



# European Union

Delegation of the European Commission  
to South Africa

**... this week  
in review**

*This publication seeks  
to provide information  
on EU activities of  
interest to SA readers.*

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## 3 - 9 September 2007



### Headline News

#### [EU Trade Commissioner interviewed on Doha trade talks](#)

In an interview with BBC World Business, EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson said the Doha trade talks could be saved, but were running out of time. "There has to be a very serious engagement by the negotiators. They have to identify the flexibility they can offer and where they can converge - that means all of us, including the European Union, I'm not exempting us - so that we can achieve some sort of breakthrough this autumn. If we fail to do that, then I am afraid that I can see the round going into the deep freeze and it will be very difficult indeed to remove it and revive it in future."

#### [Javier Solana welcomes the announcement on a date for peace negotiations on Darfur](#)



Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), issued a statement welcoming the announcement by the AU and the UN on the convening of peace negotiations on Darfur: "Convening peace negotiations on Darfur is a very welcome step in the right direction. I urge all parties to the forthcoming negotiations to participate constructively with a view to obtaining a truly inclusive and sustainable political settlement of the conflict in Darfur. The European Union stands ready to contribute to and facilitate this process".

#### [EU counter-terrorism action plan](#)

Franco Frattini, European Commissioner responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security, reported to the European Parliament on a package of counter-terrorism measures, based on prevention and prosecution, which will be adopted by the Commission this autumn. He said the EU's political goal was to strike the right balance between the fundamental right to security of citizens, right to life, and the other fundamental rights of individuals, including privacy and procedural rights. The package will consist of an EU Action Plan on the security of explosives, a proposal for an amendment of the Framework Decision on terrorism to deal with terrorist use of the internet, and an EU Passengers Name Record policy."

### Other News

#### [Declaration by the EU Presidency on developments in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo](#)

"The European Union expresses its grave concern at recent developments in Eastern Congo and specifically at the military confrontations currently taking place. They threaten the consolidation of peace in the DRC and the stability in the region. The violence is causing increasing numbers of displaced persons and human suffering is now widespread, particularly in the Kivu Provinces. The EU underlines the need for immediate and concerted political and diplomatic action to find peaceful solutions. The EU remains strongly committed to furthering stability and development in the region and will to this effect continue its support to regional cooperation and to the individual countries in the region".

#### [Committee of the Regions supports strengthening of European Neighbourhood Policy](#)

Istvan Sertö-Radics, First Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions' (CoR) Commission for External Relations, presented the Committee's political strategy on European Neighbourhood Policy during a high-level conference in Brussels. The representative voice of regions and cities in the EU, the CoR believes that co-operation at local and regional level across of Europe is a major pre-requisite for political stability, sustainable growth and protection of the environment in the neighbourhood area. In his opening speech, President Barroso stressed that the fundamental principle of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is a tailored approach determined by differing needs. "The ENP is not, and never has been, a one-size-fits-all policy," he said.

#### [European Neighbourhood Policy: Economic Review of EU Neighbour Countries](#)

### [Commission proposes actions to foster 21st Century e-Skills](#)

Recent reports and surveys have indicated that Europe may face severe e-skills shortages and mismatches in the coming years. At the same time, e-skills are becoming central to boost innovation, productivity and employability and to respond to global challenges. The European Commission has therefore proposed a long-term e-skills agenda at EU level, following extensive expert group and stakeholder consultations. Vice-President Günter Verheugen, responsible for Enterprise and Industry Policy, said: "The availability of e-skills is a key condition for successful innovation and for the competitiveness of European enterprises. In this context, I warmly welcome the initiative of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) industry to create an e-Skills Industry Leadership Board ". The Commission will organise a major conference in co-operation with stakeholders at the end of 2008 to report on progress, present the results of the actions and discuss the way forward. See also: [E-Skills for competitiveness, growth and employability](#)

### [Commission wants to involve more youth](#)

A Commission document has highlighted the need, at EU and national level, to invest more and earlier in youth education and health and to improve the transition from education to work. It also stresses the importance of involving young people more in civic life, as well as in society as a whole. Vladimír Špidla, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities said: "We need to address the paradoxical situation where the EU has labour shortages on the one hand and too many young people unemployed on the other – twice the overall EU unemployment rate." One in six young Europeans still leaves school early and 4.6 million 15-24 year-olds are unemployed. He added, "We need to give more attention to creating an inclusive society in which no child and young person is left behind."

For more information see: [Promoting young people's full participation in education, employment and society](#)

### [Reports propose simpler and clearer EU legislation](#)

The European Parliament debated on four reports on clearer and simpler EU legislation. The reports will add to the Commission's "better regulation" initiative, which was launched in 2005 after figures released in 2002 showed that there were 14,500 pieces of binding EU legislation. If written down it would amount to 97,000 pages in the EU's rulebook the "Official Journal". In May last year, the European Parliament adopted several reports and a resolution aimed at simplifying, codifying (merge several laws into one) and modifying 222 basic pieces of legislation and 1,400 legal acts. The scale and complexity of EU legislation is often blamed for many citizens' lack of interest in the EU.

### [Solana expresses support for the EU missions in the Palestinian Territories](#)

Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, met the Heads of Mission and key personnel of the EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories in the Palestinian city of Ramallah. Mr Solana gave a briefing on his trip to the region ahead of a series of major international meetings on the Middle East peace process in the coming months. They discussed the work of the missions on the ground and looked at ways to increase further the EU's support to the Palestinian Authority, aimed in particular in helping to build up effective Palestinian civilian and border policing. The EU is playing an important role in training and mentoring the Palestinian police and this is an essential element in developing the structures of a Palestinian state.



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