. These figures, though tentative, give Member States an important tool for tackling undeclared work as part of the European Employment Strategy. Since 2003, the EU has had a specific Employment Guideline aimed at transforming undeclared work into regular employment. To achieve this, Member States have to measure the extent of the problem and their progress in combating it.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/843&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Euro-area economy gaining momentum (02/07/2004)

Recent data indicate that the euro-area recovery is now proceeding on firm ground. GDP growth came in stronger than expected in the first quarter. After having sent somewhat mixed signals in the first months of the year, survey indicators are again pointing upwards on the back of a revival in business sentiment. Some of the uncertainties that had hitherto weighed on confidence have been lifted and annual GDP growth for 2004 is now likely to exceed the Commission's spring forecast of 1.7%. See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/842&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Ahead:

- **09-10/07/2004 – EU Trade Commissioner, Danuta Hübner, visit to South Africa**
- **05-13/07/2004 – EU Development & Humanitarian Aid Commissioner, Poul Nielson, visit to Southern Africa**
Poul Nielson, European Commissioner for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, will visit South Africa and Namibia from 5 to 13 July 2004. The visit will ... not only provide an opportunity to get a first hand appreciation of development activities financed by the EC but will offer a good opportunity to reflect on the future co-operation with South Africa and Namibia. Commissioner Nielson will use the opportunity to recall the EC's firm intention of remaining a reliable and close partner not only of these two countries but of the Southern African region as a whole. On 8 July Commissioner Nielson will join Commissioner Danuta Hübner for the launch of the EU-SADC negotiations on an Economic Partnership Agreement.

See: <http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/849&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>

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