



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.



30 May – 5 June 2003

Headline News:

Iraq: Commission grants €10mil to combat landmines (05/06/2003)

The European Commission has granted €10 million in Humanitarian Aid to help protect people affected by unexploded landmines and bombs in Iraq. Funds allocated via the Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), under the responsibility of Commissioner Poul Nielson, will provide safety training, information on the location of such unexploded landmines and bombs and some minefield clearance. Programmes will be implemented by international agencies operating in the region. ECHO has contributed more than €57 million in humanitarian aid to the region since 2000.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/807|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

European Commission contributes R20mil to southern African energy initiatives (04/06/2003)

The European Commission, through its Industrial Development Corporation based Risk Capital Facility, is a key partner in the newly established Empowerment Through Energy Fund (ETEF) that will finance black economic empowerment SME's in South and southern Africa. The ETEF will invest in initiatives including distribution, retail and maintenance of modern energy products such as small household solar systems, LPG pressurised units, and energy efficient equipment such as insulation and lighting. Speaking at the launch event EU Ambassador Michael Lake said: "The ETEF is truly multifaceted as it translates objectives of several Government policies into direct actions ... as a development partner of the Government, the EU supports these policies and therefore welcomes the opportunity to participate in the ETEF initiative."

For more information contact Riaan Coetzee at the Industrial Development Corporation: RianC@idc.co.za

International conference outlines steps to increase renewable energy globally (04/06/2003)

The first International Conference of the "Johannesburg Renewable Energy Coalition" (JREC) at ministerial level took place in Brussels. The outcome of the conference is a set of strategic priorities that the Coalition will pursue in its work, including strengthening the financial instruments promoting renewable energy, and a road map outlining the Coalition's activities in the run-up to next year's World Conference on Renewables in Bonn. JREC was founded during last year's World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg and brings together more than 80 countries. "The result-oriented outcome of this conference, the inspiring discussions and excellent ideas put forward have filled me with confidence that we will achieve our goal," said Environment Commissioner Margot Wallström, who chaired the conference.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/802|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Other News:

Parliament approves Proposal for Regulation on transboundary movement of GMOs (04/06/2003)

The Members of the European Parliament reached agreement which should allow the legislation to be formally adopted next week on the Proposal for a Regulation on the transboundary movements of genetically modified organisms. This agreement marks an important step towards the full implementation into Community legislation of the provisions of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/790|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

European Commission to Support Round Table Conference on Liberia (04/06/2003)

Replying to a request for funding from ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), the Commission has decided (through its Rapid Reaction Mechanism) to make €390.000 available for the immediate launching of comprehensive Round-table discussions on Liberia with the former Nigerian President Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar acting as mediator. The main goal of these discussions is to initiate a comprehensive peace process including a cease-fire agreement. The conference which starts on 4 June will take place in Akosombo whilst the cease fire negotiations take place, in parallel, in Akusi. See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/800|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

EIB Launches the Cotonou Agreement Investment Facility (03/06/2003)

The European Investment Bank formally launched a new €2.2 billion Investment Facility to promote the private sector and fight poverty in the African Caribbean and Pacific States. The Investment Facility was officially inaugurated by EIB President

Philippe Maystadt at a ceremony in Luxembourg attended by President Abdulaye Wade of Senegal, Finance Minister David Mwiraria of Kenya, EU Commissioner Pedro Solbes, and representatives of the 78 African Caribbean and Pacific States.
See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=BEI/03/5510|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Message by EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy at the 2nd LDC Ministerial, Dhaka (02/06/2003)

"The EU welcomes the organisation of the 2nd Least Developed Country's Ministerial Meeting in Dhaka bringing together Ministers and representatives from the 49 Least Developed Countries. This meeting takes place at a timely moment, three months before the Cancun 5th Ministerial Meeting, where stock will be taken of the progress of the WTO negotiations since the launching of the Doha Development Agenda. The EU fully supports the efforts of LDCs to integrate in the multilateral trading system and use trade as an engine for economic development and poverty eradication. ..."

See: http://europa.eu.int/comm/commissioners/lamy/speeches_articles/spla171_en.htm

ACP: Package to fight killer diseases and crippling debt in developing countries (02/06/2003)

Ministers from 79 developing countries and the 15 European Union Member States have agreed to allocate €686 million of funds to combat lethal communicable diseases and ease the debt burden in developing countries.

See: http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/body/news/news_en.htm#1

Commission adopts four new humanitarian aid decisions worth more than €3mil (02/06/2003)

The European Commission has recently taken decisions to help victims of humanitarian crises in Eritrea (€1.3 million), Central African Republic (€1 million), the Philippines (€500,000) and Argentina (€495,000). The assistance is channelled through the Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), which comes under the authority of Commissioner Poul Nielson.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/78310|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Commission takes clear stance against corruption (02/06/2003)

The European Commission today adopted a Communication on a coherent and comprehensive EU policy against corruption. The communication will be sent to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee. It appeals to EU leaders to undertake more efforts against this form of crime.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/77710|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Statement of President Romano Prodi on the European Convention (30/04/2003)

President Prodi said: "I was a little surprised to hear declarations that the European Commission would attempt to slow down progress in the European Convention. The opposite is true. The Members of the European Convention are faced with a formidable challenge. I want to offer my support to the President of the Convention: we share the same goal because we both want the Convention to be a success. ..."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/78210|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Ahead:

Plenary Session of the European Convention 04-06/06/2003,

See: <http://european-convention.eu.int/sessplen.asp?lang=EN>

For further information please contact Frank Oberholzer at 012-452-5200



EUROPEAN UNION Film Festival

Great news for all fans of European films – the EU Film Festival is back. One year after record audiences made it clear that this feature on the country's cultural calendar was a must, the EU again presents a film festival that will showcase films from all across the European Union.

Spokesman for the European Commission Delegation in South Africa, Frank Oberholzer said, "We are particularly pleased that the festival, for the third year running, has expanded in size and this year will be run in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban. We feel that increased local exposure to the many European cultures is important, particularly in the light of the European Union and its Member States remaining not only South Africa's largest trading partner but also by far the country's biggest development partner."

Durban: Gateway 06-12 June

For film reviews & festival schedule, see: <http://www.sterkinekor.com/festivals/EuropeanUnionff/listing.asp>

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