



European Union

Delegation of the European Commission
in South Africa

... this week
in review

media briefing



21– 27 February 2003

COTONOU AGREEMENT - Ratification and entry into force (27/02/03)

At a short ceremony at ACP House on 27 February 2003, the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, acting for the Community, lodged its act of notification of ratification of the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part. Before it can enter into force, the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement, signed in Cotonou on 20 June 2002, and concluded for a period of 20 years, has to be ratified by two thirds of the ACP States (52 out of 77), the 15 Member States of the European Union and the Community. Most of the Agreement's provisions are already being applied, pursuant to a decision by the ACP-EC Council of Ministers.

The Cotonou Agreement sets out a comprehensive, integrated vision of development strategies based on three interlocking strands: political dialogue, economic and trade cooperation and development aid. It lays the foundation for a new partnership between the Union and the ACP States, based on the fundamental concept that the ACP States should take charge of their own development strategies. The partnership's basic objectives are to alleviate poverty and integrate ACP economies into the global economy.

The first Financial Protocol to the Cotonou Agreement, covering a period of 5 years from March 2000, has a budget of EUR 13,5 billion, 1,3 of which is for regional cooperation and 2,2 for the new Investment Facility. On the trade front, negotiations for new partnership agreements between the Community and the ACP regions and States were launched on 27 September 2002. Once the two parties have completed their ratification procedures, the Cotonou Agreement will enter into force on 1 April 2003. Press Release: Council of the European Union - Press:60 Nr: 6875/03. For more information please refer to the web address: <http://ue.eu.int/newsroom/newmain.asp?lang=1>

Sri Lanka : Commission funding plans 2003-2005 (27/02/03)

The European Commission adopted its Country Strategy Paper (CSP) for 2003-2006 and its National Indicative Programme (NIP) for 2003-2005. Over the next three years an indicative sum of €16.8 million has been earmarked for Sri Lanka to finance the EU cooperation strategy. The NIP outlines activities to be supported, on the basis of priorities set out in the Country Strategy Paper (CSP) 2003-2006, namely Rural Development, support for post-conflict activities and trade development, promotion of business and institutional links and assistance to the redevelopment of the Sri Lankan domestic airline system.

Lake Victoria: Commission allocates EUR30 million to support sustainable Fisheries Management (27/02/03)

The European Commission has approved a programme worth €29.9 million designed to assist Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda implement fisheries' management measures on Lake Victoria. To be implemented over a 5-year period (2003-2007), the programme is a concrete expression of support for the Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) which aims to maintain and sustain fish resources in the lake. In particular, this programme will help the 3 governments to monitor catches and enforce measures to counteract illegal fishing. Commenting on this decision, EU Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid Poul Nielson said, " I particularly welcome this Programme as it shows how we can combine development, environment and trade policy on a regional level to foster sustainable, economic growth. Economic growth is essential for helping to achieve poverty reduction in Africa. This Programme will make an important contribution to avoiding over fishing, protecting the environment and improving quality and safety standards of the fish. For more information please refer to the web address: http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=qt&doc=IP/03/286|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Fighting communicable diseases in developing countries: Commission strengthens action programme (26/02/03)

The European Commission today issued a report on the progress made in the last 2 years in the implementation of its Programme for Action on HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis which was adopted in February 2001. This report entitled "Update on the EC Programme for Action - Accelerated action on HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB in the context of poverty reduction" shows that despite progress made in improving the effectiveness of existing initiatives, in making medicines more affordable to poor countries and in improving investment in research and development, challenges remain great and mobilisation remains important. Since its adoption, the Commission has continued to draw attention to the threat of these diseases, particularly by bringing developing countries on board in the debate as well as in multilateral negotiations. In 2001, €450 million was spent by the Commission in the area of health and population policies. The report also sets out future challenges and details outstanding policy issues that need to be addressed. Commenting on the adoption, EU Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid Poul Nielson said, "Two years after its adoption, the Programme for Action remains a comprehensive, forward looking and coherent policy framework aimed at making a significant contribution towards fighting the scourge of these killer diseases. It is important to get the policy right. However, concrete, effective implementation on the ground is better. With an estimated 6 million people dying of HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria in 2001 alone, there is still an urgent need for large-scale collective action. Major challenges lie ahead and we are determined to play our role in facing them." For more information please refer to the web address:

http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=qt&doc=IP/03/282|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

European Union and Morocco strengthen their relations (24/02/03)

During their third Association Council held today, the European Union and Morocco decided to intensify bilateral co-operation in the framework of the Association Agreement through the establishment of six strategic sub-committees on internal market; industry, trade and services; transport, environment and energy; research and innovation; agriculture and fisheries; and justice and security. The new sub-committees will have the task of monitoring implementation of the partnership priorities and the approximation of legislation. Commissioner Chris Patten said: "This is the first time such an ambitious and complex network of committees has been established by the European Union with a partner country of the South Mediterranean. Our dialogue had reached maturity and definitely needed this new set of fora as a concrete and pragmatic instrument to further deepen our relations. I hope this example will be followed in our relations with other countries in the region". For more information refer to web address:

http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=qt&doc=IP/03/274|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

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