

Brussels, 7 May 1997

7804/97 (Presse 140)
P 42/97

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on Burundi**

The European Union welcomes the outcome of the summit meeting of regional Heads of State in Arusha on 16 April 1997 and confirms its support for their efforts. Its special envoy will continue to work in close collaboration with them.

The European Union condemns the atrocities committed daily against civilians and other violations of human rights.

In that context it has learned with consternation of the recent violence in the provinces of Makamba and Bururi, and in particular of the massacre of forty-three seminarists and staff members at the seminary in Buta carried out by armed rebels on 30 April this year.

It totally condemns that massacre and offers its condolences to the families of the victims and to those in charge of the seminary.

The European Union believes that such acts of violence, whoever they are committed by, seriously undermine the peace process in Burundi and therefore calls on all the parties in the conflict to renounce violence, publicly to repudiate the acts of violence committed daily in Burundi and resolutely to pursue a political settlement.

The European Union solemnly appeals to all Burundian leaders not to let themselves be tempted by the illusion of a military victory. It repeats its appeal for a ceasefire and an immediate and unconditional start on negotiations amongst all parties to the conflict in Burundi.

It also repeats its concern at the humanitarian situation in the "regroupement" camps and appeals to the Burundian Government to disperse those camps at the earliest opportunity.