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◆ **Committee on Foreign Affairs**

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- 13 September 2005
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◆ **Subcommittee on Human Rights**

- 11 July 2005
- 12 September 2005

♦ **Subcommittee on Security and Defence**

- 4 July 2005 (Strasbourg)
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♦ **Committee on Development**

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♦ **Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs**

- 4 July 2005 (Strasbourg)
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- 13 July 2005
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**REGIONS:**

**AFRICA**

**♦ Burundi**

- ▶ **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on parliamentary questions in Burundi** (07.06.05)

**The European Union welcomes the peaceful conduct of the National Assembly elections in Burundi on 4 July.** These elections represent an important step in Burundi's transition towards democracy and durable peace. The EU congratulates the Burundian people who showed their commitment to ensuring a stable and democratic future for their country.

The EU further welcomes the work of the **European Union Observation Mission in Burundi** and its conclusions that **the elections were, despite some minor irregularities and allegations of fraud, generally in accordance with international standards.** The EU also acknowledges the key role played by the CENI (National Electoral Commission) in organising, and by ONUB and the international community in facilitating these polls. The EU commends the active role of the Regional Initiative and its strong political support to the holding of the elections.

**The EU calls upon all parties in Burundi to respect the results of these elections and to continue to demonstrate their commitment to democracy.** The EU urges the parties to refrain from any action that would negatively affect the electoral process or undermine progress made.

The EU reiterates its commitment to accompanying Burundi towards a successful conclusion to the transition and to building a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future (...)

[http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/85594.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/85594.pdf) (EN)

**♦ Sudan**

- ▶ **Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, welcomes the inauguration of Transitional Government of Sudan, and the signing of the Declaration of Principles on the Darfur conflict** (09.06.05)

Today **President Umar Hassan Ahmad al-BASHIR** and Vice-Presidents **Dr. John GARANG** and **Ali Osman al-TAHA** were sworn in at the ceremony inaugurating the **new transitional Government of Sudan** and marking **the beginning of the interim period stipulated in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed on 9 January 2005.** It is a historic moment and a start of a new era in Sudan, an era millions of Sudanese have longed for during decades of civil strife and authoritarian governance.

**The EU High Representative Solana** commends the Government of Sudan, the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), and all parties that have participated in the drafting of the transitional constitution for their efforts. He **encourages all parties to honour their respective commitments in the Comprehensive Peace agreement and implement it in good faith.**

The High Representative also commends the parties to the **Darfur talks in Abuja**, as well as the **African Union (AU) mediator, Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim**, for achieving **agreement on the Declaration of Principles** that opens the way for substantive negotiations. He appeals to the Government of the

Sudan as well as to the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) to **respond positively to the invitation of the AU** and resume negotiations on 24th August, with a sense of responsibility and urgency, so as to rapidly bring an end the conflict in Darfur and to the suffering of its people. Peace is indivisible, and it must be achieved everywhere in the country in order to make the Comprehensive Peace Agreement sustainable.

Mr. Solana reaffirms **the commitment of the EU to support the AU** in its resolve to address the conflict in Darfur, as well as to **assist the Sudanese Government and its people** in their efforts to build a peaceful, prosperous, and fully democratic Sudan.

[http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/declarations/85626.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/declarations/85626.pdf) (EN)

## AMERICAS

### ◆ Mexico

- ▶ **Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe meets Mexican Minister of Family Affairs** (04.07.05)

Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, met Ana Teresa Aranda, Mexican Minister of Family Affairs on 4 July. They discussed recent developments in the Mexican policy for **protecting children within the family**, as well as issues related to **trafficking and sexual abuse of children**. The Deputy Secretary General invited Mexico to participate in the activities organised in the framework of **the Council of Europe's Programme of Action on children and violence**, and informed the Minister of the forthcoming European Conference of Family Ministers, scheduled for 2006.

<http://www.coe.int/DEFAULTEN.asp> (EN)

### ◆ Nicaragua

- ▶ **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union concerning the situation in Nicaragua** (08.07.05)

The EU expresses its concern at the **political and institutional crisis** that Nicaragua is undergoing. In its view, any solution to the current crisis should be found in accordance with the rule of law and should respect the balance and independence of the powers of the State.

The EU recalls its **declaration of 1 November 2004** voicing its concern about the **independence of the principal institutions of the State from influence by political parties**.

The EU fully supports the efforts of the Secretary General of the **OAS** and the role of the Organisation in **fostering political stability** in Nicaragua.

The EU urges all political actors to **return to national dialogue** in order to reach a solution to the crisis. The EU expresses its concern about the effects of the political crisis on the maintenance of macro-economic stability and reiterates that **political stability is central to effective co-operation to fight poverty and to support social cohesion and economic development**.

The EU expects the **2006 Presidential and Legislative elections**, scheduled for November, to be held in **full transparency** and with **equal opportunities for all candidates**. All necessary measures should be taken from now on to ensure elections in accordance with international standards.

[http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/85621.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/85621.pdf) (EN)

## ASIA

## ◆ India

- ▶ Parliamentary questions: Role of human rights in the EU-India strategic partnership - oral question by Sajjad Karim to the Commission (04.07.05)

In February 2002, Hindu extremists instigated mass violence against the Muslim population of the Indian state of Gujarat, including rape, murder and the destruction of homes and businesses. In August 2004, the Supreme Court of India issued a key decision ordering that more than two thousand complaints and approximately two hundred cases, which had previously resulted in acquittals, be reviewed. Over one year since that decision, the perpetrators continue to walk free amongst their victims, whose lives were ruined by merciless and targeted violence.

Given that the **strategic partnership between the European Union and India** entails the pursuit of **dialogue on democracy and human rights**, what steps does the Commission plan to take to put pressure on the Government of India to fulfil its obligations under international law and bring to justice those responsible for the 2002 mass killing of two thousand Muslims in the State of Gujarat?

<http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/OM-Europarl?PROG=QT&L=EN&PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+QT+H-2005-0565+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> (EN)

## ◆ Tibet

- ▶ Council of the European Union: Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on Tibet (06.07.05)

The European Union **welcomes** the fourth round of **talks between the envoys of the Dalai Lama and members of the Chinese Government** that took place at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Berne, Switzerland on 30 June and 1 July 2000

The **EU strongly supports** the continuation of **dialogue** which it hopes will bring about serious **negotiations** leading to a **peaceful and sustainable solution for Tibet** that both sides agree upon.

[http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/85587.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/85587.pdf) (EN)

## EUROPE (OUTSIDE OF UE ) AND CIS

## ◆ Albania

- ▶ Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, welcomes overall peaceful conduct of elections in Albania (04.07.05)

Javier SOLANA, European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), made the following statement today on the conduct of general elections in Albania on Sunday 3 July 2005:

"I welcome that the elections yesterday, which registered a **high voter turnout**, took place in a **generally peaceful manner** in most parts of the country. I note, however, that the first reports refer to **certain shortcomings**. These shortcomings **must be investigated** and addressed so that they do not recur in future.

All political forces must continue to **refrain from premature conclusions on the outcome** and **await the results of the final count**, and should act in accordance with the **Code of Conduct** in **accepting the results achieved as a democratic expression of the choice of the Albanian electorate**. Any



disputes must be referred to the relevant Albanian bodies and their independent decisions must be fully respected. Looking forward to the **OSCE/ODIHR's final assessment**, it is important that the **next steps in the electoral process**, and any possible further campaigning, **fully comply with international standards and entirely respect the Electoral law and the Code of Conduct**.

I appeal to all democratic forces to work together in order to ensure that a new government based on a clear and strong European reform agenda can be formed in a rapid, smooth and democratic manner, and I look forward to a constructive working spirit in the new Parliament."

[http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/declarations/85574.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/declarations/85574.pdf) (EN)

## ◆ Turkey

### ▶ Commissioner Rehn defends "rigorous" framework for negotiations with Turkey (04.07.05)

Appearing before the **Foreign Affairs Committee**, **Enlargement Commissioner** Olli Rehn stressed that the framework for **accession negotiations with Turkey** proposed last week was the most rigorous ever. Drawing lessons from the previous round of enlargement, Mr Rehn said, "*the focus will be less on commitments and more on practice, less on words and more on deeds*". On the Commission's intention to go ahead with the opening of negotiations on 3 October, the Commissioner said that the EU is a community which adheres to its commitments and that "*pacta sunt servanda*". The conditions under which the decision to open negotiations was taken have not changed, he said.

The Commission has made it clear that the shared objective of the negotiations is accession by Turkey, but that the negotiations are by nature open-ended and the outcome is not a foregone conclusion. "*In other words: let us give Turkey the opportunity to prove itself*", Mr Rehn said.

In general, **MEPs were supportive** of the negotiation framework as proposed by the Commission - **which will have to be approved by the Council** - although a number of them did stress the need for **real and visible progress in the fields of human rights, women's rights, religious freedom and Cyprus**, as well as the need for a genuine application of the accession criteria.

In reply to questions, the Commissioner said that the **priorities in the negotiations will be respect of human rights** in general, **zero-tolerance of torture**, and **respect of the rights of non-muslim communities, women's organisations and trade unions**. As regards religious freedom, Mr Rehn stated that the Commission had signalled that the *Law on Foundations* currently before the Turkish parliament was deficient and that it might be better to postpone its adoption until it had been improved. He added that this will in fact be one of the core issues before negotiations start. (...)

<http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/sipade2?PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+PRESS+NR-20050704-1+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&L=EN&LEVEL=2&NAV=X&LSTDOC=N#SECTION1> (EN)

### ▶ Parliamentary questions: Statements by Mr Gül concerning the Patriarchate and the Halki School of Theology - oral question by Dimitrios Papadimoulis to the Council (07.06.05)

In statements made to the Turkish press on 27 June 2005, the **Turkish Foreign Minister**, Mr Gül, expressly **ruled out the possibility of the Turkish Government recognising the ecumenical nature of the Patriarchate** and made it clear that the issue of the Halki School of Theology **was being examined on the basis of current Turkish law, which meant that the School would not be re-opening**.

In the light of the **European Council's conclusions** of December 2004 and the **Commission's announcements** of December 2004 concerning Turkey's progress, which contained an **express reference to the religious rights of the non-Muslim communities**, what is the **Council's reaction to these statements by Mr Gül?**

<http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/OM-Europarl?PROG=QT&L=EN&PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+QT+H-2005-0575+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> (EN)

#### ◆ Romania

- ▶ **European Economical and Social Committee: Role of Romanian civil society should be strengthened before accession** (04.07.05)

The 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the EU-Romania Joint Consultative Committee (JCC), held in Tulcea, Romania, on 30 June/1 July, adopted a **joint declaration that calls for a number of important actions to be taken in the interim period before Romania joins the EU**. The role of the **social partners and organised civil society** should be strengthened before accession.

The JCC took stock of the important advances of Romania in several policy areas and **congratulated the Romanian government for the work done so far**. Nevertheless, the JCC calls upon Romania to strengthen the role of the social partners and organised civil society and to develop the role of its Economic and Social Council along the lines of the European model, in order to introduce a more democratic participation within the Romanian ESC.

Furthermore, it is vital **that Romanian civil society be properly informed about the pre-accession aid programmes**. The JCC calls upon the Romanian government to organise training sessions in that matter. Romanian **citizens should also be properly informed about their new rights as future EU citizens**. Organised civil society can play an important role in this information process. (...)

[http://www.ces.eu.int/press/cp/docs/2005/cp\\_eesc\\_85\\_2005\\_en.doc](http://www.ces.eu.int/press/cp/docs/2005/cp_eesc_85_2005_en.doc) (EN)

#### ◆ Bosnia and Herzegovina

- ▶ **Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, supports the detention of Aleksandar Karadzic** (07.07.05)

Javier SOLANA, European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), expressed today his **full support for the detention of the suspected Indicted for War Crimes (PIFWC) supporter Aleksandar "Sasa" Karadzic** who is one of the persons on a list of individuals subjected to an **EU visa ban**.

"I fully support the action taken this morning by forces of the multinational security presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina detaining the suspected Person Indicted for War Crimes (PI WC) supporter Aleksandar "Sasa" Karadzic.

All those indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia have to be in the Hague in front of the tribunal where they will stand a fair trial.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in all the Balkans region **there can be no reconciliation without justice.**"

[http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/declarations/85590.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/declarations/85590.pdf) (EN)

#### ◆ Kyrgyzstan

- ▶ **Declaration by the Presidency of the European Union on the Presidential elections of 10 July 2005 in Kyrgyzstan** (07.07.05)

The Presidency of the European Union has been following closely the preparations for Presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan on Sunday, 10 July 2005. **The Presidency of the European Union hopes that these elections will be held in a free, fair and peaceful manner in line with international standards**. A transparent election process will contribute to an easing of tensions in the country and provide a firm base for the further social, political and economic development of Kyrgyzstan.

The EU supports the ODIHR/OSCE Election Observation Mission and draws the attention of the Kyrgyz authorities to the interim reports published by the ODIHR/OSCE Observation Mission. **The Presidency of European Union appreciates the work which has been carried out to improve electoral standards in Kyrgyzstan**, including for example on voter education.

The Presidency of the European Union hopes that Kyrgyzstan takes this excellent opportunity to set a positive example to the rest of the region, demonstrating that it is possible to have both democracy and stability. The EU is strongly committed to supporting Kyrgyzstan in its pursuit of these aims.

<http://www.eu2005.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1107293561746&a=KArticle&aid=1119518951776&date=2005-07-07> (EN)

#### ◆ **Kazakhstan**

▶ **EU statement on Kazakhstan** (07.07.05)

The EU continues to monitor closely the situation of Uzbek refugees in the aftermath of the events in Andijan.

We are therefore deeply concerned by reports of the **detention on 4 July of an Uzbek national and human rights defender, Luffulla Shamsiddinov, by the Kazakh Migration Police**, apparently on the grounds that Mr Shamsiddinov is wanted by Uzbekistan for crimes related to terrorism. Mr Shamsiddinov and his family were given refugee status by UNHCR on 24 June. We are also concerned by reports that **UNHCR has been denied access to Mr Shamsiddinov**. In such cases we attach importance to unrestricted access for UNHCR.

The EU would like to request further information from the Kazakh authorities on the arrest of Luffulla Shamsiddinov. We also take this opportunity to **remind Kazakhstan of its international responsibilities in respect of the 1951 UN Convention on the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees**.

The EU also notes that **Kazakhstan has relevant international responsibilities under the UN Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT)**.

We would underline that we expect Kazakhstan to honour its commitments to UN conventions, which have primacy over regional and bilateral agreements, as well as its commitments to the standards of the OSCE. (...)

<http://www.eu2005.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1107293561746&a=KArticle&aid=1119519377604&date=2005-07-07> (EN)

### MAGHREB AND MIDDLE EAST

#### ◆ **Western Sahara**

▶ **Parliamentary questions: Situation in the Western Sahara - oral question by Richard Howitt to the Council** (07.06.05)

The EU has an extensive and **growing relationship with Morocco**, and therefore has a crucial ability to affect progress and to pressure Morocco to accept its international obligations. Can the Presidency explain **why the enormous leverage offered by that relationship is not used to push for progress in the unresolved dispute of the Western Sahara**, where **Morocco's illegal occupation** will this November reach its 30th anniversary and where hundreds of thousands of Saharawis suffer under occupation or in refugee camps, forgotten by the world, and where there have been credible and

disturbing recent reports of arrests and torture of Saharawi students and human rights activists in the occupied territory?

<http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/OM-Europarl?PROG=QT&L=EN&PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+QT+H-2005-0571+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> (EN)

## THEMATIC:

### JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

#### ◆ Children's Rights

- ▶ Council of Europe – Unicef: Fighting sexual exploitation and violence against children – speech by Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General (05.07.05)

We are here to design a strategy to fight one of the world's most terrible evils: violence against children. Violence has multiple faces (...) violence against children include killing, torture, ill treatment, abuse and sexual exploitation, trafficking, abandon and neglect. Although these behaviours entail obvious violations of children's human rights, **the crimes and their perpetrators often remain hidden and immune from prosecution.** (...) The initiative by United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan to appoint Paulo Sergio Pinheiro of **Brazil as the independent expert to lead a global study on violence against children is thus to be warmly welcomed.** (...) the UN system and civil society for appropriate action, including effective remedies and preventive and rehabilitative measures at national and international levels. **Violence may occur everywhere** (...) Our objective should be to reinforce the protection of those places and develop adequate prevention strategies. Eradicating violence needs strategic thinking and acting: A Council of Europe Programme of Action.(...) To multiply our chances of success, we need to carefully plan our strategy (...) I have been advocating the launch at the **Council of Europe of a Programme of Action on Children and Violence.** Because I am convinced that the Council of **Europe has the forces we need in order to defeat many evils.** (...) Our **2005-2007 Programme** sets an **agenda for Action.** Its core **objective is to protect children against all forms of violence and promote children's rights.** The Programme of Action aims to propose a coherent and comprehensive set of instruments and methodological tools which clearly link up the legal commitments made and the arrangements for fulfilling them. **Six specific objectives** have been identified: **1.** Directly involving children and young people in policies against violence **2.** Ensuring the application of European and international standards on the rights and protection of children **3.** Framing strategies for practical action relating to the various contexts and types of violence against children **4.** Framing national prevention strategies **5.** Making proposals for local integrated prevention strategies and **6.** Building awareness and spreading information on children's rights.  
[http://www.coe.int/T/E/Com/Files/Events/2005-07-Ljubljana/disc\\_sga.asp](http://www.coe.int/T/E/Com/Files/Events/2005-07-Ljubljana/disc_sga.asp) (EN)

#### ◆ Fundamental Rights Agency

- ▶ Joint Declaration by Council of Europe Secretary General Terry Davis and European Commission Vice-President Franco Frattini (06.07.05)

## **EU Fundamental Rights Agency is a topic for discussions between the European Commission and the Council of Europe**

Secretary General of the Council of Europe Terry Davis and European Commission Vice-President Franco Frattini (Justice, Freedom and Security) met yesterday **to continue discussions on the proposed European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and its cooperation with the Council of Europe**, as well as on joint action to organise a European Day against Death Penalty.

Vice-President of the Commission Franco Frattini and Secretary General Terry Davis said: "Ensuring respect and promotion of fundamental rights in Europe are common goals of our organisations. Human rights institutions, such as the proposed Agency are important tools to achieve these goals. **Within its sphere of competence, the Agency should bring added value to the work already undertaken by the Council of Europe.**"

They also noted that the Council of Europe will study the detailed proposals for the Agency which the Commission published on 30 June.

The Fundamental Rights Agency will be a centre of expertise on fundamental rights issues in the context of the European Union through **data collection and analysis as well as networking**. As such, it **complements the work of the Council of Europe**, in particular of its human rights mechanisms, which remains the major point of reference as regards human rights and the monitoring of human rights performance. Indeed, the Agency will build close institutional relationships with the Council of Europe.

[http://press.coe.int/cp/2005/379a\(2005\).htm](http://press.coe.int/cp/2005/379a(2005).htm) (EN)

## ◆ **Terrorism**

### ▶ **Statement by Vice President Franco Frattini on the London attacks** (07.07.05)

"I am shocked by the news about the dreadful events happened in London today. This unfortunately confirms that **terrorism is a permanent threat and has struck again at the very heart of Europe**. I express my deepest sympathy to the victims of these appalling acts and to the citizens of the United Kingdom in general.

However, I like to stress that this attack is not attack on the United Kingdom or its citizens only, but **an attack on the whole of Europe** and on all of us, all EU citizens. It is **an attack on all those who defend and promote human rights and our shared values of freedom, liberty, justice and security**. Along with my Directorate-General Freedom, Security and Justice, I am in constant contact with the British Authorities. I have already offered to them, and to my friend and colleague Home Secretary Charles Clarke in particular, every support and assistance they may find useful.

The **priority for the UK Presidency** in the area of justice and home affairs already identified is that of **security** and it is a priority which I fully share and on which it is necessary to make progress in the next 6 months. On behalf of the European Commission I confirm the **full commitment of the Commission to promote and accelerate concrete actions for preventing and reacting immediately to terrorist attacks**. Next week, on 13 July 2005, the Commission will discuss further measures on the fight against terrorism; in particular **a proposal for a terrorism related rapid response mechanism**, enabling the EU to respond more efficiently and in a coordinated way to terrorist attacks such as these happened today."

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/879&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en> (EN)

## ◆ **Immigration**

### ▶ **Charter flights to deport illegal immigrants** By Elitsa Vucheva, EU Observer\_(06.07.05)

Interior ministers from France, Germany, the UK, Italy and Spain agreed to organise **joint charter flights to deport illegal immigrants**, during their meeting in Evian, France on Tuesday (5 July).

Under the scheme, a charter airline, dubbed "**Asylum Airways**" by the UK daily the Times, and "**Migrant-air**" by the Guardian, will fly from country to country picking up illegal migrants. "We think that foreigners with no right or entitlement to be in our countries should not stay. They are in breach of our laws", French interior minister Nicolas Sarkozy said after the meeting, according to Le Monde.

The solution is to then send these people back home, he added.

This will contribute to **cutting deportation costs**, as sending the deported home on commercial airlines costs more than using a charter.

Mr Sarkozy had already made the fight against illegal immigration his priority during his previous term as interior minister from 2002 to 2004.

And he recently announced that he aimed to **increase the deportation of illegal immigrants from France by 50 percent in 2005 compared to last year**.

Mr Sarkozy suggested that the charter flights could begin within a few weeks, and the Italian interior minister Giuseppe Pisanu has even said that "it is a matter of days", according to the European press. Brussels commented on the five countries' initiative, underlying that "**it is the policy of these five countries, not of the EU**".

"It fits in" with an EU framework position however, and **justice and home affairs commissioner Franco Frattini welcomed the move**, his spokesperson indicated.

The commission had already suggested the idea of joint flights, and "in the next few weeks", **commissioner Frattini will propose a new directive for common standards for illegal immigrants and failed asylum seekers**, hoping that "this can be adopted very rapidly", the spokesperson added.

(...)

<http://www.euobserver.com/?sid=9&aid=19504> (EN)

## EXTERNAL RELATIONS

### ◆ Development

#### ▶ **Barroso floats new Euro-Africa pact** By Elisa Vucheva (05.07.05)

The president of the European Commission has **promised more aid for Africa** at the opening of an African Union summit on Monday (4 July), **according to Le Monde**.

Jose-Manuel Barroso said that "**European leaders have agreed on a new objective for the EU**", which will allow annual aid from the 25-member bloc to **increase by 20 billion euro by 2010, and 45 billion euro by 2015**. At least half of the aid is set to go to Africa.

And in autumn this year, the commission will put forward a "**comprehensive and long-term strategy for Africa**", it says in a press release.

The strategy will be discussed with the African Union and will provide a basis for a new Euro-Africa pact, with Mr Barroso calling for a Euro-Africa Summit to take place in Lisbon next year.

"There cannot be a credible Euro-Africa pact without the increase of financial solidarity between our two continents", he stressed.

On the eve of the G8 Summit in Gleneagles, the commission president also underlined the importance of Africa to Europe and said he intended to "encourage the world's other rich countries" to follow the European example.

And as "there can be no economic integration without physical interconnection", president Barroso announced that the commission would propose the creation of a **plan for African infrastructure**.

Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi who hosted the event struck a different note however, calling on African states to "stop begging" and saying "We are not going to beg at the doorsteps to reduce debt.

We are insulted constantly and we deserve it. We don't need assistance and charity", according to the Telegraph.

**Most African leaders do not share this position and are likely to keep up the pressure for more aid though**, the paper says.

**Erasing the debt of the poorest African countries, and aid to Africa in general, are to be discussed during the meeting of the leaders of the world's eight most highly industrialised countries (G8)**, starting tomorrow (6-8 July).

This is also a **hot topic for UK prime minister Tony Blair**, who is currently holding the **rotating EU presidency** and hosting the G8 summit, and who would like to see more aid to Africa.

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