



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 May 2003

Europe Day 2003 - Message from President Prodi (08/05/2003)

On 9 May 1950, a great European, Robert Schuman, made the declaration we are commemorating today. It marked the start of the long journey towards a united Europe. A Europe built on peace and solidarity. On democracy and the rule of law. A Europe in search of unity of purpose and action. The Schuman Declaration launched the first Community. The pooling of iron and steel production was the first "fusion of interest" that Robert Schuman referred to. That practical step created the "de facto solidarity" Schuman spoke of. It eliminated the "age-old opposition" that had led to so many wars. It paved the way for a Community of shared values and common interests. So today is a day for pride. Others have joined us on this journey. We grew from six to nine. To ten. Then twelve. And now we are fifteen. And last month another ten countries signed to become members of our Union. ..."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/658|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

European Commission and WHO - a healthy partnership continues and strengthens collaboration (07/05/2003)

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Commission held a series of high-level consultations in Brussels to strengthen and widen their collaboration in the field of public health. Commissioners David Byrne, Pascal Lamy, Philippe Busquin, Margot Wallström and the head of cabinet of Commissioner Nielson had discussions with the Director-General of WHO, Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, and WHO Regional Director for Europe, Dr Marc Danzon. They discussed joint strategies to address a wide range of health issues, including: communicable disease control - and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in particular - the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), a global strategy on diet, physical activity and health, global health research, environment and health, and the strategic partnership between the EU and the WHO in the field of development. The diversity of issues addressed during the meetings shows the ever-increasing co-operation between WHO and the European Commission.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/647|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Poul Nielson meets ICRC President Kellenberger at Baghdad airport to discuss humanitarian situation in Iraq (06/05/2003)

Mr Poul Nielson, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Affairs met with Jakob Kellenberger, President of International Committee of the Red Cross at Baghdad International Airport. Mr. Nielson is on a two-day trip to the Iraqi capital for discussions with humanitarian agencies and to inspect projects funded by the Commission's humanitarian aid office (ECHO). See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/635|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

European Commission airlifts urgent medical aid to Iraq (06/05/2003)

A Belgian military aircraft loaded with essential medical and hygiene supplies destined for Iraqis in need left Brussels. President Romano Prodi, the Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt and the Belgian Minister of Defense André Flahaut were present at the take-off. The airlift is funded (€10 million) by the latest package of urgent medical supplies approved by the Commission. This shipment is part of a wider co-ordinated effort involving EU Member States and the Commission, launched by President Prodi at the recent European Council in Athens.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/622|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

European Commission to frontload EUR 210 Million in financial support to Jordan and Egypt to alleviate the negative economic effects of the war in Iraq (05/05/2003)

The European Commission announced today that it intends to make available an accelerated package of €210M financial assistance in support of Jordan and Egypt to offset the economic impact of the war in Iraq. This emergency assistance will be drawn from existing commitments and is scheduled for quick disbursement to help the two countries most affected by the war to stabilise their economic situation. Chris Patten, Commissioner for External Relations, said: 'We are bringing forward this package of financial assistance to support two Euro-Mediterranean partner countries that have been directly affected by the war. We want to help alleviate the negative social and economic consequences of the conflict, thereby helping to maintain momentum for economic and political reform in the region'. €175 M of the total amount will be disbursed as budgetary assistance to Egypt while the remaining €35M will help to restore the stability of the Jordanian balance of payments.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/627|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Third preliminary Statement of the EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) to Nigeria: State Houses of Assembly elections (05/05/2003)

External Commissioner Chris Patten has declared: "I believe that the honest and professional assessment of the election process made by the European Union Electoral Observation Mission, will contribute to the process of strengthening democratic values in Nigeria and I would like to express my gratitude to the leader of the EU observers, MEP Max Van den Berg, and to his team for their excellent work. I hope that all legitimate complaints related to these elections will be dealt with according to the Nigerian legal system. I also hope that the recommendations made by the EU Mission will be taken into account with a view to improving the election framework in Nigeria for the future and to putting down ever deeper roots for Nigeria's democracy."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/634|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Pharmaceuticals: Commissioner Poul Nielson outlines EU vision for combating communicable diseases (05/05/03)

International efforts to improve poorer countries' access to medicines against AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis need to be complemented by preventive measures, Development and Humanitarian Aid Commissioner Poul Nielson has stressed. While welcoming the rapid drop in prices for anti-retroviral drugs, Commissioner Poul Nielson said that attention should be paid to preparing the health infrastructure in developing countries to administer such treatments. He also emphasised that 'prevention' is preferable to 'cure'. See: http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/body/news/news_en.htm#1

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What is Europe Day?

On the 9th of May 1950, Robert Schuman presented his proposal on the creation of an organised Europe, indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations. This proposal, known as the "Schuman declaration", is considered to be the beginning of the creation of what is now the European Union.

Today, the 9th of May has become a European symbol (Europe Day) which along with the single currency (the euro), the flag and the anthem, identifies the political entity of the European Union. Europe Day is the occasion for activities and festivities that bring Europe closer to its citizens and peoples of the Union closer to one another.

To find out more, see: http://www.europa.eu.int/abc/symbols/9-may/index_en.htm