



**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.*



## **25 June – 1 July 2007**

### **Headline News**

#### **Commission adopts a Communication on the future Joint EU-Africa Strategy (27/6)**

The European Commission has adopted a proposal presenting key flagship policy initiatives that embody the new approach to EU-Africa relations, which will be put forward by the future Joint EU-Africa Strategy. These joint policy initiatives will be discussed with the African partners and launched in Lisbon during the second EU-Africa Summit later this year. The European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel, stressed that "the emergence of a genuine strategic partnership between our two continents is a priority for the EU. It will help us to define joint answers to our common challenges and to Africa's development needs."

#### **Text of the Communication**

#### **13th session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (28/6)**

Zimbabwe was the subject of lively debates at the 13th session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in Wiesbaden, Germany. In the absence of a delegation from Zimbabwe, it was decided in advance that there would not be a vote on a resolution on the situation in that country. Clear positions on the regime of Robert Mugabe were nevertheless expressed during the debates. In a resolution adopted on developments in Darfur, the parliamentarians considered that the deployment of a hybrid UN/African Union force "must take place as soon as possible". They called on the Sudanese government to "disarm all the rebels including the janjaweed, and to end the bombing of the Darfur region".

### **Other News**

#### **Portugal takes over the Presidency of the EU Council (1/7)**

Portuguese Prime Minister José Sócrates defined the priorities of the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union for the next 6 months as "the EU Treaty, Brazil, Africa and the Lisbon Strategy". The Presidency will convene an Intergovernmental Conference, beginning on 23rd-24th July, which will draft the future European Treaty.

#### **Visit the Presidency website**

#### **European Parliament to send delegation to Darfur (27/6)**

A delegation of five MEPs from the EP Development Committee will travel to Darfur, Sudan, from 30 June to 6 July, where they will visit camps of displaced people in Darfur, as well as camps of Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad. The delegation will be led by Josep Borrell, the chair of the Development Committee. In the light of the humanitarian situation in Sudan, Mr Borrell hopes that "preparations to deploy the mixed African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force will speed up" in the western province of Darfur, where the conflict has since 2003 left over 200,000 people dead, while 2.5 million have been displaced.

#### **EU Foreign Policy: Myth or Reality? – speech by the Commissioner for External Relations (26/6)**

In an address to the Sydney Institute, Australia, Commissioner for External Relations, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, said: "The EU is not just an economic power. We are increasingly a political player on the world stage. Our heads of state showed at the recent EU Council that Europe is united, not only on some of the more introspective questions that have taxed us recently, but crucially we are united on the kind of role we want to develop with our partners around the globe. The key decisions taken at the Council were ones which will strengthen our foreign policy. This is an area where we are progressively maturing in our ability to act as one. The changes will include appointing a new High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, which will make it easier to operate more effectively at the international level".

#### **Environment: Commission welcomes Council agreements (28/6)**

European Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas welcomed the agreements reached by the latest Environment Council. The Council reached political agreement on revising the EU's basic waste legislation, limiting emissions of hazardous

substances to water and banning exports of mercury from the EU. Commissioner Dimas also welcomed the Council's conclusions on giving a new impetus to EU environment policy, and on reducing CO2 emissions from cars.

#### **2006 Annual Report on Competition Policy (29/6)**

The European Commission has adopted its 2006 Annual Report on Competition Policy, which gives an overview of the main developments in competition policy during 2006. It summarises changes to competition rules and policy and shows, through specific examples, how the instruments of competition policy were used to build a stronger European economy and to benefit consumers and businesses alike. Competition Commissioner Neelie Kroes said "Competition policy continues to work for European consumers and businesses. Safeguarding and creating the conditions for undistorted competition is an integral part of delivering the Single Market".

#### **Migration and asylum: new actions to co-operate with third countries (25/6)**

The European Commission has launched a new programme to co-operate with third countries in the areas of migration and asylum with a budget of €380 million for 2007-2013. The programme will seek to support third countries in their efforts to ensure better management of migratory flows in all its dimensions. "This programme is the visible expression that the Commission takes migration issues very seriously and considers it a priority in our relations and co-operation with third countries. I believe that it will contribute to a better and more balanced management of migration in a true spirit of partnership with other countries, which for us also includes the fruitful exchanges between our citizens and cultures" Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy Benita Ferrero-Waldner said.

#### **International Day against Torture - the fight against torture: a key priority for the EU (26/6)**

The prevention and the eradication of all forms of torture and ill-treatment within the EU and worldwide is one of the main objectives of EU human rights policy. The EU is currently carrying out its "Global action plan" on torture, consisting of demarches to all countries on the issue of torture and ill-treatment. Issues raised in the course of these demarches include the ratification or implementation of the UN Convention against Torture (UNCAT).

#### **EU Tube – Sharing the sights and sounds of Europe on YouTube**

The European Commission has launched a dedicated channel on YouTube to make its audiovisual material more widely available to the public. "This initiative reflects the Commission's commitment to better explain its policies and actions on issues which concern citizens across the EU – such as climate change, energy or immigration" said Margot Wallström, Vice-President for Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy. Currently, users can watch approximately 50 video clips on a wide-range of topics - from the EU's first post-war historical steps to today's need to safeguard the environment and combat climate change.

[www.youtube.com/eutube](http://www.youtube.com/eutube)

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