



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.



6 – 12 May 2005



Headline News



Delegation celebrates Europe Day (09/05/2005)

"It is a pleasure to celebrate "Europe Day" at the Foundation for Human Rights - a departure from tradition in an attempt to focus attention more directly on those to whom we try to reach out." These were the opening remarks of the Head of Delegation during his 9 May speech. Addressing the issue of the EU's role in the world, Mr Briët noted: "On a political level and in our foreign policy, the European Commission will prioritise conflict prevention and crisis management; promote human rights and human security; and strengthen effective multilateralism." Concluding with his vision Mr Briët said: "If I have a dream then it is to see South Africa (together with the African Union, NEPAD, and regional organisations) play an increasing role in shaping the sub-Saharan African continent along the lines of the European model and European experience, adapted to Africa's needs, in our joint effort to uplift the African people, or, to paraphrase President Mbeki's words on Freedom Day - to create a country, indeed a continent, for all." See: http://www.eusa.org.za/PDFdownload/FranksPDF/Speech_EuropeDay_9%20May%2005.pdf



The transformation of Europe – Speech by José Manuel Barroso (11/05/2005)

Addressing the European Parliament, European Commission President, José Manuel Barroso, stated: "Let us recognise what came out of the ruins of Europe in 1945. Something remarkable. Let me give you a quote from one of the visionaries of that time, speaking in 1946 a few hours south of here. "I am now going to say something that will astonish you. The first step in the recreation of the European family must be a partnership between France and Germany. In this way only can France recover the moral and cultural leadership of Europe. There can be no revival of Europe without a spiritually great Germany." Churchill was right. It is easy to forget now the courage it took to say these words. What he said was astonishing. Even more astonishing were the deeds which turned these words into reality. ..."

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/272&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Other News

President Barroso announces details of Afghan reconstruction programmes for 2005/2006 (11/05/2005)

Commission President, José Manuel Barroso, met Afghan President, Hamid Karzai, in Brussels on 12 May. They reviewed the reconstruction process and the ongoing political transition in Afghanistan. They also discussed counter-narcotics efforts, priorities for future cooperation between the EU and Afghanistan and forthcoming elections. Presidents Barroso and Karzai announced details of the Commission's programme for reconstruction assistance for 2005 and 2006. This programme completed the delivery of the Commission's pledge of €1 billion of reconstruction aid for Afghanistan for the period 2002-2006. So far, under this reconstruction programme, €657 million has been delivered. This figure does not include an additional €216.5 million in humanitarian assistance over the 2001-2004 period.

See: <http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/553&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: Afghanistan: How EU support is making a real difference (11/05/2005)

<http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/156&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>



EU deploys Election Observation Mission to Lebanon for upcoming Parliamentary Elections (04/05/2005)

Following an agreement with the Government of the Republic of Lebanon, the European Commission will deploy an EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) for the Parliamentary elections in Lebanon. The Commissioner for External Relations and the European Neighbourhood, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, stated: "Supporting moves towards democracy is one of my priorities in the region. I am delighted that there is now a chance for the Lebanese people to freely elect a Parliament that represents their aspirations. The EOM will build on our strong record of impartial observation, to build confidence in Lebanon's election process. I have personally selected the European Parliament Member, José Ignacio Salafranca, as head of this mission."

See: <http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/550&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Commission provides €28 million in humanitarian aid to vulnerable Palestinians (10/05/2005)

The European Commission has allocated €28.3 million in humanitarian aid for one million Palestinians in the occupied territories and Lebanon. The aid will provide food, water and sanitation services, employment opportunities, health care, psychosocial support and protection for the poorest Palestinians and those most affected by movement restrictions. Assistance will be channelled through ECHO, the Commission's humanitarian aid department. Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, said: "Despite the improving political climate, most movement restrictions for people and goods remain in place. While it is crucial that humanitarian aid does not become a structural feature of the Palestinian economy, international donors must continue to help meet the urgent needs of the population."

See: <http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/549&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&quiLanguage=en>

Ahead:



Cinema Nouveau and the Embassies/High Commissions of the Member States of the European Union in Pretoria are proud to present the **2005 European Union Film Festival**. The film festival will be at Rosebank Mall (Johannesburg) from 13-20/05/2005, Cavendish Square in Cape Town and at Gateway centre in Durban. **Entrance is free.**

See: <http://www.eusa.org.za/PDFdownload/Film%20Festival%202005.pdf>

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

Science pop stars – improbable no longer



Finding the new faces of science.
"Bright young people working

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/headlines/news/article_05_05_12_en.html

Television watchers will have seen reality TV evolve over the past decade from a peek inside the world of young would-be stars to fly-on-the-wall programmes covering more serious issues, such as child-rearing and public health. All over Europe, young hopefuls sing and dance before the ever-watchful camera to become their nation's next pop idols. This month, organisers in Britain have taken the Fame Academy formula a step further and plan to give the next generation of scientists a chance to sing and dance to another sort of tune – one accompanied by physics, chemistry, biology, technology, etc. The aptly-named FameLab is a competition to find those with a talent for describing science in its many forms. The Cheltenham Science Festival launched the competition in partnership with the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) to, in its words,

"find bright young people working in science who can share their enthusiasm and knowledge in innovative and entertaining ways"

Research to tackle biology's intolerable cruelty



Post-genomic research into targeted
explains the severe degenerative
applications and clinical practices.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/headlines/news/article_05_05_11_en.html

Organ, cell or tissue transplants can be effective against ailments, such as degenerative diseases and cancer. But a cruel irony about the human body is that it does not always know what is good for it. The immune system, designed to protect us, can become our own worst enemy. European scientists in the EU's RISET project are on a path to improving the current regime of immunosuppressive drugs and treatments. Today, around 250 000 people in Europe are alive thanks to a transplanted organ. The current stable of drugs designed to suppress the immune system's tendency to attack foreign organs, cells and tissue are effective in controlling early acute rejection, but the long-term outcome is less successful. A new Sixth Framework Programme-funded project is hoping to capitalise on recent progress in post-genomic immunology to rectify this. "New biotechnology products have been shown to promote long-term transplant acceptance in pre-clinical models,"

partner Integrated Project from ten EU countries. It plans to translate these advances into new

From speech recognition to full-blown multithreaded conversation

Anticipating what your interlocutor will say helps a dialogue run smoothly. Faster recognition of a conversation's context – from the phrases, speech and grammar – is something language technologists have been striving to achieve since the early days of man-machine speech recognition. Now, European and American researchers have built a dialogue management system which promises to make conversing with our machine friends at work, in cars and at home that much more realistic. Researchers from Edinburgh University (UK) and Stanford University (US) have designed and built a dialogue management system that, among other things, promises to make verbal communication between people and computers more realistic and responsive by alerting the machine to the type of phrase the operator is likely to say next. The system has applications in a variety of speech recognition exchanges, the researchers claim, including robots, telephone-based information systems, interactive gaming, in-car voice recognition systems, as well as speech interfaces for personal computers.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/headlines/news/article_05_05_10_en.html