

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the resumption of hostilities in Croatia

The European Union is deeply concerned about the resumption of hostilities in Croatia and asks that an immediate end be put to military operations.

The European Union expresses its most profound concern about the offensive of the Croatian armed forces in the Krajinas, which violates the UN Security Council Resolutions, has prevented further progress in the political negotiations the ICFY had convened in Geneva and risks extending the conflict.

The Union requests free access to the area for international organizations, without any obstacles, so that they can fulfill their missions with adequate security conditions.

Bearing in mind the decisions of the Council of 10 April and 12 June 1995, as well as the 27 June 1995 Cannes European Council warning, the Union has decided to immediately suspend negotiations on a trade and cooperation agreement with Croatia, as well as to suspend the implementation of the Phare programme for Croatia.

The European Union condemns the Krajina Serbs involvement in the attacks on the Bihac pocket, which have contributed to a dramatic worsening of the situation.

The Union calls on Belgrade to avoid participation in current operations.

The Union reiterates its conviction that dialogue and negotiation are the only ways of finding a just and lasting solution to the conflicts in former Yugoslavia and calls again on all parties to put an end to hostilities, to avoid the suffering of the civilian population and to resume the peace negotiations on the basis of the Z-4 plan. The Union strongly appeals to all parties to strictly abide by all rules of international humanitarian law laid down in the Geneva Conventions and strongly condemns the military actions that have already led to death and injuries of innocent civilians and UN peacekeepers.