



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*



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Headline News

[European Commission allocates €9 million to reinforce food security in Zimbabwe](#)

The European Commission allocated €9 million to safeguard access to food for vulnerable people affected by the breakdown of essential services in Zimbabwe. The funds will be channelled through the Commission's Humanitarian Aid department under the direct responsibility of Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Karel De Gucht. Commissioner De Gucht said: "Though the food security situation has started to improve slightly, Zimbabwe continues to face a protracted emergency. Urban populations are particularly vulnerable due to lack of access to land. It is therefore crucial in this period that ongoing food security interventions are reinforced and consolidated in order to reach the populations in need." The funds will be used to provide short-term food security and livelihood support. They are part of the Short Term support Strategy for an amount of €120m to be implemented by the European Commission following the visit of Prime Minister Tsvangirai and his Governmental delegation to Brussels on 18 June 2009.

[European Commission approves Tanzania's biggest ever EU co-operation programme](#)

The European Commission approved the Annual Action Programme 2009 for the United Republic of Tanzania, providing the country with €385m in assistance for budget support and infrastructure programmes, which will enable pro-poor economic growth. This programme complements the bilateral co-operation programmes of the individual EU Member States. It is the largest ever financial commitment made by the EU in support for Tanzania since EU co-operation first started in 1975. "This substantial financial commitment demonstrates our confidence in the Tanzanian Government to aggressively tackle the economic challenges ahead, and to put good governance, accountability and the fight against corruption at the centre of their agenda," stated Karel De Gucht, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid. €305m will be provided in the form of enhanced general budget support through a so-called "Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Contract". The MDG-Contract is a financial commitment over a 6 year period, twice as long as the common budget support agreements, aligned with the country's procedures and policy priorities focusing on MDG-related results. Tanzania is one of only 7 African countries to benefit from this unique form of co-operation.

[EU and Papua New Guinea sign interim Economic Partnership Agreement](#)

The EU and Papua New Guinea signed an interim Economic Partnership Agreement, which focuses on trade in goods and includes important provisions on rules of origin for the fisheries sector. EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton said: "This agreement is an important step towards a strong and lasting EU-Pacific trade and development partnership. We have already seen how the initialling of the agreement has delivered results, with new investment flowing into the fisheries industry, supporting development in Papua New Guinea and creating jobs." The interim EPA was first initialled in November 2007 by Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Fiji, who are two of the fourteen Pacific ACP countries, but represent the vast majority of the region's exports to the EU. The Agreement has been provisionally implemented by the EU since 1 January 2008 and it has already attracted investment into Papua New Guinea. Under the Agreement all imports from Papua New Guinea and Fiji will have immediate duty free quota free access to the European market (with short transition periods for rice and sugar).

Other News

Commission takes stock of progress on sustainable development

Three years into the implementation of the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy, the Commission has taken stock of developments at EU level and launched a reflection on how the strategy could be taken into the future. European Commission President José Manuel Barroso said, "We have made solid progress on integrating sustainable development into EU policy areas. This review highlights the progress we have made over the last three years and the areas where further work is needed. The economic crisis has created a unique opportunity to create a new sustainable economy through smart green growth. I hope this review will stimulate reflection on how best to make progress on areas like energy consumption in the transport area, declining biodiversity and degradation of our ecosystem". The review confirms that positive EU policy progress has been made in all seven priority areas covered by the Strategy. Examples include the EU's climate and energy package of December 2008, actions for greening of transport and more intelligent transport systems, improvement of energy efficiency of buildings, revisions of eco-design and eco-label directives, and setting up an integrated maritime policy framework.

Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the Maputo Political Accord on Madagascar

"The EU welcomes the outcome on 9 August 2009 of the Maputo Summit on Madagascar between the four political movements under the mediation of the Joint Mediation Team to Madagascar, including the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, the United Nations and the International Organisation of La Francophonie. The EU encourages the four political movements to continue building on the Maputo consensus to ensure prompt implementation of a neutral, peaceful and consensual transition process leading to transparent elections and the restoration of constitutional order in Madagascar. The EU continues to support the Joint Mediation Team to Madagascar in its continued efforts to promote peace, democratic stability and prosperity in Madagascar".

EU concerned over increasing risks to humanitarian workers on first World Humanitarian Day

World Humanitarian Day aims to honour humanitarian workers who have lost their lives or been injured in the course of their work. The European Commission, through its Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) has staff permanently present in crisis spots around the world. ECHO works closely with partner relief organisations, for example specialised UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and non-governmental organisations. Together they ensure the delivery of relief to civilian populations throughout the world in an impartial and non-discriminatory way. However, humanitarian access and the security of relief workers is increasingly at risk. Karel De Gucht, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, said: "World Humanitarian Day is an opportunity to honour the fallen humanitarian heroes - those who have lost their lives in humanitarian service. It is also a chance to acknowledge the vital work of our humanitarian staff in often harsh conditions and to draw attention to the urgent humanitarian needs worldwide." He added: "My message is simple: Don't harm civilians and the humanitarian aid workers who try to help them. The principles and values of humanitarian aid – humanity, independence, neutrality and impartiality – should protect relief workers and enable them to operate freely to tackle suffering around the world."

Erasmus Mundus: 63 new Masters Courses and Joint Doctorates added

The European Commission has selected a further 50 Masters Courses and 13 Joint Doctorates to be added to the courses available under the Erasmus Mundus programme. The new courses involve 296 universities from Europe and 70 partner universities from a range of countries around the world. Students starting their studies in the academic year 2010-2011 will be able to choose from among 116 Masters offering scholarships. The courses offer Erasmus Mundus scholarships to top-ranked students from "third countries", and to "scholars" (academics) to teach or carry out research. The 50 new Masters Courses treat a wide variety of disciplines: the most popular area is engineering and technology, followed by social sciences, mathematics, natural sciences and agriculture. This was the first selection year under which Masters applications could include universities from outside the EU as full partners in their consortium. As a result, 58 universities from non-EU countries are involved in the selected Masters Courses. Consortia with partners in third countries can also offer scholarships to European students or scholars to spend periods of study, teaching or research in one of the partner universities outside the EU.

EP opinion poll analyses 2009 European election turnout

The European Parliament published a Eurobarometer survey of 26,830 people across Europe carried out in the month following the 4-7 June European elections. Citizens were asked about their reasons for choosing whether or not to vote, and, if they did vote, what factors they took into account in deciding which party to vote for. Overall turnout in the elections was down compared with the 2004 elections by 2.47 percentage points, a smaller decline than in the past. This overall figure masks major national variations, with turnout up in eight Member States, about the same in a further eight, moderately lower in seven countries and markedly lower in four Member States.

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