

PRESS RELEASE

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Statement by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the entry into force of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
with the Russian Federation

The European Union welcomes the entry into force of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the Russian Federation this coming 1 December 1997. The entry into force of the Agreement, which was signed at Corfu in June 1994, constitutes an historic event which marks a qualitatively new stage in relations between the European Union and the Russian Federation.

With this Agreement, the European Union is establishing with the Russian Federation a mutually beneficial partnership of trust which will help, inter alia, to consolidate the process of democratic and economic reforms and to improve respect for human rights in Russia. The Agreement also marks the integration of Russia into the European family and constitutes an instrument through which the European Union and the Russian Federation can together consolidate peace, stability and security on the European continent.

The European Union will energetically implement the provisions of the Partnership Agreement and hopes that the first Cooperation Council meeting can be held early in 1998.

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