



EUROPEAN UNION

Pretoria, 8 March 2011

## **Statement on the death of Mr Vernie Petersen**

It is with a profound sense of sadness that the Delegation of the European Union to South Africa received the sad news of the passing of Vernie Petersen, Director-General of the National Department of Sport and Recreation.

Mr Petersen's visionary and hands-on leadership contributed to the good relations between the European Union and the South African Government.

Recognising the power of sport to unite people and cultures, Mr Petersen welcomed the European Union's support for the South African Department of Sport and Recreation through the EU's funding of the Youth Development through Football (YDF) partnership ahead of the 2010 World Cup. YDF, using the medium of football, involves socially disadvantaged girls and boys in expanded life skills programmes and assists them in shaping their future – a fitting tribute to the efforts of Mr Petersen.

Our thoughts are with the former Director-General's family at this difficult time.

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