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Statements on Israel's military operation against Gaza flotilla



Catherine Ashton, European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/European Commission Vice-President, made a statement in Warsaw on 31 May, which reads in part:

"During the course of this morning, I have spoken to Israel's Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman to express our deepest concern about the tragedy that has happened. I have said there should be an immediate inquiry by Israel into the circumstances, and I have also taken the opportunity to point out, having visited Gaza, the importance of opening the crossings for humanitarian aid to go through, to ensure that ordinary people have a better existence than that which I saw. I express my condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives." [read the full statement](#)

Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, in Moscow for the EU-Russia Summit, expressed his shock and grave concern at the tragic events that took place, saying *"The ensuing loss of life is inexplicable. I would like to extend my sincere condolences to the families of the victims. Today we have a joint statement by High Representative Ashton and Foreign Minister Lavrov. I lend my full support to these statements on behalf of the EU, we regret the loss of life, condemn the use of violence, and demand an immediate, full, and impartial investigation. Above all, I appeal for a durable solution to be found to the situation of Gaza. I would also like to point out that the continued policy of closure is unacceptable and counterproductive. Finally, I would like to underline that peace in the Middle East must remain our ultimate goal. It is of particular importance, although the situation is more tense, that recently launched proximity talks continue."* [Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, on the Israeli military operation](#)

The EU and ASEAN move towards greater cooperation



Ministers and high representatives of the European Union and South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) met in Madrid on the thirtieth anniversary of the first cooperation agreement between the two regions, to take stock and to set ambitious goals for the future. The 27 countries of the EU and the 10 ASEAN nations presented their goals in a joint declaration, which highlights: *"taking into account Asia's resilience during the current crisis"* this region could be a major contributor to global economic growth in the coming years. [The EU and ASEAN move towards greater cooperation on a biregional and global level](#)

Global Climate Change Alliance regional conference for Asia



The Global Climate Change Alliance conference held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, was an opportunity for the EU to hear directly from Asian countries about the day-to-day challenges they face, and how financial support can help. In 2007, the EU launched the Global Climate Change Alliance, an initiative to strengthen cooperation and dialogue

between the EU and the developing countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, which allows the EU to fund measures that help developing countries adapt to climate change and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

The world's least developed countries and small island developing island states – which together account for more than 70 countries – are likely to be hit the hardest by rising tides and temperatures.

The two day conference on 30 and 31 May brought together representatives of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal and the European Union. An agreement signed by Bangladesh, Cambodia and the Maldives commits the EU to supporting concrete initiatives in each of the three countries. [Helping the most vulnerable cope with climate change](#)

Green Week: Europe's largest conference on biodiversity opens



Green Week 2010 began on June 1, with the opening in Brussels of Europe's largest annual conference on environment. This year's event, coinciding with the International Year of Biodiversity, will concentrate on the immense variety of species and ecosystems that make up the extraordinary web of life on our planet. Green Week 2010 will address the current state of biodiversity and nature, offering potential solutions to the current alarming rates of biodiversity loss. Events include a screening of the film *Dirt! The Movie*, and an audiovisual show featuring *Wild Wonders of Europe Outdoor Exhibition* which which tour Europe from May 2010 until 2012.

[Environment: Europe's largest annual conference on biodiversity opens in Brussels](#)

EC & UN call for taxation regimes to reflect impacts on the environment



The European Commission and the UN Environmental Programme this week launched a major new report highlighting the need for a radical change in the way major economies are using scarce resources. The report provides science-based priorities for world environmental efforts, ranking products, materials and economic and lifestyle activities according to their environmental and resource impacts. Major findings include the news that over half of all world food crops are now fed to animals, and that a doubling of wealth leads typically to an increase of environmental pressure by 60 to 80 per cent. The report, put together by the International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management, indicates that legislators and policymakers looking to make the most impact on the Earth's well-being should use taxes and other incentives to encourage more eco-friendly agricultural practices and reduce the use of fossil fuels.

Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik said: *"This report drives home the urgent need for a switch to a resource-efficient economy. It will be a titanic task, but one that is essential for our future prosperity and quality of life. If we really want to change the way we use resources, altering price signals through taxation is among the most efficient and effective approaches."*

[Environment: Calls for taxation regimes to reflect impacts on the environment](#)

Fall in EU greenhouse gas emissions for fifth consecutive year



The European Environment Agency this week published the latest EU inventory of greenhouse gas emissions showing that emissions fell again significantly in 2008, the first year of the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period. The fall marks the fifth consecutive annual decrease. Welcoming the news, European Climate Action Commissioner Connie Hedegaard said: *"With negotiations on a global climate agreement for the post-2012 era continuing, showing that Europe is able to deliver on our commitments under Kyoto is of paramount importance. The significant emission decreases we have achieved over the past five years clearly illustrate the value of binding targets. However, 2008 was only the first year of the Kyoto commitment period and all Member States need to continue their efforts to ensure they meet their targets for 2008-2012."*

The data was compiled by the European Environment Agency and has been submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). [Fall in EU greenhouse gas emissions for fifth year running](#)

EU calls on trading partners to remove protectionist barriers



recovery.

Almost 280 trade restrictive measures have been put in place by the European Union's major trade partners during the economic crisis over the last 18 months according to a report published on 31 May by the European Commission. Contrary to the G20 commitment, hardly any measures have been removed despite signs of economic recovery in most countries. The European Commission calls on trading partners to remove these restrictions in order to give a much needed boost to the

EU Trade Commissioner **Karel De Gucht** said: "*There is a risk that trade restrictive measures introduced by our partners during the crisis will become part of the trade regime even when the economy picks up speed. What we need now is an exit strategy from protectionism.*"

The European Commission has been issuing reports on the trade restrictive measures adopted by major trade partners since the beginning of the economic crisis. This monitoring mechanism has been important to prevent an escalation of trade protectionism during the downturn. The recent report covers the EU's thirty main trading partners over the period from October 2008 to April 2010. The protectionist measures range from classical trade barriers such as import bans or tariff increases to "buy national" and other behind-the-border policies. The report finds that many of the new barriers are rapidly becoming permanent features of the world trading system.

The report covers measures from the following countries/customs territories: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, China, Ecuador, Egypt, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Switzerland Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine, USA, Vietnam. [news release](#)

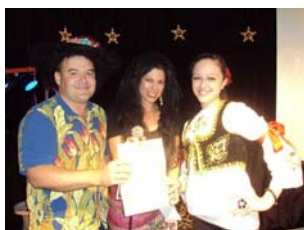
EU- Western Balkans Conference in Sarajevo



Speaking at the EU-Western Balkans High-Level Conference in Sarajevo on 2 June, European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy, Štefan Füle, said that the Western Balkans was a priority for the new EU external policy in the post Lisbon Treaty period. He spoke of the practical outcomes of the enlargement process, such as visa-free travel to the EU, which has already been achieved by the citizens of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, and has been proposed for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania. Accession negotiations with Croatia have stepped up a gear and are now entering a crucial phase, and Stabilisation and Association Agreements are being implemented throughout the region. Despite the difficulties currently facing the European Union "*We share the responsibility to ensure peace, stability and prosperity in the Western Balkans*" concluded Commissioner Füle.

[Štefan Füle European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy Address to EU-Western Balkans Conference EU-Western Balkans High-Level Conference Sarajevo](#)

Eurovision comes to Canberra



Canberra again welcomed Eurovision at Teatro Vivaldi at the Australian National University on Sunday 30 May, organised by the vivacious and charming Nina Markovic. Over 140 guests watched the screening of the final on big screens while enjoying a delicious dinner and joining in the laughter with the very politically incorrect comedian, of Arab-Australian origin, who cracked jokes at the expense of everyone in the world. The event was an overwhelming success with over \$600 raised for the National Breast Cancer Foundation.

Germany took out first prize in Eurovision, and one of Germany's favourite sons, Chris Loch, wearing a huge German hat and a big grin, took out one of the two prizes of a balloon ride over Canberra in the EU balloon. Milka Dragicevic, wearing Serbian national dress, took out the other balloon prize (see photo). The judges for the best-dressed man and woman prizes were Turkish, South African and Australian, so truly an international event!

There were prizes galore, with gift packages donated by the embassies of Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Italy, Norway, Turkey, as well as the major prize contributed by the European Union Delegation. A great time was had by all.

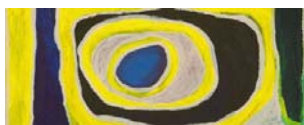
European Union's MEDIA program supports French-Australian co-production at Cannes



Twenty European films financed by the European Union's MEDIA programme were selected for screening at the 63rd Cannes International Film Festival, including six films in competition for the Palme d'Or Award. Chosen for closing night at Cannes was French-Australian coproduction *The Tree*, directed by Julie Bertucelli. Shot on location in Australia, this MEDIA-funded adaptation of Judy Pascoe's debut novel "Our Father Who Art in the Tree" tells a young girl's story of facing up to her father's death.

Eight out of the past ten Palme d'Or winners since 2000 have received support from the MEDIA programme, and there have been six Oscar winners since 1999. [read full release](#) and [winners supported by MEDIA](#)

European Museum dedicated to Australian Aboriginal Art



Utrecht in the Netherlands hosts the only museum in Europe entirely dedicated to contemporary Aboriginal art from Australia. The Museum of Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art is currently hosting an exhibition: *Aboriginal art today!* which provides all those who are keen to know more about this young and dynamic art movement a fascinating overview of the evolution of contemporary Aboriginal art from around 1970 right up to the most recent developments. It features artists who have become icons of Australian Aboriginal art such as Emily Kame Kngwarreye, John Mawurndjul, Rover Thomas, Trevor Nickolls and Michael Riley. [further information on AAMU](#)

Academic news and events

Applications for the **Go8-Germany Joint Research Co-operation Scheme** close on 30 June 2010. Since 2008 this scheme has provided over \$3 million to support research exchange, particularly for early career researchers, between Australia and Germany. The funding has supported 90 projects on issues ranging from renewable energy and emissions trading to ageing and integration of migrants. Further details including application and selection procedures and are available from the Go8 website at: www.go8.edu.au/university-staff/programs-afellowships/64-go8-germany-joint-researchco-operation-scheme

Criminal Justice Cooperation: Comparing European, United States, Asia-Pacific and Australian Approaches. 4 and 5 October 2010, University of Canberra (tbc). International conference, preliminary notice and call for papers. More information from <http://www.canberra.edu.au/faculties/law/crossing-borders-conference>

The ANU Centre for European Studies is offering a **PhD scholarship** for a student to undertake a doctoral program funded by a grant from the European Union. The project will support the Centre's aim to promote the study of the European Union in one of the following general areas: law, politics, history, culture, business, economics and Europe's role in the Asia Pacific. The applicant will hold an Honours Degree in a relevant discipline. The Scholarship is only open to Australian and New Zealand citizens and to Australian permanent residents. The Scholarship provides a tax free stipend of \$22,500 per year for three years. Applications close on 30 June 2010. Further information is available from Professor Paul Pickering 02 6125 3451 or paul.pickering@anu.edu.au or the website at <http://ces.anu.edu.au/>

EU tube:

Regional Policy for Real People (27 May 2010). Photographers Gaël Romier and Cécole Hesse talk about how regional policy has benefited their work. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8BG-5VnTbI>

[see EUtube](#)

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.

[Study in Europe 2010](#)
[Key Facts 2010](#)

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

Upcoming events: Australia

Touring French Film Festival June- 18 July 2010, venues and dates: AF Wagga Wagga 4 - 11 June, AF Sunshine Coast 2 - 4 July, AF Cairns 16 - 18 July. Also screening in Tamworth (18 - 20 June) and Orange (25 - 27 June). Refer to Alliance Francaise websites for full details <http://www.alliancefrancaise.com.au/>

Winter Lantern Walk – a German tradition held in Glebe Park, Canberra, hosted by Spielwelt German Parents Association. Sunday 20 June 6 to 7.30pm. Email spielwelt@homemail.com.au
 Far Away So Close - German Life and History in Australia: Exhibition, Sydney, until- 2 July 2010 . free entry . [further information](#)

HIJACKED 2 Australian and German Photography/Exhibition 11 June 2010 - 17 July 2010
 Australian Centre for Photography 257 Oxford Street, Paddington NSW 2021. free entry. [further information](#)

57th Sydney Film Festival, German films until 14 June 2010 - State Theatre, Dendy Opera Quays, George Street Cinemas, Sydney Opera House, AGNSW . Language: English subtitled
[further information](#)

Melbourne Winter Masterpieces: European Masters Städel Museum, 19th-20th Century Exhibition. 19 June 2010 - 10 October 2010, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, [further information](#)

Schrebergarten Exhibition until 30 September 2010, Goethe-Institut Australien, Melbourne. Free entry. [further information](#)

Meg Stuart & Philipp Gehmacher: **MAYBE FOREVER** .presented by the Malthouse Theatre and Goethe-Institut, Dance. 23 June 2010 - 26 June 2010, 7.30pm. Malthouse Theatre, Melbourne
[further information](#)

[More events](#)

Upcoming events in New Zealand

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

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