



**EU-Presidency 1997-I / Royal Netherlands Embassy
Press and Cultural Department**

PRESS RELEASE

DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDENCY ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Presidency of the European Union has taken note of the decision of the Israeli Cabinet on March 6th to approve the first phase of the further redeployments. It is encouraging that this decision respects the timetable agreed upon in the framework of the Hebron Agreement.

The Presidency also notes the expression of concern by the Palestinian Authority as to the scope of the announced Israeli redeployment which the Palestinian side regards as insufficient.

The Presidency acknowledges this first phase of the further redeployments as a step that will have to be followed by significant steps towards the implementation of the Hebron Agreement and its connected documents.

The Presidency calls on both parties to do their utmost to maintain the momentum created by the Hebron Agreement in the interest of the peace process. For this it is of great importance that rapid progress is made towards a genuine implementation of the pending further redeployments and other outstanding commitments of the Interim Agreement.

The Presidency expresses its hope that both parties proceed to serious and substantial talks on the permanent status questions which are due to begin on the 17th of this month.

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20: H.A.S.

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Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

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