

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 situation in the FRY**

The European Union has noted with appreciation the report of the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Mr. Felipe Gonzalez and fully endorses the conclusions and recommendations therein.

The European Union attaches particular importance to the conclusion in this report that the results of the elections on 17 November reflect the will of the majority of the citizens of Serbia and that the coalition Zajedno has won the local elections in 13 cities, as well as in 8 municipalities and the Assembly of the City of Belgrade.

The Union notes the letter of Foreign Minister Milutinovic to the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, but calls on the authorities in the FRY, and in particular on President Milosevic of Serbia, to accept fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Personal Representative and act upon them without delay.

Following the conclusions of the European Council of Dublin, the European Union furthermore calls on the authorities in the FRY to enter into a constructive dialogue with the opposition and ensure the viability and availability of the independent media.

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The European Union reiterates its appeal to the authorities in the FRY to refrain from the use of force against peaceful demonstrators and journalists.

Recalling its declaration of 9 April 1996 setting out i.a. the conditions for the development of good relations with the FRY, the European Union reaffirms its position that only reform directed towards full democratisation and liberalisation of the political and economic system, in dialogue with the opposition, as well as respect for human rights and for the rights of minorities will bring a solution to the present problems and allow for the full integration of the FRY into the international community.
