



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 May 2003

Headline News:

Humanitarian principles under threat", says Poul Nielson (15/05/2003)

Recently back from a mission in Iraq, Mr Poul Nielson, European Commissioner in charge of Development and Humanitarian Aid, today warned that the core principles of international humanitarian law, namely humanity, impartiality and independence of action, are being eroded. "These principles have been agreed at international level to ensure that life saving support reaches the most vulnerable during an emergency. When they are compromised, it is the victims who suffer most. It is imperative to provide the space for humanitarian agencies to get on with the job which is already dangerous enough", he said. See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=qt&doc=IP/03/686|0|RAPID&lg=EN

Report: Commissioner Poul Nielson on humanitarian mission to Iraq (12/05/03)

See: http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/body/news/news_en.htm#1

Zimbabwe: Commission approves €13 million in humanitarian aid (14/05/2003)

The European Commission adopted a €13 million humanitarian aid package to support vulnerable people affected by drought and food shortages in Zimbabwe. The funds provided by the Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office, ECHO, under the supervision of Commissioner Poul Nielson, will help improve nutrition, food, water and sanitation levels and combat HIV/AIDS. The projects will be implemented by ECHO's partners working in the field. Including this latest decision, ECHO has committed €29.2 million to help combat the humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe since 2001.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=qt&doc=IP/03/684|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display

Commission regrets US decision to file WTO case on GMOs as misguided and unnecessary (13/05/2003)

The US earlier this week announced its intention to request WTO consultations on the EU's authorisation system for genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The European Commission regrets this move as legally unwarranted, economically unfounded and politically unhelpful. EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy said: "The EU's regulatory system for GMO's authorisation is in line with WTO rules: it is clear, transparent and non-discriminatory. There is therefore no issue that the WTO needs to examine. The US claim that there is a so-called 'moratorium' but the fact is that the EU has authorised GM varieties in the past and is currently processing applications. So what is the real US motive in bringing a case?"

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=qt&doc=IP/03/681|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display

Other News:

Launching of a new EU-Central America Political Dialogue and Co-operation Agreement (13/05/2003)

Against the background of the 19th San Jose Dialogue Ministerial Meeting that took place in Panama City, the EU and Central American countries opened a first round of negotiations (12-15 May) with the goal of concluding a new Political Dialogue and Co-operation Agreement. The decision to negotiate a new EU-Central America agreement was taken by Heads of State and Government at the Madrid EU-Latin America and Caribbean Summit in 2002.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=qt&doc=IP/03/673|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display

Europe moves into position to host ITER (13/05/2003)

Commissioner Philippe Busquin, responsible for research, presented a progress report to the Council of Ministers on the negotiations concerning construction and operation of ITER - the international fusion energy demonstration project. The international agreement to launch the operational phase of ITER, including selection of the site and the cost-sharing arrangements is due to be concluded by the end of 2003. (Also involved are China, the USA, Russia, Canada and Japan).

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh?p_action.gettxt=qt&doc=IP/03/670|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display

Cannes Film Festival 2003 and Commission join forces (13/05/2003)

The Cannes Film Festival and the European Commission are joining forces to organise for the first time this year a European Day, which will bring together Ministers of Culture and cinema professionals from the 15 existing Member States and from the new Member States to discuss ways and means of promoting European cinema and intensifying relations with other

world cinemas. European Day on 15 May will close with the award of the fourth edition of the EU's MEDIA Prize, set up to reward film distribution within the spirit of the MEDIA programme.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/667|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Energy, technology and environmental challenges: research predicts bleak world picture (12/05/2003)

In 2030 the world's energy consumption will have doubled; fossil fuels, namely oil, will continue to dominate as energy sources and carbon dioxide emissions will be nearly twice those recorded in 1990, according to research published by the European Commission. The "World Energy, Technology and Climate Policy Outlook" sets out for the first time ever a detailed picture of global challenges in this field expected in less than thirty years.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/661|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Côte d'Ivoire : Commission approves almost €6 million in humanitarian aid (08/05/2003)

The European Commission has adopted a €5.74 million humanitarian aid package to provide basic needs to vulnerable groups affected by the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire. The funds, made available by the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office, ECHO, under the responsibility of Commissioner Poul Nielson, will support food, health, nutrition, logistics, shelter and water/sanitation programmes. Humanitarian organisations operating in the region will implement the programmes.

See: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/653|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display=

Commission publishes draft new Chemicals Legislation for consultation (07/05/2003)

Enterprise Commissioner Erkki Liikanen and Environment Commissioner Margot Wallström presented new proposals to overhaul and modernise the EU's regulatory system for chemicals. Following discussion of their approach, the European Commission gave the go-ahead for an 8 weeks' Internet consultation on the draft chemicals legislation. The aims of the proposed new Regulation, which will replace 40 different pieces of current legislation, are to increase the protection of human health and the environment from exposure to chemicals while at the same time to maintain and enhance the competitiveness and innovative capability of the EU chemicals industry.

See: http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/646|0|RAPID&lg=EN

Ahead:

G8 Summit – Evian-les-Bains, France, 01-03/06/2003

At the G8 Summit the Heads of State & Government of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, the US, and the Russian Federation, together with the EU, meet informally to discuss issues relating to globalisation and to devise responses commensurate with the responsibilities that flow from their place in the world economy. France has proposed that one of the major themes of the summit is NEPAD. See: <http://www.g8.fr/evian/english/home.html>

EU Green Week 2003, 02-05/06/2003

Green Week is about bringing people together to debate, as a follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, key issues of sustainable consumption and production, renewable energy & climate change and water. See: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/greenweek/index_en.htm



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Great news for all fans of European films – the EU Film Festival is back.
One year after record audiences made it clear that this feature on the country's cultural calendar was a must, the EU again presents a film festival that will showcase films from all across the European Union.

Spokesman for the European Commission, Frank Oberholzer said, "We are particularly pleased that the festival, for the third year running, has expanded in size and this year will be run in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban. We feel that increased local exposure to the many European cultures is important, particularly in the light of the European Union and its Member States remaining not only South Africa's largest trading partner but also by far the country's biggest development partner."

Pretoria: Brooklyn Mall 09-15 May; **Johannesburg:** Rosebank Mall 09-15 May
Cape Town: Cavendish Square 23-29 May; **Durban:** Gateway 06-12 June

For film reviews & festival schedule, see: <http://www.sterkinekor.com/festivals/EuropeanUnionff/listing.asp>

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