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Solidarity with Haiti



The European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs & Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, is coordinating the EU response to the earthquake in Haiti. Working under the strategic umbrella of the [United Nations](#), the EU is working closely with the [United States](#) and with others. The European Union has promised more than 420 million euros in aid to Haiti, of which 229 million will consist of humanitarian aid and immediate restoration after the earthquake. Ashton emphasised the importance of coordinating European and international actions to help Haiti, and next Wednesday will hold a meeting with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and UNO Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. The European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid, Karel de Gucht, will visit Haiti on the same day to assess needs.

For the latest on the EU's response to the disaster, visit the website:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/ashton/haiti/index_en.htm

[Solidarity with Haiti](#)

President Van Rompuy convenes meeting of EU Heads of State or Govt



Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, has held bilateral meetings with a number of EU leaders, and announced that he will convene a meeting of EU Heads of State or Government on 11 February to discuss three main issues:

- How the EU can best contribute to improving the situation in Haiti;
- Combating climate change; and
- Formulating a new EU economic strategy in the wake of the global economic crisis.

Following his meeting with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Mr Gordon Brown, on 19 January, President Van Rompuy said "*All of us have been deeply moved by the plight of Haiti and its people. The EU and its Member States have responded quickly, in order to alleviate suffering and restore minimum conditions for the population. The international conference for the reconstruction of Haiti will be central to this effort. On 18 January Baroness Ashton convened an Extraordinary meeting of the EU ministers to coordinate and strengthen help coming from all quarters in the EU. Pledges for human aid*

and reconstruction efforts of the EU and its Members states already amount to 420 million euros."

[President Van Rompuy's homepage](#)

EU & Iraq sign a Strategic Energy Partnership MoU

The European Union and the Republic of Iraq on 18 January signed a Memorandum of Understanding on a "Strategic Energy Partnership" which provides a political framework for reinforcing energy relations between Iraq and the EU. It also outlines priorities for future cooperation, taking into account the possible role of Iraq as a natural gas supplier for the Southern Corridor and that Iraq has the world's third largest proven petroleum reserves; Iraq could become an energy bridge between the Middle East, the Mediterranean and the EU. The Memorandum outlines the following areas of cooperation: development of an energy policy for the Iraqi people, energy security of supplies between Iraq and the EU, renewable energy and energy efficiency measures. In recent years the EU has significantly strengthened its relations with partners in the Middle East and North Africa and this policy is one element in diversifying EU energy imports. Full energy partnership means cooperation on elements that will make Iraq stronger by introducing energy demand management, energy efficiency and renewable energy.

[Memorandum of Understanding: EU-Iraq](#)

Europe 2020 strategy

European Commission President José Manuel Barroso, speaking at the European Parliament on 20 January, presented his vision for "**Europe 2020**" which will be formally outlined once the new Commission is confirmed.

Focussing mainly on the economy, but also on the follow-up to the Copenhagen conference on climate change, EC President Barroso reiterated the emphasis on offering ' *a clear direction towards a competitive, innovative, sustainable, socially inclusive market economy, able to prosper in the global marketplace,*' concluding " *This is how to make the best case for the European Union on the global stage: a European Union ready for action, with a clear vision for the future and a determination to get there. The more we are united and effective at home, the more our case will win through internationally.*"

[read full speech](#)

EU economic update



Euro area **annual inflation** was 0.9% in December 2009, up from 0.5% in November. A year earlier the rate was 1.6%. Monthly inflation was 0.3% in December 2009. The annual average rate of inflation in 2009 was 0.3%, down from 3.3% in 2008. EU annual inflation was 1.4% in December 2009, up from 1.0% in November. A year earlier the rate was 2.2%. Monthly inflation was 0.2% in December 2009. The annual average rate of inflation in 2009 was 1.0%, down from 3.7% in 2008.

The first estimate for the euro area (EA16) **trade balance with the rest of the world** in November 2009 gave a €4.8 bn surplus, compared with -€7.0 bn in November 2008. The October 2009 balance was +€6.6 bn, compared with -€1.2 bn in October 2008. In November 2009 compared with October 2009, seasonally adjusted exports fell by 0.4%, while imports rose by 0.3%. The first estimate for the November 2009 extra-EU27 trade balance was a €5.8 bn deficit, compared with -€24.4 bn in November 2008. In October 2009 the balance was -€4.8 bn, compared with -18.3 bn in October 2008. In November 2009 compared with October 2009, seasonally adjusted exports rose by 1.9% and imports by 1.5%.

[Read full report](#)

International Year of Biodiversity

The European Commission marked the opening of the International Year of Biodiversity with a paper setting out future options for biodiversity policy. Despite past efforts, species extinctions are continuing at alarming rates, and a new vision is required to halt these losses. The Communication proposes a long-term (2050) vision for biodiversity, with four options for a mid-term (2020) target – an essential step along the way towards reaching the vision. In this vision, biodiversity and the ecosystem services we get for free from nature are preserved, valued and, insofar as possible, restored for their intrinsic value, enabling them to support economic prosperity and human well-being, and averting any catastrophic changes linked to biodiversity loss.

Thorough discussions with Member States, European institutions and other stakeholders will now follow. These discussions will be launched at a high-level European conference on the "Post-2010 Biodiversity Vision and Target" hosted by Spain in Madrid on 26-27 January 2010 and will continue with the aim of reaching a high level agreement in the months to come. Based on this agreement and further work, the Commission will present, by the end of the year, a new EU biodiversity strategy aimed at reaching the agreed target.

[read more on Biodiversity](#)

Report on the efficacy of the list of banned airlines

Three years after the adoption of EU rules governing the establishment and update of the list of airlines banned from European airspace, the European Commission reported on their application. The review shows that despite the increase in traffic and the complexity of the single aviation market, the European Union has succeeded in maintaining a high level of aviation safety to the benefit of the travelling public. Safety however can never be taken for granted and constant effort is needed to maintain its high level in the changing operational and economic context of the global air transport industry. In this respect, the remit of Community legislation was extended in 2008 to crew licensing and aircraft operations (of both Community and third country operators). In 2009, it was further extended to safety aspects of aerodrome operations as well as the provision of air navigation services and air traffic management. The report is available on the Commission's website - http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air/safety/safety_en.htm

New candidate for European Commissioner

Rumana Jeleva this week withdrew her candidature for the position as Commissioner-designate for Bulgaria. Commission President Barroso took note of Mrs Jeleva's withdrawal and fully respects this personal decision. Bulgarian Prime Minister Borisov has in the meantime informed President Barroso of his intention to suggest Ms Kristalina Georgieva, currently Vice-President of the World Bank, as member of the European Commission, in place of Mrs Jeleva. President Barroso will meet Ms Georgieva as soon as possible, so he can consider the appointment. The process of the investiture of the new Commission should now continue and be concluded at the earliest opportunity.

[full statement](#)

New beef access to the EU for Australia

On 20 January, the European Commission announced that the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is authorised to issue certificates of authenticity under the new 20,000 zero duty import tariff quota for high quality beef, introduced as part of the resolution to the long running WTO beef hormones dispute with the United States.

This means that Australia is now able to send beef to the EU under this quota, as long as it can be demonstrated that the cattle have not been treated with hormone growth promotants at any time in their lives (i.e. were under the European Union Cattle Accreditation Scheme) and the beef is certified that it meets the specific product definition conditions specified in the relevant EC legislation establishing the quota.

National Europe Centre seeks Director

The Australian National University wishes to appoint an outstanding academic leader to hold the **Directorship** of the **National Europe Centre**. Applications are invited from women and men with a recognised record of achievement in any disciplinary field which addresses the research interests of the Centre. Applications for the position close 5 March 2010.

[download full details of position](#)

Europe Street at the National Multicultural Festival



Visit Europe Street at the National Multicultural Festival in Canberra on Saturday 6 February. It's a great opportunity to come along to see what Europe has to offer. As well as the European Union Delegation, the following Member States will participate: Bulgaria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and Sweden.
<http://www.delau.ec.europa.eu/News&events/Cultural/EuropeStreet2010/>

National Multicultural Festival 2010

Windows on Europe Film Festival



Don't miss the 5th annual Windows on Europe Film Festival, which commences in Canberra on 6 February 2010. Seventeen award winning films will be screened in Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane, Auckland and Melbourne. For the full programme, and information on all films, please visit our website:

<http://www.delau.ec.europa.eu/News&events/Cultural/FilmFestival2010/index.htm>

EU tube: History in the Making



EU Tube: Erasmus - Few, if any, programmes launched by the European Union have had a similar Europe-wide reach. Around 90% of European universities take part in Erasmus and two million students have participated since it started in 1987. The annual budget is in excess of €440million, more than 4,000 higher education institutions in 31 countries participate, and even more are waiting to join.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ljo1hDFOviQ&feature=channel>

[see EUtube](#)

Reminders: 2010 Jean Monnet and 2010 Erasmus Mundus

Call for Proposals under all three Actions of the **Erasmus Mundus** programme: Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes; Erasmus Mundus Partnerships; and Promotion of European higher education. To assist those submitting applications under the program, an **information day** has been organised on **22 January 2010** explaining the application process and documents, to take place in Brussels, and also broadcast live via webstreaming. The deadline for submission of applications under all three Actions is **30 April 2010**. More information:

<http://www.delau.ec.europa.eu/education/Erasmus/ErasmusMundus2010.htm>

The European Commission's **Jean Monnet** Programme is designed to increase knowledge and awareness about European integration world-wide. It encourages universities from **any country in the world** to set up teaching, research and conference activities on the European Union and on relations between the EU and other regions and countries. University-level institutions in countries outside the European Union are highly encouraged to apply. The deadline for applications is **12 February 2010**.

[Jean Monnet: further information](#)

European Union Delegation: publications available online



The following publications are available from our website. If, however,

you would like to receive hard copies of any of these publications, please send an email to delegation-australia@ec.europa.eu specifying the name of the publication(s) and the number you would like to receive.

[EU Insight: Education](#)
[EU Insight: Lisbon Treaty](#)
[European Union Australia Partnership Framework](#)
[EU Insight: Climate change](#)
[EU Insight: Economic relationship](#)

Upcoming events: Australia

20 years of the Peaceful Revolution and of the German Reunification
Exhibition, 30 Oct 2009 - 31 March 2010, Goethe-Institut Australien, Melbourne
<http://www.goethe.de/ins/au/lp/ver/vsy/en5000568v.htm>

[More events](#)

Upcoming events in New Zealand

Gateway to the EU in New Zealand <http://www.eu.org.nz/>

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