

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 DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN ETHIOPIA**

The election of the President and Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the formation of a new government marks the end of the transitional period in Ethiopia which began in 1991.

Recognizing this important step in the country's history, the European Union conveys its best wishes to the new authorities and assures them of its commitment to continue and further develop relations of co-operation and political dialogue.

The European Union has taken note with satisfaction of the renewed commitment of the Ethiopian authorities to govern the country in conformity with the democratic principles and the respect for Human Rights enshrined in the constitution.

In this regard, as the Prime Minister himself has recognized, further progress needs to be made, and the European Union appeals:

- to the government, which now has all the necessary powers at its disposal, to do its utmost to achieve these goals;
- to all political forces, including the opposition and all elements of civil society, to participate peacefully in this process.

The European Union takes this opportunity to reaffirm its desire to see Ethiopia fully and definitively embarked on this path and will follow its development closely.

The European Union is furthermore of the view that the pursuit of liberal economic policies open to private sector investment, both domestic and foreign, is vital for the rapid socio-economic development of the country.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the Union align themselves with this declaration.