



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 – 31 July 2003

Headline News:

WTO Farm Talks/Cancun: EU's Fischler calls for renewed effort to bridge differences, (28/07/2003)

EU Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler, following meetings in Washington DC with United States Trade Representative Robert Zoellick and US Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman, underlined the importance of the US and the EU working together to make the Doha Developing Agenda (DDA) a success. ... Fischler also rejected the myth that Europe's farm policy hurts developing countries: 'The image of the EU as a fortress to farm goods from the developing world may serve some cynical interests, but it is pure fiction. The EU in fact is by far the largest importer of farm exports from the developing world, most of which enter the EU at zero or very low tariffs. The EU imports more agricultural products from the developing countries (€36 billion) than the US, Canada, Australia and Japan combined. Indeed our average import tariff on agricultural imports is only 10%, a level which compares respectably with any country at the WTO negotiating table.'

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/11270|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

See also: **CAP Reform: What Relevance for Cancun? Speech by Commissioner Fischler, Washington (28.07/2003)**

http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/03/3730|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Other News:

EU Election Observer Mission re presidential and parliamentary elections arrives in Rwanda (31/07/2003)

In follow-up to the observation of the referendum of 26 May on the new constitution, the EU decided to observe the presidential elections of 25/08/2003 and the parliamentary elections of 29/09/2003, which will complete the process of laying the foundations of democratic and sustainable institutions in Rwanda. The aim is to enhance the transparency of the two upcoming electoral processes and to boost voters' confidence.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/11420|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Combating poverty related diseases: Com Busquin to promote clinical trials programme (31/07/2003)

The Europe-Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) is an ambitious initiative to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis backed by €200 million of EU money. European Research Commissioner Busquin recognises that providing funding is not enough and will be in Africa from 29/08 - 02/09/2003 to raise the profile of the clinical trials programme and to encourage African countries to mobilise around this important initiative. He will visit key research sites and meet ministers in Tanzania, Mozambique and SA, in particular at the forthcoming WHO meeting in Johannesburg where he will address the Ministers of Health of African States.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/11380|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Commission adopts proposal to grant €79,5 mil for a 3rd Afghan Reconstruction Programme (31/07/2003)

As part of its €400 million package to Afghanistan for 2003-04, the Commission has adopted a proposal to finance a Third Reconstruction Programme for Afghanistan with a total budget of €79.5 million. The programme reflects the Country Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme adopted by the Commission in February 2003. It is also fully in line with the development priorities of the Afghan Transitional Authority and will guarantee the EC's ongoing financial assistance to the socio-political and economic rebuilding of Afghanistan. The programme aims to restore political stability coupled with a fully operational public administration, to promote respect for the rule of law and human rights, especially those of women, and to improve economic recovery, thus alleviating poverty.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/11400|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Why do Geographical Indications (GIs) matter to us? (30/07/2003)

GIs are important to our producers and to our exports, to the future of our Agricultural policy, to consumers, to many developing countries, to free trade. GIs are unique asset for our producers in an increasingly liberalised world. The EU has entered, in good faith, in negotiations with its partners in the WTO with a view to further liberalising world trade in agricultural commodities. This will mean, in practice, less export subsidies to our farmers. This policy is embodied in the Commission's proposed review of the Common Agricultural Policy: compete internationally on quality rather than quantity. Yet, efforts to compete on quality would be futile if the main vehicle of our quality products, GIs, are not adequately protected in international markets. The EC can hardly ask EU farmers to invest in promoting GIs, if anyone would be allowed to use them!

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/03/160|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

EU-ACPs - Commission approves €50 million trade assistance programme: Trade.Com (25/07/2003)

The European Commission has approved Trade.Com, a €50 million trade related assistance programme for African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. The programme will focus on creating the necessary capacities in ACP countries to benefit from increased trading opportunities. Funding will primarily benefit ACP countries other than South Africa as SA receives other forms of support under the Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA). However, SA institutions and consultants will be able to compete under this facility for contracts as and when they are launched.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/1123|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Ahead:

- **Handing over EU funded vehicle fleet to the South African Police Service (SAPS) for Driver Training (05/08/2003)**
SA Police Mechanical School, Benoni
- **Plenary session of the European Parliament, 1-4/09/2003**
See: http://www.europarl.eu.int/plenary/default_en.htm
- **5th WTO Ministerial Conference, Cancún, Mexico, 10-14/09/2003**
See: http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_e/min03_e/min03_e.htm
- **European Investment Bank (EIB) to open office in Pretoria with David White at its helm; (October 2003)**

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Extracts from an address by Ambassador Michael Lake to the Innovation Forum University of Pretoria (23/07/2003)

"The challenge facing South Africa (SA), the government and all the peoples of SA, is to bridge that gap between First World and Third World, between plenty and poverty. What I would like to do is to take a few minutes to describe what the EU is doing to support SA in that historic endeavour. It is not generally known that the European Commission's (EC) programme for SA is almost the largest country programme that we run ... Through our programme, the EPRD, we are supporting the transfer of technology and the inculcation of the reflex of innovation which is a crucially important way of bridging SA's First and Third Worlds that I talked about. We are seeking to help the process by which SA diversifies from a largely resource-based economy to a knowledge-based economy."

"For example we are providing technical and financial support for SMME development, Black Economic Empowerment and enhanced entrepreneurial education. ... tomorrow I shall be at the launch of Phase II of Godisa's Softstart Incubator. We have committed more than R46 million to this project and in particular to the three pilot models: the Zenzele Technology Demonstration Centre which is working nationally with small scale miners and associated enterprises, the Voxel Innovation Support Centre which is supporting inventors and other so that they can optimise and commercialise their ideas and projects, and Softstart, seeking to help emerging software entrepreneurs."

"We are also helping SA to enter the realm of fundamental research leading to innovation. Here we come to the Scientific and Technological Cooperation Agreement between SA and the EU. It was signed on 05/12/1996 and entered into force on 11/11/1997. The Agreement provides for the participation of SA researchers in the EU's Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development, and the participation of European researchers in SA programmes. A SA-EU Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee has been set up to oversee the implementation of the Agreement. The Science and Technology cooperation involves more than collaborative Research and Technological Development and Demonstration projects. SA for example has collaborated actively in the preparation of the 5th and 6th Framework Programmes. It now has to make sure that it draws full benefit from its experience and earlier cooperation in the planning."

"Let me spend a bit of time explaining the FP6. It is the European Community Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration. Seven key areas have been chosen: genomics and biotechnology for health; information society technologies; nanotechnologies and nanosciences; aeronautics and space; food safety; sustainable development; and economic and social sciences; and also an eighth: 'Specific activities covering a wider field of research'. ... this last area is critically important for SA. FP6 has a budget of €17.5 billion for the years 2002-2006 and represents about 4-5% of the overall expenditure on RTD in EU member states. ... The promotion of partnering and collaboration is a central commitment, and this is where SA comes in: there has to be a minimum of three partners, including two Member States or future Member States. As to size, we set no minimum amount but we are focussing on larger projects up to tens of millions of Euros, and a duration of, typically, 3-5 years ..."

"The difference between the old and new FP is that in the past countries and research institutions launched their own ideas and sought specific support. Last year we received more than 15 000 research ideas and analysed them. We are now launching invitations to take part in very specific research programmes. Thus, the required degree of specialisation of a research institution is much higher than in the past. The first call for proposals closed at the end of May, and are still being evaluated. It does however seem that in this first call, the participation of SA institutions is less than in the past. However, there is another opportunity which SA research institutions must not miss. At present a new call for tenders is open. This relates to International Cooperation under that eighth area I mentioned: Specific activities covering a wider field of research. The approach followed is the traditional one that SA knows well: research institutions are invited to submit smaller project proposals in the following areas: reproductive health, child survival, water assistance, and food security. In December we shall be launching a new call for tenders related to the seven other focal areas that I mentioned, and we shall be inviting smaller projects. Here too SA research institutions should get in the hunt."