



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.



28 March – 3 April 2003

The Cotonou Agreement enters into force (01/04/2003)

The trade, aid and political Agreement signed in Cotonou, Benin in June 2000 between the 77 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States and the EU entered fully into force on 1 April. The partnership sets ambitious goals for the next 20 years centred on the reduction of poverty, the prevention of violent conflicts and improved governance. It aims at making ACP-EU development co-operation more efficient and acknowledges mutual responsibilities. Poul Nielson, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, said: "The delay in ratification of the Agreement should not cause us to forget the ambitious goals we set ourselves. At a time of conflict and division in the world, we should celebrate the objectives we share in the Cotonou Agreement and the commitment made by over 90 countries, half the countries in the world, to work together to achieve them. In terms of North-South solidarity, this is the biggest show in town."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/467|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Speech to ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly by Poul Nielson - Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo, (01/04/2003)

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/03/175|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Commissioner Nielson to visit Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan from 2-6 April (01/04/2003)

Mr Poul Nielson, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, is currently visiting Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan. In each country, Mr Nielson will be discussing issues of peace and security with political leaders, as well as reviewing matters relating to the EU's development co-operation and humanitarian aid programmes with the countries concerned. Mr Nielson's last visit to the Horn of Africa was in October 2000.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/466|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Pascal Lamy stresses the need for a realistic approach to WTO Trade Talks (01/04/2003)

Speaking in Bangkok, first destination of a trip to South-East Asia, EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy said: "I share the disappointment of many that we have missed deadlines on agricultural modalities which were to be agreed yesterday. But let's not over-dramatise it either: deadlines are there to focus minds, to get people to clarify their positions. This has largely been achieved: today, we have a much clearer understanding than six or even three months ago about where individual countries stand." He then went on to say: "What we need is a more realistic approach and less tactics. On agricultural market access the EU has been working hard to respond to the far reaching expectations of highly ambitious WTO Members." See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/468|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Speech to the International Chamber of Commerce by Pascal Lamy, Bangkok (01/04/2003)

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/03/173|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

WTO farm talks: "We will plough on", says Fischler (31/03/2003)

Speaking to journalists in London, EU Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler regretted that WTO members failed to meet the 31 March deadline to agree on the modalities for the WTO agriculture negotiations. "The EU has been working hard to meet this deadline. Unsuccessfully, as it turned out. We regret this. But missing this deadline is not the end of the world. Several other WTO deadlines have been missed. Now we will have to plough on. More important than a deadline is real effort to inject new dynamism into the negotiations, to keep working to narrow existing gaps. We have to ensure that we can develop a balanced set of modalities, which address the concerns of all the parties involved. We have to concentrate our attention on pursuing the negotiations to ensure that we can establish a comprehensive set of modalities and contribute to making the Cancún Ministerial Meeting in September a success", he said.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/457|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

President Romano Prodi in Algiers and Tunis

Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, visited Algeria on 30 and 31 March. This was the President's first visit since the signing of the Association Agreement. During his visit President Prodi covered the international situation, with particular reference to the repercussions of the conflict in Iraq on the situation in the southern Mediterranean region, and the Mediterranean dimension of the European Union's relations in the context of the Commission's Communication on the wider Europe - neighbourhood policy, which provides an opportunity for the southern Mediterranean countries. During his visit to Tunis on 31 March and 1 April, President Prodi had the opportunity to discuss with Tunisian leaders both the bilateral (Association Agreement and MEDA programme) and regional aspects of the Euro-Tunisian partnership. The main topics of discussion included matters relating to enlargement of the European Union, deepening of the upgrading process, co-operation in the field of migration and that of justice, and human rights.

Speech to the Foreign Affairs Committees of the Algerian National Assembly and Senate by Romano Prodi, Algiers (31/03/2003)

see: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/03/162|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Lamy in Thailand, Malaysia and Laos to strengthen EU-ASEAN trade relations, 31/03-05/04 (26/03/2003)

Currently EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy is visiting South East Asia to promote the EU's regional and multilateral trading links. His tour takes him to Thailand, Malaysia and Laos, where he will participate at a meeting with ASEAN Economic and Trade Ministers. Before leaving for Asia, the Trade Commissioner said, "I am looking forward to returning to a region, which is so important for the EU at all levels: bilaterally, regionally and multilaterally. I count on having fruitful discussions on the on-going WTO talks under the Doha Development Agenda, which we both consider essential to give developing countries a better deal in the world trade system. This time I will give particular focus to the regional dimension of the EU's trading links with South East Asia. By participating at the meeting with ASEAN trade and economic ministers I want to demonstrate the EU's commitment to a strategic partnership with this region."

See: http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/bilateral/asean/pr260303_en.htm

For more information please call Frank Oberholzer: 012-452-5200