



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.



21 - 27 May 2004

Headline News

Progress in the Doha Development Agenda – Speech by Pascal Lamy (25/05/2004)

In his address to the WTO Symposium - *Multilateralism at a Crossroads*, EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy said in Geneva: "... Where are we now on the Doha Development Agenda? Seems a long time since we launched the Round in Qatar two and a half years ago. But the current signs are relatively good. I have said before that trade talks are like volcanoes, with three modes: sleeping, smoking and erupting. The last few weeks have convinced me that that the Round is now 'smoking' rather actively, and the stage is set for a decent eruption in July. This would be satisfying in lots of ways, not least to show people that conventional wisdom – in this case, that there will be no movement in 2004 – can be profoundly wrong."



See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/04/263&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Commissioner Nielson attends launch of the African Union Peace and Security Council (25/05/2004)

On behalf of President Prodi, Poul Nielson, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, attended the formal launching of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union in Addis Ababa on 25/05/2004. The Peace Facility is a 250M€ instrument intended to support African peace support operations. The Peace and Security Council will play a central role in the implementation of Peace facility operations. Commissioner Nielson said: 'The launching of the Peace and Security Council is both historic and welcome. Based on continental solidarity and firm regional building blocks, the Council is destined to be a necessary and indispensable contribution to promoting peace and stability in Africa. The EU's speedy approval of the Peace Facility recognises the credibility and authority with which the African Union is taking responsibility in the area of peace and security. The Peace Facility gives concrete backing to the emerging African resolve of dealing with African conflicts.'

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/670&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: **Presidency Declaration on the EUs behalf re the launch of the AUs Peace & Security Council (25/05/2004)**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=PESEC/04/64&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Islam and the West - at the Crossroads – Speech by the Rt. Hon Chris Patten (24/05/2004)



In an address to the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, Chris Patten, the EUs Commissioner for External Relations, said: "Some of the global problems that we shall face in this century - for example, whether China can make an accommodation between economic license and political authority - are matters for a circumscribed few, in this case a small cadre of bureaucratic politicians in Peking. Others - like "Day after Tomorrow" environmental disasters - have to some extent already been set in train by past greed and ecological pillage. But a clash between the world which likes to think of itself as being primarily made in the mould of the New Testament and the Islamic world of another Book is a catastrophe that we seem sedulously set on triggering through acts both of omission and commission. How can things have come to this?"

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/04/256&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Other News

Afghanistan: Commission allocates €35.16 million in humanitarian aid (27/05/2004)

The European Commission has allocated €35.16 million for humanitarian aid to vulnerable people affected by the consequences of the Afghan crisis in both Afghanistan and in neighbouring Pakistan and Iran in 2004. The overarching objective of this aid is to continue assisting the most vulnerable sections of the population while supporting the return and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs). Activities will include the rehabilitation of water and sanitation systems; the provision of shelter, healthcare and nutrition; the establishment of 'cash for work' activities; and the protection of vulnerable groups. Funding is also being provided for air transport and security information systems to facilitate access and boost the security of humanitarian aid workers. Funds are managed by the Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office. See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/687&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Commission proposes action to secure the social dimension of globalisation (26/05/2004)

The Commission has published a report on its contribution to securing the social benefits of globalisation, partly in response to the findings of the ILO's World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation (WCSDG) published in Feb 2004. The intention is to ensure that the EU makes an active contribution to harnessing globalisation to serve social as well as economic goals. As the WCSDG has noted, the positive benefits of globalisation are visible globally, but its benefits are still spread unevenly. To be truly sustainable, globalisation needs to secure more equitable social development for all. The EU already makes an active contribution to this goal, but efforts can be strengthened.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/680&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

"Time to take on obesity" says Byrne as WHO debates world-wide strategy (22/05/2004)

As ministers from all over the world meet in Geneva to debate a joint World Health Organisation (WHO)/UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) global strategy on diet, physical activity and health, the European Commission has called on Europe to "take on obesity". Welcoming the WHO / FAO strategy as giving impetus to the fight against expanding waistlines, Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner David Byrne warned that "obesity may be to the 21st century what smoking was to the 20th century". The EU's Public Health Programme has created a network bringing together experts on diet and physical activity EU-wide and is working to identify best practice in obesity prevention. The European Commission has also proposed a new EU law on health and nutritional claims on food (see [IP/03/1022](http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/03/1022)) to improve the quality of information given to consumers. Clear accurate information is essential to enable consumers to make healthy food choices.

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/672&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Russia - WTO: EU-Russia deal brings Russia a step closer to WTO membership (21/05/2004)

EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy and the Russian Economy Development and Trade Minister German Gref have signed today the agreement concluding the bilateral market access negotiations for the accession of the Russian Federation to the WTO, in the presence of the European Commission President Romano Prodi, the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin and the President of the European Council Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern. Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission said: "Today the EU and Russia cement further their trade and economic relations. This deal brings Russia a step closer to the international trade family, the World Trade Organisation, where it belongs."

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/673&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: **Press Conference on Russia WTO Accession. Speaking points by Pascal Lamy (21/05/2004)**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/04/258&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

The future of the Community sugar regime – Speech by Franz Fischler (19/05/2004)

In an address to the NGG Sugar Conference, Franz Fischler, Member of the European Commission responsible for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries, said: "The (EU's sugar) market organisation is an inherently perfect system which, apart from a few tweaks over the years, has scarcely been altered since 1968. ...So why should we reform the system? What are the challenges? Firstly the EU sugar regime is faced with internal challenges, above all the high sugar prices that are a concern to the sugar-processing industry and consumer organisations. It is generally accepted that reforming the sector can and will have the effect of reducing prices."

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/04/257&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Ahead:

- **28/05-04/06/2004 – EU Film Festival (Durban)**
See: <https://www.sterkinekor.co.za/>
- **07/06/2004 – Euro Conference (Cape Town)**
- **09/06/2004 – Euro Conference (Johannesburg)**

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