



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 July – 24 Aug 2006

Headline News

EU support for Local Economic Development in South Africa in the news (15/08/2006)

Speaking at the launch of the Local Economic Development Framework for South Africa, European Commission Chargé d'Affaires, [Jürgen Lovasz](#), spoke about the EU-SA partnership: "In the field of LED the European Commission has three active programmes – in Limpopo, the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal. The programmes have a combined value of almost R1bn"; and addressing Minister Sidney Mufamadi (Provincial and Local Government), he concluded: "We wish you all the best in implementing the LED framework." This launch followed the recent signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the KZN Department of Economic Development and Standard Bank at which Commission Attaché [Charles Reeve](#) observed: "The EU-funded Gijima KZN LED Support Programme has provided an opportunity for Standard Bank to look towards funding pro-poor local economic development projects in KwaZulu-Natal" – such partnerships are key to ensuring said Programme's sustainability.

Louis Michel: "Humanitarian crisis in Lebanon continues" (16/08/2006)

Although the fighting has stopped, victims of the conflict in Lebanon still face urgent humanitarian needs. They lack basic essentials such as food, medicines, fuel and electricity while key infrastructures including roads and houses have been destroyed. Displaced people have begun to return to their home cities and villages in huge numbers. They will face enormous challenges. So will those who provide relief. Commissioner Louis Michel, responsible for Development and Humanitarian Aid, spoke in Beirut with victims of the conflict and humanitarian aid workers as well as with the Lebanese government.

See also: [EU assists Lebanon in managing environmental impact of the Middle East crisis \(11/08/2006\)](#)

[EU response to the conflict in Lebanon \(08/08/2006\)](#)

[EC activates civil protection mechanism to help Lebanon cope with major oil spill \(28/07/2006\)](#)

[First payments to Palestinian workers under Temporary International Mechanism \(27/07/2006\)](#)

[International Conference on Lebanon – Speech by Com B Ferrero-Waldner \(26/07/2006\)](#)

[€11 million to evacuate citizens of developing countries from Lebanon \(26/07/2006\)](#)

[Humanitarian aid for Lebanon: Commission commits further €10 million \(26/07/2006\)](#)



Com Michel viewing the destruction

Other News

EC requires certification of US rice exports to stop unauthorised GMO entering the EU (23/08/2006)

The European Commission adopted a decision requiring imports of long grain rice from the USA to be certified as free from the unauthorised GMO LL Rice 601. The decision has been taken in light of the recent announcement by the US authorities that this unauthorised GMO had been found in samples of commercial rice on the US market. With immediate effect, only consignments of US long grain rice that have been tested by an accredited laboratory using a validated testing method and accompanied by a certificate assuring the absence of LL Rice 601, can enter the EU.

EIB takes \$5 million stake in new SME Fund in Kenya (22/08/2006)

The European Investment Bank (EIB) will contribute US \$5 million (US) to the Business Partners International Kenya SME Fund (BPI-K). BPI-K is a Kenyan Limited Partnership that invests in young Kenyan SMEs focusing particularly on small companies and investing between \$50,000 and \$500,000 per company. The fund is co-sponsored by IFC and Business Partners International (BPI), a subsidiary of Business Partners Ltd (BPSA), a South African SME investment specialist. Other investors in the fund, which is targeting a total size of \$15m, include IFC, CDC Group plc, Trans-Century Ltd and the East African Development Bank.

Presidency's declaration on behalf of the EU on the situation in Burundi (11/08/2006)

The EU, which has always supported the democratic process in Burundi and which attaches great importance to the harmonious political and economic development of that country, has taken note with concern of the information it received from the Burundian Government on 04/08/2006 regarding the preparation of a coup d'état on 30/06/2006. The EU has taken

note of the assurances given by the Burundian Government that the judicial investigations currently under way in this matter will be conducted in strict compliance with legal procedures, with transparency and with respect for human rights.

[International Day of the World's Indigenous People \(09/08/2006\)](#)

In her message on celebrating the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner (External Relations & European Neighbourhood Policy), writes: "It is a day when we honour indigenous peoples across the globe. We pay tribute to their traditions and knowledge, and to the enormous contribution they have made to the world's cultures and to conserving the planet. We also reflect on what has been achieved to protect their rights and guarantee them equal treatment. And on how much more we need to do."

[Presidency's declaration on behalf of the EU on elections in the DRC \(04/08/2006\)](#)

The European Union congratulates the Congolese people for fulfilling its duty with serenity by turning out to vote on 30/07/2006 in very large numbers in order to choose its future leaders. These elections mark a major step forwards for the Democratic Republic of the Congo towards democracy and the establishment of the rule of law. The EU welcomes the fact that the parliamentary and presidential elections in the DRC, the first free and multi-party elections for over forty years, went smoothly. The few incidents recorded did not, fortunately, have a significant impact on the overall conduct of the ballots.

[Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender rights – Speech by V Špidla \(29/07/2006\)](#)

Addressing the International Conference on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender rights in Montreal (Canada), Commissioner Vladimír Špidla (employment, social affairs and equal opportunities), noted: "In Europe, despite the progress achieved in combating discrimination, the situation is far from ideal. Most often it is a case of individuals discriminating against other individuals but, here and there, certain political statements reveal institutionalised discrimination. It took a long time for the European Union to tackle the question of combating discrimination, which, until recently, was an area for which the Member States were exclusively responsible. Since then, many measures have been adopted at European level, which I shall present to you now. I shall then go on to talk about our plans in this area. ..."

[Commission proposes new legislation on food additives, flavourings and enzymes \(28/07/2006\)](#)

The European Commission adopted a package of legislative proposals to introduce harmonised EU legislation on food enzymes for the first time and upgrade current rules for flavourings and additives. The texts aim to clarify and update current legislation in this area and to create a simplified common approval procedure for food additives, flavourings and enzymes, based on scientific opinions from the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

[Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU on the freedom of expression in Iran \(26/07/2006\)](#)

The European Union expresses its serious concern about the deteriorating situation with regard to the freedom of expression and the status of human rights defenders in Iran. The EU calls on Iran to implement fully its international human rights obligations, notably those contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which provides that everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which guarantees the right to form and join trade unions.

[EU concludes most important Fisheries Partnership Agreement with Mauritania \(22/07/2006\)](#)

The European Commission, on behalf of the European Union, and Mauritania have initialled a new fisheries partnership agreement to replace the current fisheries agreement due to end on 31/07/2006. It is the most important fisheries agreement concluded by the EU with a third country both in financial terms and as regards fishing opportunities for EU vessels. The new agreement will be in place for 6 years. A protocol, for a period of two years, renewable twice, will provide fishing possibilities for about 200 EU vessels on crustaceans (mainly shrimps), hake and other demersal species (living near the sea floor), cephalopods, small pelagics (living mid-water) and tuna.

See also: [Main components of the new EU-Mauritania Fisheries Partnership Agreement \(22/07/2006\)](#)

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