



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 – 12 January 2006

Headline News

Council adoption of EU Strategy for Africa marks new Euro-African relations era (12/12/2005)

The European Commission welcomed the endorsement by the General Affairs and External Relations Council of the EU Strategy for Africa. This ambitious long-term plan marks an important milestone in EU-Africa relations and will boost Africa's sustainable development. Discussions with African states and organisations are starting now about turning this strategy into concrete projects, in order to increase stability, boost economic growth and reduce poverty. This decision is not the end of the process; it has rather to be seen as the beginning of a new kind of partnership between the EU and Africa. The Strategy marks a step change in the way the EU deals with the African continent.

Presidency's Declaration on behalf of the EU re Iran to resume nuclear activities (07/01/2005)

The EU views with serious concern the Government of Iran's intention to resume suspended nuclear activities. It recalls that this and other parts of Iran's nuclear programme were frozen, under IAEA supervision, following revelations of Iran's clandestine nuclear activities over a period of more than a decade. It urges Iran not to take this step which would violate both the letter and the spirit of the 8 previous resolutions. These call on Iran, inter alia, to suspend all enrichment related activities. The EU regrets that Iran has chosen to announce this unilateral move at a moment when international confidence in the peaceful nature of its programme is far from restored.



Other News

Innovation scoreboard: Mixed results (12/01/2006)

The fifth edition of the European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS) reveals that Sweden, Finland, Switzerland, Germany and Denmark are the European innovation leaders. Most of the new Member States are engaged in the catching-up process, however, their slow pace is unlikely to allow for short-term convergence in Europe.

See also: [Innovation scoreboard: Summaries of Member States results \(12/01/2006\)](#)

Commission recommends correction of UK budget deficit (11/01/2006)

The European Commission took the view that at 3.3% of GDP in the 2004/5 financial year, the United Kingdom is running an excessive budget deficit within the meaning of the European Union Treaty and the revised Stability and Growth Pact. The Commission is asking the Council to endorse this opinion and to recommend that the deficit be brought below 3% by the forthcoming 2006/7 financial year.

Presidency's Statement on behalf of the EU Somali agreement (11/01/2006)

The EU warmly welcomes the Declaration issued jointly in Aden on 05/01/2006 by President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed of (Somali Republic) and the Speaker of the Transitional Federal Parliament of Somalia, Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden. The EU commends President Ali Abdalla Salah (Republic of Yemen) for his facilitation of their discussions. The EU is greatly encouraged to note the parties' guidance by the Transitional Federal Charter and their undertaking to convene a session of Parliament within thirty days.

Air passengers' rights: The European Court of Justice confirms legality of EU rules (10/01/2006)

The European Court of Justice confirmed the validity of EU legislation on air passengers' rights. This legislation, which came into force on 17/02/2005, has introduced very significant improvements to the protection of air passengers' rights in the EU in the event of denied boarding, flight cancellation or long delays. "This is very good news for European citizens. Air transport is making a major contribution to their mobility. The Court now also confirms EU legislation giving them certain rights when their flight is overbooked, delayed or cancelled", said European Commission Vice-President Jacques Barrot (Transport). See also: [The regulation on compensation and assistance for air passengers is valid \(10/01/2006\)](#)



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