



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.



31 March – 6 April 2006

Headline News

[Situation in the Middle East after the Israeli elections – Speech by Com B Ferrero-Waldner \(05/04/2006\)](#)



Addressing a European Parliament plenary session in Strasbourg, Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner (External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy) stated: "There has been much speculation about the impact these elections will have on the prospects for peace. One might be tempted to believe that the election result broadly endorsed acting PM Olmert's avowed intention to proceed with the establishment of permanent borders for Israel by 2010, following further disengagement from the occupied West Bank. The question for us is how that will be done. We strongly believe that Israel's legitimate security concerns cannot be met through unilateral action or decisions imposed by force: only a negotiated settlement will be sustainable. The EU would only support changes to the pre-1967 borders agreed by consensus between the Parties: we support a two-State solution leading to a final and comprehensive settlement of the conflict, with Israel and a Palestinian State living side-by-side within secure and mutually recognised borders ..."

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Other News

[Avian Influenza: several preventive and control measures agreed by Standing Committee \(05/04/2006\)](#)

Member States have backed a series of Commission proposals to reinforce EU preventive and control measures with regard to avian influenza, at the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCFCAH). The Decisions relate to the outbreak of H5N1 avian influenza on a German poultry farm, rules on preventive measures taken with regard to zoo birds and an extension of the import bans for Croatia, Romania and Turkey.

[Presidency's declaration on access for humanitarian operations in Darfur \(06/04/2006\)](#)

The European Union notes with concern that in recent days representatives of the international community, and most recently Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Egeland, were not authorised by the Government of Sudan to visit Darfur. The humanitarian situation in Darfur requires sustained action by the international community. USG Egeland has a crucial role to play in that respect. The European Union is committed to providing adequate support and funding for humanitarian activities. It recalls the need for humanitarian actors in the field to be given free access by all actors concerned.

[Commissioner Louis Michel joins High Level Panel on restructuring the UN \(04/04/2006\)](#)

Louis Michel, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, joined Prime Ministers and Ministers from around the globe at a High Level Panel to take forward UN reform (04-06/04/2006). UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, appointed the 15 member panel to recommend how the UN's work in development, humanitarian assistance and environment could be restructured. The appointment of Mr Michel is recognition of his personal role in supporting the United Nations and multilateralism, as well as recognition of the European Community as a major political player in Development cooperation and as the world's biggest donor.



[Experts gather to discuss co-existence of GM crops with conventional and organic farming \(04/04/2006\)](#)

European politicians, senior civil servants and leading experts from the worlds of academia, commerce and NGOs gathered in Vienna (04-06/04/2006) to discuss future policies on the co-existence of GM crops with conventional and organic agriculture. The conference forms part of the Commission's consultations with interested parties on the development of efficient and cost-effective strategies to ensure co-existence. It follows the adoption on 09/03/2006 of a report on the progress EU Member States have made so far in implementing national rules.

See also: [Co-existence of GM crops with conventional and organic farming – Speech by Com M Fischer Boel \(05/04/2006\)](#)
[Co-existence of GM, conventional and organic crops: Freedom of choice – Speech by Com S Dimas \(05/04/2006\)](#)

Presidency's declaration on behalf of the EU on arrest of Charles Taylor (31/03/2006)

The European Union welcomes the arrest of former Liberian President Charles Taylor in Nigeria and his speedy transfer to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, where he is to stand trial on several counts of crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. The European Union hails the courage of Liberian President Johnson-Sirleaf in demanding Taylor's extradition and commends the important role played by President Obasanjo and the Nigerian authorities in securing his arrest.

Commission provides additional €118 mil to help rebuild Indonesia's Aceh province (31/04/2006)

The European Commission has approved a further contribution of €118 mil to support rehabilitation and long-term reconstruction in Indonesia's Aceh province following the Tsunami. This will bring the Commission's total post-Tsunami aid package for Aceh to €207 mil. The aid supports projects that are rebuilding houses and restoring community infrastructure. The funds are channelled through a multi-donor trust fund for reconstruction led by the World Bank with the European Commission as the largest contributor and co-chair. The Fund was set up in order to rationalise the plethora of projects and donors working in the country in the immediate aftermath of the Tsunami.

Uniting in peace: the role of Law in the European Union – Speech by Pres JM Barroso (31/03/2006)

While presenting the Jean Monnet lecture at the European University Institute in Florence, European Commission President José Manuel Barroso drove home the point that "... the EU is of course a political project, and has political goals. But whilst we need political voluntarism to define our objectives, our Union is not one based on the spirit of methodical voluntarism. In a Union of many Member States, there will more often than not be a multiplicity of voluntarisms, on any given issue, at any given moment. For these voluntarisms to be brought to a fruitful synthesis, rather than remaining in a thesis and antithesis stage, we need rules, i.e. the law. The essence of our Union is cooperation on the basis of rules. And it is the Commission that under the Treaties acts as the guardian of the rules. That is why the role of the Commission is so important and deserves to be upheld.

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In the April 2006 issue:

- EC – Nigeria Cooperation
- Water emergency: Delivering effective development
- Trinidad & Tobago: a big fish in a small pond?
- Uganda's strides in trade policy

See: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/development/body/publications/courier/eCourier/ecourier_10_2006_en.pdf#zoom=100