



# European Union

Delegation of the European Commission  
to South Africa

... this week  
in review

This publication seeks  
to provide information  
on EU activities of  
interest to SA readers.

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## 22 – 28 October 2007



### Headline News

#### [Commission presents roadmap for negotiating trade agreements with ACP](#)



The European Commission issued a [Communication](#) to the Council and the European Parliament on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), setting out clearly the way forward and the issues at stake to conclude these important trade pacts. The Commission sees full EPAs as essential to enable ACP states to play a full part in international trade. The end of 2007 represents a firm deadline for negotiating the goods market access element of the EPAs, and the Communication deals with how the Commission intends to work with the ACP to address this deadline while still securing full EPA content and full regional coverage. EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson is clear: "Our objective remains to conclude comprehensive, full economic partnership agreements with all interested ACP countries and regions.

These agreements have a WTO-compatible goods agreement at their core, but also cover other issues. ... Those completing these full EPAs will benefit from the full development potential of these agreements".

See articles: [Turning trade with Europe to good regional account](#) & [Nobody is pushing free trade on Africa](#)

#### [Alarm sounded over humanitarian impact of climate change](#)

Com Louis Michel (Development & Humanitarian Aid) and Josette Sheeran (World Food Programme Executive Director) jointly warned that "climate change is an increasing threat to development and humanitarian relief efforts". Com Michel said: "The recent spate of weather-related disasters across the globe sets the alarm bells ringing." He continued: "The EU is the world's main source of humanitarian funds. WFP is the world's largest relief agency. Through our existing close partnership, the suffering of millions of people is already being alleviated. But we must ... confront the challenges presented by ever-more extreme climate events to see how the humanitarian community can best prepare itself since the most vulnerable people will be those that suffer the most. There is a real risk that, in the future, we'll have climatic refugees."



#### [European Parliament MEPs debate new Treaty of Lisbon](#)



Meeting in Strasbourg, the European Parliament debated the outcome of the Lisbon summit and the new Treaty of Lisbon to be signed on 13 December. While many MEPs welcomed the deal reached in Lisbon and the new Treaty, others criticised that no ratification referenda were called for and criticised the Treaty's similarity to the failed Constitutional Treaty (2005). President José Manuel Barroso called the European Summit a summit of a united Europe of solidarity and pointed out that the Treaty is the first of an enlarged EU, the first time states once divided by the iron curtain together reached agreement. The Treaty gives a clear definition of citizenship; giving legal force to the Charter of Fundamental Rights; giving the European Parliament a greater role in the legislative process; and increasing the rights of national parliaments.

### Other News



#### [SA-EU Wine Tasting Function](#)

On Friday 26 October Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Sue van der Merwe co-hosted a South Africa-European Union wine-tasting function, together with EU Ambassadors to South Africa, at the historic Groote Schuur Estate in Cape Town. The wine-tasting event offered an opportunity to learn more about each other's regions and to share the tastes and approaches of the different wine producing regions of South Africa and Europe. A panel consisting of two European and two South African wine experts gave awards in a variety of categories.

#### [EU strategy for Africa: European Parliament calls for stronger parliamentary dimension](#)

The EU Strategy for Africa needs a stronger parliamentary dimension, says an own-initiative report, adopted by the European Parliament, that sets out priorities for the EU-Africa Strategy to be adopted at the second EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon in December. MEPs will meet African MPs in Lisbon prior to the Summit. [Read the Report](#)

See also: [EP adopts resolution on the state of play of EU-Africa relations](#)

### [Evaluation of the Export Helpdesk for Developing Countries](#)

The final report of the Evaluation of the Export Helpdesk for Developing Countries is now publicly available. Its findings confirm the value of this tool, since the inception of this service in 2004, to provide a practical instrument to facilitate exports from developing countries into the European Union. In its recommendations, the evaluation offers many practical and useful ideas for the further development of the Helpdesk website. [Read the Report](#)

### [Sakharov Prize 2007 for Freedom of Thought awarded to Sudanese lawyer Salih Mahmoud Osman](#)

Sudanese human rights lawyer Salih Mahmoud Osman is the winner of this year's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. The unanimous decision by the European Parliament's political group leaders was announced to Parliament's plenary sitting in Strasbourg by EP President Hans-Gert Pöttering. Mr Osman, who works with the Sudan Organisation Against Torture, has for over two decades provided free legal aid to victims of human rights abuses in his country. The prize will be formally awarded to Mr Osman in Strasbourg on 11 December, the day after the 59th anniversary of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### [European Investment Bank signs Corporate Governance Statement](#)

Philippe de Fontaine Vive Curtaz, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank (EIB) signed a statement on corporate governance in emerging markets. The leaders of 31 Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) issued a joint statement, positioning corporate governance at the forefront of their sustainable development agenda in emerging markets.

### [European Commission wants to strengthen the role of Eurojust in the fight against organised crime and terrorism](#)

The European Commission has approved a Communication on the role of Eurojust and the European Judicial Network in the context of the fight against organised crime and terrorism. The Communication sets out the Commission's views on possible improvements. It will be discussed with Member States at a Seminar in Lisbon 29 and 30 October 2007. Vice-President Franco Frattini, Commissioner responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security, pointed out that "The fight against transnational organised crime and terrorism cannot be fought by the Member States individually. Co-operation is an absolute necessity and figures show that Member States rely more and more on Eurojust when investigating and prosecuting these types of serious crime."

### [European Parliament adopts three human rights resolutions](#)

The European Parliament voiced concern at the worsening situation in Iran, called for democracy to be restored in Pakistan and condemned the killing of 10 African Union peacekeepers in Sudan. The EP expressed deep concern at "the deterioration of the human rights situation" in Iran, notably the "dramatic increase in the repression of civil-society movements over the past year". In a resolution on Pakistan adopted in the wake of the suicide bombing attack against Benazir Bhutto, Parliament voiced concern at the unstable political situation in the country and called on the authorities to restore democratic standards ahead of the parliamentary elections. MEPs also adopted a resolution (by 65 votes to 0, with 0 abstentions) condemning the killing of 10 African Union peacekeepers in Darfur, and called on the Sudanese government to shoulder responsibility for the country's internal security, notably by allowing the UNAMID peacekeeping force to be deployed.

### [EU-funded scientists decode proteins with potential for new medicines](#)

An EU-funded research team, working with scientists at Stanford University in the US and the European synchrotron radiation facility in Grenoble, is the first to determine the structure of a specific membrane protein, known as "recombinant G protein-coupled receptor". Membrane proteins are potentially very important targets for future medicines, because of their involvement in the development of many diseases within the body. In addition to this exciting discovery, the European Commission has announced around €22 mil of funding for two new projects looking into membrane proteins, one of which involves two previous Nobel Prize laureates. The two new projects selected within the first call from the EU's 7<sup>th</sup> Research Framework Programme are: EDICT (European Drug Initiative on Channels and Transporters), and NeuroCypres (Neurotransmitter Cys-loop receptors (CLRs): structure, function and disease).

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