



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.



9 - 15 April 2004

Headline News

Zimbabwe: Commission allocates €15 million in humanitarian aid (14/04/2004)

The European Commission approved €15 million in humanitarian aid for vulnerable groups in Zimbabwe. This decision will enable the continuation of emergency food aid, agricultural rehabilitation, water, sanitation and health programmes. It will also provide assistance to internally displaced people and support humanitarian co-ordination efforts. The funds are managed by the Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO. Commissioner for development and humanitarian aid Poul Nielson said: "Over the past few years we have witnessed a spectacular decline of living conditions for millions of Zimbabweans. By working through professional and independent partners ECHO has been able to ensure that EU humanitarian aid reaches vulnerable people in need. I urge the Zimbabwean authorities to continue to allow unfettered access for humanitarian organisations, so that the further development of this looming crisis can be prevented."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/481|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

EU-ACPs: EU and Caribbean launch negotiations for an Economic Partnership Agreement (15/04/2004)



On 16/04/2004 the European Union opens negotiations for an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the EU and 16 Caribbean countries. Meeting in Kingston, Jamaica, the EU Commissioners for Trade and Development and their Caribbean colleagues will officially launch these negotiations aimed at promoting trade and development by concluding a region-to-region agreement. By opening up trade between both regions and setting up clear rules for trade, the EPA will also contribute to the economic integration of the Caribbean. Before travelling to Jamaica, EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy said:

"The EU has a long-standing relationship with the Caribbean. With the launch of these negotiations we are opening a new chapter between our regions. Tearing down barriers to trade among Caribbean countries is the necessary complement to the almost full access to the EU market already enjoyed by these countries. As a result, the region will come out stronger and EU-Caribbean relations will be boosted."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/488|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Other News

TRACES: EC adopts system to manage animal movements & prevent spread of diseases (15/04/2004)

The European Commission has just introduced TRACES, a new IT system designed to improve the management of animal movements both from outside the EU and within the EU. TRACES will consolidate and simplify existing systems and create better tools for managing animal disease outbreaks. All those concerned by animal trade authorities and economic operators will benefit from this modern web-based system, the first EU-wide e-government application in the field of food safety. David Byrne, Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, said "The new TRACES database will facilitate tracking the 50 000 animals transported in the EU each day. This is a major innovation and will help in case of an outbreak of an animal disease like foot and mouth disease."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/487|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

The Role of the EU in a changing World – Speech by Romano Prodi (14/04/2004)

In an address to the CASS European Institute in Beijing, Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission said: "... In just two weeks' time, the EU will enlarge to 25 Member States, with a population of close to 450 million and a GDP of nearly 10 trillion Euro. With this historic event, the European Union is at the crossroads. The choice is simple: to sit back, consolidate our position and become consumed with our own internal issues, or to move forward and look to play a greater part in global affairs. ... We are convinced that internal developments within the EU are closely entwined with developments on the world scene. Moreover, the world community expects the EU to play a rôle commensurate with its importance, not only in the economic area, but also on issues of global security and other concerns. ..."

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/04/176|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=



Commission provides €1.5 million to support the peace process in Sudan (14/04/2004)

Through its Rapid Reaction Mechanism the EC supports the peace negotiations between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) to help them to reach a comprehensive peace agreement. Sudan has been embroiled in the longest running and one of the most devastating conflicts of post-colonial Africa. After a decade with on-off dialogues, the negotiations between the Government and the SPLM/A seem to have reached the home stretch. Several sectoral accords, considered major 'building blocks' on the path towards a comprehensive agreement, have been reached. The Commission funding of €1.5 million provides support to the IGAD peace secretariat in Nairobi covering costs related to hosting the peace-talks during the coming 6 months as well as operational costs of the international cease-fire observation mechanism (the Verification and Monitoring Team, VMT).

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/483|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Brussels, 13 April 2004

EC allocates €7 million in aid to vulnerable populations in Chad, Madagascar & Ethiopia (13/04/2004)

The European Commission has adopted three humanitarian aid packages, totalling €7 million, in response to the crises in Chad (€4 Million), Madagascar (€2 Million) and Ethiopia (€1 Million). These funds are managed by the Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) under the responsibility of Commissioner Poul Nielson. They will help to improve access to clean water, sanitation and health-care and provide food-aid and nutritional support, shelter and protection for refugees and other victims of conflicts and natural disasters.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/04/478|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Ahead:

- **17-18/04/2004 - Asia-Europe Foreign Ministers' Meeting (ASEM), Ireland**
See: http://www.eu2004.ie/templates/meeting.asp?sNavlocator=5,418,13&list_id=11
- **18/04/2004 - EU–Japan Foreign Ministerial Troika, Ireland**
See: http://www.eu2004.ie/templates/meeting.asp?sNavlocator=5,418,13&list_id=128
- **02/04/2004 - EU–China Foreign Ministerial Troika, Ireland**
See: http://www.eu2004.ie/templates/meeting.asp?sNavlocator=5,418,13&list_id=347
- **19-22/04/2004 – Plenary Session of the European Parliament**
See: http://www.europarl.eu.int/plenary/default_en.htm

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