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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the Central African Republic**

The European Union welcomes the signing in Bangui on 25 January of the solemn declaration ending the rebellion, and the success obtained by the African mediation supported by the European Union in its declaration of 10 January 1997.

The Union hopes that the fact that African mediation, undertaken at the instigation of the Heads of State meeting at the Ouagadougou summit in December 1996, has proved successful in settling a conflict in the Central African region, will serve as an incentive for on-going mediation in other conflict situations, particularly in the same region, and for the involvement of African mediation in crisis situations throughout the continent of Africa.

The Union also congratulates the parties which signed the military and political agreements accompanying the declaration and expresses the hope that they will scrupulously honour the undertakings given and implement the provisions adopted, in order to achieve the lasting stabilization of the country and the national reconciliation essential if energies are to be channelled into resuming the country's development.

The Union is proposing to consider a resumption of aid as soon as the long-term normalization of the country's political and security situation is confirmed by application of the various measures planned.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated country Cyprus and the EFTA countries members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.