

PRESS RELEASE

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**STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENCY ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
ON THE COUP D'ETAT IN SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE**

The European Union roundly condemns the military coup d'état which took place in São Tomé and Príncipe on 15 August 1995.

The European Union demands the immediate restoration of constitutional order and reaffirms its commitment to the universal values of human rights and the rule of law, which are the basis of democratic order.

An immediate return to constitutional legality is a pre-condition for the continuation of normal relations between the European Union and the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, including the cooperation and development programmes.

The European Union strongly condemns the conditions in which President Trovoada and his family are being held.

The European Union notes with interest the offers of mediation made by the African countries, particularly the initiatives of the Angolan Government, and hopes they will result in a negotiated solution which respects the rule of law and the values referred to above.