

PRESS RELEASE

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the bombing of the Temple of the Tooth at Kandy**

The Presidency on behalf of the European Union strongly condemn the bomb attack on the Temple of the Tooth (Shri Dalada Maligama) in Kandy on Sunday 25 January.

This brutal and malign attack in blatant violation of the principles of international humanitarian law, severely damaged a Buddhist shrine which is revered by all Sri Lankans, whatever their faith, and is a precious part of the world's cultural heritage. It killed and wounded those intending to worship at the Temple, and the Presidency on behalf of the European Union express their sympathy to the Government of Sri Lanka and all those injured or bereaved. The attack seemed intended to provoke communal hostility and deter the Government of Sri Lanka from celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Independence.

The Presidency on behalf of the European Union firmly hope that efforts to reach a political settlement will continue and they appeal to all political and social groups, which have not yet done so, to commit themselves to a peaceful political solution.

The Presidency on behalf of the European Union send their congratulations to the President and People of Sri Lanka on the 50th Anniversary and their best wishes for the future of the Island.