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Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on Afghanistan

The European Union is following the situation in Afghanistan particularly closely. It wishes to express its support for the peace process initiated by the United Nations and would reiterate the importance it attaches to maintaining the territorial integrity and national independence of Afghanistan. It calls upon all Afghans to keep to a lasting ceasefire and to join in a spirit of compromise in the endeavours of Mr Mestiri, Head of the United Nations special mission for Afghanistan, to establish a national reconciliation plan in accordance with the Resolution adopted on 20 December 1994 by the United Nations General Assembly.

The European Union also regards it as important that external interference should cease. A contribution by countries in the region is essential in order to put an end to aid to the various factions. The European Union requests these countries to support Mr Mestiri's plan. These countries play a crucial role in facilitating the bringing of humanitarian assistance and development aid.

The European Union is aware of the situation of the population, particularly in the capital, and calls on the protagonists and neighbouring countries to allow food and medical aid to be brought quickly and without hindrance. Moreover, the persistent disorder in Afghanistan is encouraging an escalation of violence and an increase in the production of drugs. It constitutes a serious threat to peace and regional and world security.

When hostilities have ceased, the international community including the countries in the region will have a key role to play in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

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