



European Union
Delegation of the European Commission
to South Africa

EU Perspectives

*Regular publication that seeks to provide information
on EU-related activities of interest to SA readers*



25 May – 7 June 2009

Headline News

[European Parliament elections results](#)

[Economic Partnership Agreements: EU and Southern African countries sign interim deal](#)

The EU signed an interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. This interim agreement secures EU market access for these countries, while negotiations for a full EPA with the seven country Southern African Development Community (SADC) EPA group are ongoing. EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton said: "The signature of this agreement is an important step. It first of all guarantees market access to the European market for those countries that have signed today. More importantly, it is a vote of confidence in the process that we have put in motion to build a strong and lasting economic and trade relationship." Neo Moroka, Minister for Trade and Industry of Botswana and Chair of the SADC group, said: "The signing of the interim EPA marks a significant milestone in our trade negotiations. It ensures uninterrupted flow of SADC EPA goods into the EU market. There are still some outstanding issues to be resolved. These will be negotiated in parallel with negotiations towards a full EPA, covering services and investment."

[Africa Day: The European Commission reaffirms its commitment to strengthen the EU-Africa Partnership](#)

On 25 May 2009, to mark Africa Day, the Commission reconfirmed its commitment to Africa. Olli Rehn, the acting European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, said "The peoples of Africa and of Europe share the same hopes, the same values and the same interests. Together we can meet the challenges facing us today, such as the economic crisis, poverty, climate change or illegal immigration. Working together, the continents of Africa and Europe can bring development and progress to their peoples. We have developed a strategy, now we need to create platforms for dialogue and for taking action".

[European Commission allocates €3 million for ongoing humanitarian needs in Zimbabwe](#)

The European Commission allocated an additional €3m to support vulnerable people affected by the breakdown of essential health and water supply services in Zimbabwe. The funds will be channelled through the Commission's Humanitarian Aid department. Olli Rehn, Acting Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid said: "The new Unity Government has to address numerous challenges to place Zimbabwe on the path to recovery. The country which was once the bread-basket of southern Africa is facing an enduring humanitarian crisis, compounded by the collapse of basic social services." The funds will be used for the recovery of essential health and safe water supply services by providing inter alia essential medicines and medical supplies, essential water treatment inputs as well as spare parts for the rehabilitation of water treatment plants, boreholes and water points. Projects will be implemented by non-governmental relief organisations, specialised UN agencies and the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement.

Other News

[Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, met Seretse Khama Ian Khama, President of Botswana](#)

Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) met with Seretse Khama Ian Khama, President of Botswana. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the latest developments in Botswana and the Southern African region, as well as EU-Botswana relations. Mr Solana praised the President for the development of a stable democracy in Botswana since independence. This was clearly visible through his dynamic leadership which impacted positively the whole region. The High Representative and the President discussed the current situation in Madagascar and

Zimbabwe in particular, and the role of the SADC (Southern African Development Community) in these two countries. Mr. Solana praised the support of Botswana for the International Criminal Court (ICC), as one of the African signatories of the Rome Treaty.

Commission initiates new strategy to tackle the employment impact of the crisis

The EU will make available €19bn of planned European Social Fund expenditure to support people hit by the economic crisis. Together with the European Investment Bank Group and other partners, a new EU loans facility will be set up to provide micro-credits for those who would usually have difficulty accessing the necessary funds to set up a business or micro-enterprise. "Europe took swift action to respond to the financial and economic crisis, including its social dimension. Today the Commission is taking a further step towards shared commitment and coordinated action by the EU, Member States and social partners to save and create jobs" said President Barroso. "I call on the European Council to endorse this ambitious plan."

World Environment Day : Commissioner Dimas calls for greater ambition in talks on new global agreement

Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas called for greater urgency and ambition in international negotiations on a new global climate agreement, warning that it represents the world's last chance to prevent climate change from reaching dangerous levels. Commissioner Dimas made the remarks in a statement to mark World Environment Day on 5 June, which had climate change as its theme. "The new global climate agreement that is due to be finalised at the Copenhagen climate conference in December is the world's last chance to prevent the dangerous, perhaps even catastrophic, levels of climate change that are projected by scientists to occur as early as 2050 – well within the lifetimes of over a billion young people alive today. We cannot win the battle against climate change unless developing countries, and particularly the big emerging economies, step up action to limit their rate of emissions growth. But only by setting a strong example themselves will developed countries succeed in convincing the developing world to join the global effort that the Copenhagen climate conference in December must launch".

25 May 2009 - International Missing Children's Day - a message of hope and solidarity

The European Commission supported International Missing Children's Day on 25 May. The main purpose of this day is to encourage European citizens and the whole world not to forget all the children who are missing and to send an international message of hope and solidarity to parents who have no news of their children. Mr Barrot, Commission Vice-President, took part in launching a high-profile publicity campaign for the 116 000 hotline promoted by Missing Children Europe, a European federation which represents 23 NGOs active in 16 Member States in the fight against the disappearance and sexual exploitation of children. Mr Barrot expressed his personal commitment to encouraging the adoption in each Member State of an "abduction alert" type of system, which could save lives.

Financial services: Commission proposes stronger financial supervision in Europe

The European Commission adopted a Communication on Financial Supervision in Europe. The Communication proposes a set of ambitious reforms to the current architecture of financial services committees, with the creation of a new European Systemic Risk Council (ESRC) and European System of Financial Supervisors (ESFS), composed of new European Supervisory Authorities Commission President José Manuel Barroso said: "Better supervision of cross-border financial markets is crucial for ethical and economic reasons. The Commission is making proposals today to help restore confidence, guard against future crises and protect growth and jobs". Internal Market and Services Commissioner Charlie McCreevy said "Financial supervision in Europe has not kept track with market integration. The crisis has shown that the current system is not sufficiently responsive and not appropriate for a single financial services market. This new system will combine the expertise of all those responsible for safeguarding financial stability, with strong European bodies to co-ordinate their work. "

[Memo on Financial Supervision – Frequently Asked Questions](#)

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