

E-3211/10/EN

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs  
on behalf of the Commission  
(7.7.2010)

The Commission closely follows internal developments in South Africa, including the protection of children and the promotion of their rights.

The Commission is aware of reports in the media that children are being moved from urban to rural areas ahead of the World Cup. These concerns are linked to the broader issue of illegal settlements and their relocation.

The Commission regularly engages the South African authorities in a policy dialogue on human rights matters. Furthermore, in the overall context of the EU-South Africa Strategic Partnership, the EU and South Africa conduct regular political dialogue meetings at various levels. These fora provide an appropriate platform to discuss human rights issues as well as issues of concern regarding each other's domestic policies.

The Commission's development cooperation with South Africa aims at reducing poverty whilst furthering the democratic development of the country and supporting human rights. In the context of the World Cup, there is a particular EU-funded programme which should contribute to the improvement of the situation of disadvantaged youth by empowering them through culture, arts and sports activities. This programme is the Youth Empowerment through Culture and Sport Programme (YEP), for which the EU has committed EUR 10 million in 2009. The purpose of the Youth Empowerment Programme is to support the engagement of local authorities and community groups with disadvantaged youth, including them in the organisation of community life through the development of training modules/materials, training of sport coordinators, testing and dissemination of school football leagues, development of networks and organisation of "football for development" events before and after the FIFA World Cup 2010.

Vulnerable youth in the greater Cape Town area are also supported by the EU-funded project Youth Unlimited, with a budget of EUR 0.6 million. This project consists of a partnership between seven organisations aimed at reducing the impact of impoverishing conditions in black townships and informal settlements by providing young people with access to human and technical skills training that will assist them to become fulfilled, independent and responsible members of society.