



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.



5 – 11 May 2006



Headline News



EC Delegation to South Africa celebrates Europe Day with a theme: Water (09/05/2006)

This year the Delegation celebrated Schuman Day, marking the founding of the European Union, at Roodeplaat Dam just outside Pretoria. The Guest of Honour, South Africa's Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Ms Buyelwa Sonjica (MP), addressed the gathering of over 300 guests after opening remarks by Mr Michael Gahler (MEP) and Ms Glenys Kinnock (MEP), both visiting South Africa at the time. EU Ambassador Lodewijk Briët concluded formal proceedings with a toast to South Africa and President Mbeki. Also in attendance were Deputy Minister of Arts & Culture, Ms Ntombazana Botha (MP) and other members of the Pan African and European Parliaments. ([Ambassador Briët's speech on 9 May 2006](#))

Minister of Water Affairs & Forestry, Ms Buyelwa Sonjica. MP



EU Ambassador to South Africa, Mr Lodewijk Briët

ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly Co-President, Ms Glenys Kinnock, MEP

Centre: Chairman of the European Parliamentary Delegation to the 5th Ordinary Session of the Pan-African Parliament, Mr Michael Gahler, MEP

Deputy Minister of Arts & Culture, Ms Ntombazana Botha, MP

For celebrations within the European Union, see: [Celebrations of Europe Day - 9 May \(05/05/2006\)](#)
See also: [Strengthening a Citizens Europe - 9 May Speech by Pres JM Barroso \(08/05/2006\)](#)

Other News

Money laundering & terrorist financing: Member States agree to EC's draft measures (11/05/2006)

The Committee for the Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing, a regulatory committee composed of Member States and chaired by the European Commission, agreed on 10/05/2006 to the Commission's formal draft for technical measures implementing the Third Directive on the prevention of money laundering and terrorist financing. The Directive was adopted in October 2005 and is to be implemented at the latest in December 2007.

Future challenges of EU humanitarian aid & role of NGOs – Speech by Com L Michel (11/05/2006)

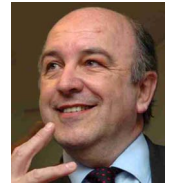
Addressing a forum of NGOs at the Voice General Assembly in Brussels, Antonio Cavaco (DG: Humanitarian Aid) said on behalf of EU Commissioner Louis Michel: "Non Governmental Organisations are the largest group of partners of the Commission's humanitarian assistance, both in number of organisations (179 out of 212) and in financial volume (54% in 2005), and you (Voice) represent about half of them. ... I am committed to a strong, reciprocal, responsible partnership between the Commission and its partner NGOs."

Priorities in agricultural and trade policy – Speech by Com M Fischer Boel (11/05/2006)

Speaking at the COCERAL Congress in Hungary, Commissioner Mariann Fischer Boel (Agriculture & Rural Development) asked: "Is the Doha Round really a priority for the EU? ... After all, doesn't everyone know that the EU has a lot to lose and little to gain in these talks?" ... I can tell you that the Doha Round has always been very high on the EU's list of priorities. We want to get a deal; and we want to get the right deal. That is as true now as it has ever been. We want to get a deal because we firmly believe that multilateral trade agreements are the best way of maximising the benefits of trade for everyone. They deliver much more than bilateral agreements: they cover a much wider range of issues and they make possible more comprehensive trade-offs. They also provide a context within which the strong cannot pick off the weak one at a time.

European Monetary Union (EMU): performance & challenges – Speech by Com J Almunia (11/05/2006)

Addressing a Conference on EMU in Austria, Commissioner Joaquín Almunia (Economic & Monetary Affairs) observed: "Looking beyond Europe's borders, the euro has rapidly become the second most important international currency. At the same time, the euro area has become one of the most relevant economic entities at the international level, accounting for 23% of world GDP and world trade (this excludes intra-euro-area trade). The enhanced macroeconomic stability, the improved economic efficiency and the closer financial integration within EMU have inspired confidence in the euro among consumers, producers and investors, not only in the euro area but well beyond its borders."



Reliable health information at the click of a mouse – EC launches new Health Portal (10/05/2006)

In 2005 at least one third of the European adult population, 130 million EU citizens, browsed the web in search of information on health. However, searching for health-related information is not always easy. To help European citizens answer their health questions, the Commission has launched the "Health-EU Portal" http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/index_en.htm. The portal is a gateway to simple and sound information on 47 topics that range from babies' health to bio-terrorism, and from infectious diseases to health insurance. It is foreseen that up to 1.5 billion people world-wide will be able to make use of this resource.

EU-Latin American and Caribbean Summit: moving the strategic partnership forward (10/05/2006)

The 25 Heads of State and Government of the EU and 33 of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) will hold their 4th Summit in Vienna (Austria) on 12/05/2006.

See also: [EU-Latin America relations on the eve of the Vienna Summit, 12 May 2006](#)

[An EU25 trade deficit of 9 bn euro with the LAC countries in 2005 \(11/05/2006\)](#)

[Commission establishes scientific partnership with the Amazon Co-operation Treaty Organization \(10/05/2006\)](#)

EU – Africa Ministerial Troika Meeting (08/05/2006)

In the framework of the EU-Africa dialogue, the sixth Ministerial Meeting of the African and EU Troikas met in Vienna, Austria, on 08/05/2006. The meeting was preceded by a meeting of Senior Officials, held 6-7/05/2006. The meeting of Ministers was co-chaired by H.E. Rodolphe Adada, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Congo and current chairperson of the AU Executive Council and H.E. Ursula Plassnik, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria and current President of the Council of the European Union (EU).

Clash of civilisations or dialogue of cultures: building bridges across the Mediterranean (06/05/2006)

Giving the Anna Lindh Foundation Lecture at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina during her recent visit to Egypt, Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner (External Relations & European Neighbourhood Policy) said: "The very name "Alexandria" is resonant with the common heritage shared by the peoples of the Mediterranean and the world's three major religions. The bibliotheca of ancient times was ... a pooling of scholarship from around the Mediterranean and beyond. Documents from that time reveal the cosmopolitan nature of ancient Alexandria where Arab, Christian and Jewish traders and scholars mixed freely and developed new ideas. ... Unfortunately however, that spirit of exchange, of commonality, has since been lost. Our forefathers in the ancient world would be astonished at the deep division, which today lies across the Mare Nostrum."

See also: [Egypt-European Union relations in the age of reform – Speech by Com B Ferrero-Waldner \(07/05/2006\)](#)

Council approves cohesion policy package for 2007-2013 (05/05/2006)

The Council decided to integrate the cohesion fund into the programming of structural assistance to seek greater coherence amongst the interventions of the various funds in order to increase the Community added value of cohesion policy. The work of the structural funds and the cohesion fund will be concentrated on the three following redefined objectives: 1 Convergence of the member states and the regions; 2. Regional competitiveness and employment; 3. European territorial cooperation.

Future Events

- **10-12/05/2006 - [14th Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development](#), New York**
Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas will announce the launch of the EU Energy Facility, which will make available €220 million to projects improving access to energy, in particular renewable energy, mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- **15-16/05/2006 - [The challenges facing participatory democracy in an enlarged Europe](#), Vienna**

Photo File



Louis Michel, Member of the EC in charge of Development and Humanitarian Aid, receives Azali Assoumani, President of the Comoros (10/05/2006)

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