



European Union

Delegation to South Africa
Head of Delegation

EU Perspectives

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



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Headline News

[World Cup summit on education](#)

The 2010 Football World Cup Education Summit was the culmination of the 1 GOAL Education for All campaign, supported by football's governing body FIFA. "The most important investment in the future of any nation is in education. No legacy could be higher than that" SA President Zuma stated in his opening speech, in which he encouraged world leaders to honor pledges to support education in poor countries. Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende said that the international financial crisis could not be an excuse for a reduction in support to education. "Destroying education and health systems by cutting budgets is not the way to achieve sound economic recovery" he said.

[European Commission adopts 2010 Annual Report on development assistance](#)

The European Commission adopted its Annual Report 2010 on the implementation of the EU's development and external assistance policies in 2009. Commission Programmes reached around 140 developing countries. Specific instruments were set up to help the world's poorest to face the triple economic, food and environmental crisis and delivered results: for instance, more than 50m people are receiving assistance to face hunger from the EU Food Facility, the budgets of 15 countries in Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific were supported to help them resist to the pressure of the economic crisis, and the EU agreed a 'fast-start' funding of €2.4bn annually for 2010-2012 to assist developing countries in adapting to climate change. "The Commission has acted rapidly to address the problems caused by the crises of 2008-2009 and to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable countries. It has shown the capacity to innovate and to adapt its aid instruments to maximise the impact of its support" stated Development Commissioner Andris Piebalgs.

[Commissioner Piebalgs addresses UN conference on the Millennium Development Goals \(MDGs\)](#)

European Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, delivered a key note speech on Europe's position on the way forward to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, at a UN conference on the Millennium Development Goals, ahead of a UN High Level Summit on MDGs, due to take place in September. Commissioner Piebalgs stated: "Europe is committed to ending the lottery of where you live determines how you live. European leaders recently reaffirmed their commitment towards the MDGs and their development aid targets by 2015. At the G8/G20 meeting, President Barroso called to speed up work. I now call on other international development aid donors to join our ambition to make the fight against poverty a reality. It is time to turn pledges in actions and Millennium Development Goals in Millennium Development Achievements."

[Statement by President Barroso and President Van Rompuy following the G20 Summit in Toronto](#)

Following the conclusion of the summit meeting of the G20 in Toronto, European Commission President Barroso and European Council President Van Rompuy made the following statement. "In Toronto, the G20 has proven to be what it said it would be: the premier forum for international economic cooperation. We have kept the momentum for global coordination on economic matters, delivering on a number of Pittsburgh commitments and setting the agenda for Seoul. The G20 comes out stronger. G20 leaders have demonstrated clear common resolve to create strong, sustainable and balanced global growth. The EU came to Toronto with a clear agenda. The Summit's result reflects widespread convergence around Europe's approach".

[Full text of the statement](#)

Other News

[The EU – Zimbabwe political dialogue: moving towards enhanced cooperation](#)

EU High Representative / Vice President Catherine Ashton and Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs met with a Ministerial Delegation from the Zimbabwean Government. Following the meeting, HR Ashton said: "The EU appreciates some progress made implementing the Global Political Agreement in Zimbabwe and remains ready to continue the dialogue and to respond flexibly and positively to any clear signals of further concrete progress." Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, added: "Despite the political issues, the Commission continues to provide direct aid for health, education, food security and governance to the people of Zimbabwe. I want to make clear that the Commission remains committed to provide further assistance based on continued progress and clear signs of improved political environment in Zimbabwe."

[European Commission and Council of Europe begin talks on EU's accession to the Convention on Human Rights](#)

Official talks started on the EU's accession to the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR). Thorbjørn Jagland, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, and Viviane Reding, Vice-President of the European Commission, and Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, marked the beginning of this joint process at a meeting in Strasbourg. "Today is a truly historic moment. We are now putting in place the missing link in Europe's system of fundamental rights protection, guaranteeing coherence between the approaches of the Council of Europe and the European Union," said Commissioner Reding. "The EU has an important role to play in further strengthening the Convention's system of fundamental rights. We already have our own Charter of Fundamental Rights, which represents the most modern codification of fundamental rights in the world. This is a very good precondition for a successful meeting of the minds between the negotiation partners." Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, said "The European Convention on Human Rights is the essential reference for human rights protection for all of Europe. By accepting to submit the work of its institutions to the same human rights rules and the same scrutiny which apply to all European democracies, the European Union is sending a very powerful message – that Europe is changing – and that the most influential and the most powerful are ready to accept their part of responsibility for that change and in that change".

[EU €1bn Food Facility: already 222 projects and 50 million beneficiaries in the fight against hunger](#)

With more than €500m already disbursed and 97% of funds committed after only one year and a half from its adoption, the €1bn EU Food Facility has provided a fast and efficient response in tackling food insecurity. Following the high global food prices in 2008, the €1bn Food Facility was approved in December 2008 as a rapid EU reaction instrument to address food insecurity in 50 developing countries. Faced with an impressive number of high-quality proposals, but a limited budget, the European Commission is calling on other donors to help funding projects under the newly launched "Food Facility Auction Floor". "People struggling with hunger nowadays is unacceptable. Through the EU Food Facility, Europe has been able to provide a rapid and efficient response to the food crisis faced by developing countries. The Commission delivered on its promises, ensuring a high impact of the aid offered to countries in need. We are reaching over 50 million people, including many small-holder farmers, and this will increase." said Andris Piebalgs, EU Commissioner for Development.

[Greater Horn of Africa: Commission allocates €20 million to support 12 million victims of recurrent droughts](#)

The European Commission adopted a €20m humanitarian financial package to support 12 million people affected by drought in Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda. This funding will help efforts to develop the populations' resilience to drought and adapt to climate change. International Co-operation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response Commissioner, Kristalina Georgieva stated: "Drought is by far the main cause of natural disasters in the Greater Horn of Africa. Worryingly, the effect of climate change is felt more dramatically in this region. We need to accelerate our programmes which have an impact on the ground as they help communities to be better prepared and able to cope with reduced rains patterns." The new decision will be used to fund preparedness programmes, promote drought resilience and protect lives and livelihoods. The allocation will also finance food security improvement, livelihood support, as well as the provision of water and sanitation. The funds are channelled through the Commission's department for humanitarian aid and civil protection (ECHO).

[Statement of the EU institutions on the new European External Action Service](#)

The Presidency of the Council of the EU, High Representative, Catherine Ashton, the Commission and the European Parliament issued the following statement on the new European External Action Service: "The parties have reached political agreement on the proposal for a Council Decision establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service. In addition to the Decision, parties reached agreement on the text of two Declarations by the High Representative: on political accountability and on the basic structure of the central administration. On the basis of the agreement reached, the participants committed themselves to seek endorsement of the package by their respective institutions as soon as possible in order to proceed to formal adoption of the Council Decision establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service and the related Declarations, once all the procedural steps would have been completed".

[Statement of European Commission President Barroso on EEAS](#)

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