



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.



23 - 29 January 2004

Headline News

R310 million EU-eThekweni regeneration for Durban (28/01/2004)

The European Commission and the eThekweni Municipality (Durban) signed a R310 million (€35 million) commitment to the regeneration of the municipality's rural and urban areas. This 5-year targeted budget support initiative will concentrate on five geographic areas. The partnership will focus on upliftment by strengthening the municipality's capacity to provide basic services and by stimulating job creation and income generation through economic development. EU Ambassador Michael Lake said: "Based on the success of our support to the Cato Manor programme over a number of years we see this initiative as a natural extension and expansion of our commitment to the upliftment initiatives of the city. We are confident that our resources will assist our implementing partners to make the positive interventions required to achieve the government's vision of a better life for all." See: <http://press.durban.org.za/main.asp>



Ambassador Michael Lake and Mayor Obed Mlaba signing the Agreement at Isitumba Village in rural KwaZulu Natal.

Commission improves the management of EU external assistance (26/01/2003)

The annual orientation debate on the effectiveness of the EU's external assistance will take place at the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Brussels. The Commission set out the improvements that it has made in this area since it undertook its ambitious programme of reform in 2000. The reforms are now producing results. The ability to deliver timely and efficient development assistance to the benefit of the poor has been significantly improved. Furthermore strengthened co-ordination between Commission delegations and Member States' missions in third countries and better use of our collective resources on the ground have enhanced the EU's ability to meet its external assistance priorities.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/94|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

Other News

Water and Sanitation in ACP countries - EC proposes €1 billion to boost current efforts (28/01/2004)

The European Commission has adopted a concrete proposal to allocate €1 billion from the 9th European Development Fund (EDF) reserve to improve access to water and sanitation for people in Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP). This forms part of the campaign to deliver on international targets to halve by 2015 the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. The proposal would establish a facility to enhance the use of development aid to leverage significant amounts of funding for water and sanitation infrastructure from other financial sources ..."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/120|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

GMOs: Commission takes stock of progress (28/01/2004)

The European Commission held an orientation debate on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and related issues to take stock of the progress made over the last years in building a comprehensive EU regulatory framework on GMOs. It also endorsed the approach ensuring the correct application of the new EU legislation throughout the EU.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/118|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

See also: **State of play on GMO authorisations under EU law (28/01/2004)**

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/04/17|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

Question and Answers on the regulation of GMOs in the EU (28/01/2004)

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/04/16|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

Statement by President Prodi 'Holocaust Memorial Day' (26/01/2004)

27 January is the day on which the Auschwitz camp was liberated in 1945, and it is the day on which we commemorate the Holocaust ... The remembrance of the Holocaust, a tragedy that stands alone and unparalleled, has a universal value. Humanity has not ceased to stain itself with the crimes of genocide, ethnic cleansing, racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism. All men and women of the 21st century have a responsibility to combat and to prevent these horrors.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/102|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

See also: **Romano Prodi to receive award in Vienna from the Rabbinical Centre of Europe (29/01/2004)**

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/124|0|RAPID&lq=EN&display=

The future of WTO – Speech by Pascal Lamy (27/01/2004)

In an address to the European Parliament's Kangaroo group (see below) EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy said: "... let's start with the immediate future of the WTO, and that is of course the Doha Development Agenda negotiations. ... We cannot dismiss the importance of rules in the WTO or those developed in other areas of international policy making. ... Rules lock in and ensure market access. It is, however, clear that we need to heed the lessons from Cancun and to be more flexible on the Singapore issues (investment, competition, trade facilitation, government procurement). These issues need to be treated on a case by case basis. ..."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/04/42|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

New rights for air passengers in the whole EU (26/01/2004)

Loyola de Palacio, European Commission vice-president in charge of transport and energy, welcomed the definitive adoption by the Council and the European Parliament of the proposal of regulation to protect the rights of air passengers when facing denied boarding, cancellation of their flight or a long delay. "The passengers rights action is one of the major initiatives of this Commission in order to put the citizens at the heart of EU policies" she said. The regulation should enter into force in the coming weeks and new rights will apply by 2005.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/98|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Commission suspends EU poultry imports from Thailand after avian influenza outbreak (23/01/2004)

Following the confirmation of avian influenza (AI) outbreaks in Thailand, the European Commission adopted the proposal from EU Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner David Byrne to suspend the import of all poultry meat and poultry products from this country into the European Union (EU) with immediate effect. David Byrne who is currently on an official visit to the country said that all measures must be taken to protect the EU from the virus. Avian influenza is a highly contagious poultry disease that can cause severe economic damage to the poultry industry and can be transmitted to humans. The EU does not import live poultry and hatching eggs from Thailand and although the risk of importing the virus in meat or meat products is probably very low the Commission wants to make sure that any possible transmission is avoided.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/95|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Ahead:

- 02-03/02/2004, ACP-EU Parliamentary visit, Cape Town
- 06/02/2004, European Central Bank Governing Council Meeting, Frankfurt

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

Stay Informed:

Kangaroo Group

The Group is a forum in which politicians, officials and the social partners exchange information regarding the issues of the day; and devise initiatives for the further development of the EU. Its activities are determined by a Board that is made up of Members of the European Parliament, Commission officials and representatives of the business and academic communities. The Working Groups are: (i) Media & Information Society, (ii) Life Sciences & Health, (iii) Economic Aspects of a European Defence Policy, (iv) Modernising EU Legislation, (v) Taxation, fair taxation & harmful taxation. The Group's activities are characterised by a degree of informality conducive to amicable and open discussion. See: <http://www.kangaroorgroup.org/html/12origin.lasso> & <http://www.kangaroorgroup.org/html/11goals.lasso> & <http://www.kangaroorgroup.org/html/13members.lasso>



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Photo File:



L to R: local Traditional Leader, Inkosi Mlaba, looking on as EU Ambassador Michael Lake and eThekweni Mayor Obed Mlaba get ready to sign the Urban Development Support Programme.