



**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**

### **[TDCA tariff preferences extended to Bulgaria and Romania](#)**

On 20 February 2009, the SA Government adopted Notice R 155, with a view to effectively implementing the Additional Protocol to the TDCA, to take account of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU on 1st January 2007. The measure entered into force the same day, with retroactive effect from 1st January 2007.

### **[European Commission pledges €115m for trade project in Eastern and Southern Africa](#)**

The European Commission has pledged €115m for a pilot Aid for Trade project to improve infrastructure and remove regulatory barriers to trade in Eastern and Southern Africa. The North-South Corridor project is being driven by three of Africa's main Regional Economic Communities, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern African (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC) and Southern African Development Community (SADC). EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton represented the European Commission at a conference on the North-South Corridor in the Zambian capital of Lusaka. Commissioner Ashton said: "Trade is a source of growth and jobs for developing countries, but they cannot reap the benefits if that trade falls at the first hurdle. This initiative is a perfect example of how targeted funding can remove barriers to trade caused by poor infrastructure and cumbersome regulation." EU Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel added: "It's very clear that Africa is being hit by wave after wave of aftershocks from the financial crisis. This regional response to free-up trade and stimulate growth and jobs is essential at this time and for the long-term development of Africa's economy."

### **[European Commission acts after G20 summit with strategy to support developing countries](#)**

The European Commission outlined a range of actions which the EU can take to help developing countries weather the ongoing economic crisis. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, said: "Europe has taken the lead in ensuring that the G20 lays foundations for a fair and sustainable recovery for all, including developing countries. The full impact of the current downturn on our partners is only now becoming clear - those least responsible for the financial crisis are among those worst hit by its economic effects. Europe is by far the biggest aid donor in the world and still growing. We are now more than half way to the 2015 deadline for reaching the UN Millennium Development Goals and some of the gains achieved so far risk being forfeited leaving poor countries worse off than before the crisis. I said it before the G20, I said it at the G20 meeting and now I say it again: the recession must not, cannot, will not be used as an excuse for going back on our promises to keep on increasing aid."

[Communication](#)

### **[EU pledges Economic Partnership Agreements \(EPAs\) will boost ACP development](#)**

EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton pledged in remarks to the European Parliament that new trade agreements with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries will serve development and offer developing countries the opportunity for advancement and growth. The remarks were delivered in the context of a European Parliament debate on EPAs. Commissioner Ashton promised that moving forward, the EU would reflect and respect the different partners' needs and interests in a flexible manner. Above all, she stressed that she had no interest in agreements that made any country in the ACP worse off, dispelling some persistent myths that the EU was trying to unilaterally redefine the EU-ACP relationship.

[Read the full speech](#)

## **Other News**

### **[EU Health Commissioner launches "Better Training for Safer Food in Africa"](#)**

In an effort to help developing countries improve their food safety systems for the benefit of their populations and economies, EU Health Commissioner, Androulla Vassiliou, launched a new initiative "Better Training for Safer Food in Africa – BTSF-Africa" at the African Union headquarters in Ethiopia. Through BTSF-Africa, €10million will be used over the next two years to fund capacity building activities. Launched in 2005, BTSF has provided training to both European and third country officials who are responsible for checking that EU rules related to food and feed, animal health and welfare and plant health are properly applied. From Addis Ababa, EU Health Commissioner, Androulla Vassiliou, said: "Due to growing demands, we have agreed to set up, jointly with the African Union Commission (AUC), a specific programme targeted at Africa, with the view to promoting compliance with international Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) measures as key to bilateral trade, both within Africa and with the rest of the world, and to increasing the protection of citizens."

### **[EU and Africa join forces to develop aviation co-operation](#)**

Following the EU-Africa aviation conference, which took place in Windhoek on 2-3 April 2009, the EU Commission and the African Union Commission have agreed on an ambitious common strategic framework to develop safer and more sustainable air transport. This framework should contribute to boosting air transport in Africa and creating new opportunities between both continents. Several initiatives were discussed concerning safety, economic regulation, air traffic management, navigation aids, environment and security. European Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani and Development Commissioner Louis Michel launched this initiative with Dr Elham Ibrahim, AU Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy. "Europe and Africa must strengthen their links and cooperate more in aviation. We will both benefit from a new air transport dynamics between our continents", said Vice-president Tajani. Commissioner Michel added that "This framework goes hand-in-hand with the EU-Africa Infrastructure Partnership which aims to link-up the African continent and its regions through increased investment in infrastructure. Aviation is a key part of the infrastructure-linkage."

### **[EU Council adopts climate-energy legislative package](#)**

The Council adopted a climate-energy legislative package containing measures to fight climate change and promote renewable energy. This package is designed to achieve the EU's overall environmental target of a 20% reduction in greenhouse gases and a 20% share of renewable energy in the EU's total energy consumption by 2020. Included in the package are a directive setting a common EU framework for the promotion of energy from renewable sources, a revised Emissions Trading System (ETS) for greenhouse gases in order to achieve greater emissions reductions in energy-intensive sectors and a decision to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across a wide range of activities including transport, agriculture and housing.

### **[One year after Lisbon: the Africa-EU partnership at work](#)**

The European Parliament adopted an own-initiative report in response to the Commission Communication "One year after Lisbon: The Africa-EU partnership at work". The report welcomes the fact that, one year after the adoption of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, the main components of the institutional architecture for its implementation are in place. MEPs reiterated their request to the Commissions of the EU and the African Union to involve the European and Pan-African Parliaments in the Joint Strategy. Whilst welcoming the €55 million support programme in the 9th European Development Fund for strengthening the capacity of AU institutions, the House requested that part of this budget be made available for strengthening the capacity of the Pan-African Parliament.

### **[Trade Commissioner Ashton calls on EU, US to stand up for free trade in global downturn](#)**

EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton delivered a speech at the Carnegie Endowment in Washington, DC, in which she called on the EU and US to stand up for open trade in the economic downturn. She argued that a commitment to open markets is as important in the current economic crisis as determining the right fiscal stimulus and financial regulation, as trade creates growth and jobs. Commissioner Ashton concluded that the EU and US must show leadership both in the multilateral trade arena as well as in tackling bilateral trade issues, in order to help lift the global economy out of recession.

### **[WTO praises EU's stance on multilateral trade and support for developing countries](#)**

In its 9th review of the European Union's trade policy, the World Trade Organisation praised the EU for its instrumental role in strengthening the multilateral trading system and its leadership in the Doha Round of world trade talks. The WTO report highlights the EU's efforts to help integrate developing countries into the international trading system. The report recognises the progress made over the last two years in consolidating the EU's Internal Market, and notes the benefits of EU's reformed Common Agricultural Policy. EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton said: "The EU will continue to show leadership on global trade and stand firm against protectionism. We need this commitment more than ever to promote trade and overcome the economic downturn. We are committed to multilateralism, to transparency, and to open markets based on rules that benefit developed and developing countries alike."

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