

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 5 October 1998

11604/98 (Presse 324)
P. 118/98

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

The Latvian electorate has, by popular vote on 3 October, spoken out in favour of implementation of the amendments to the citizenship law adopted by the Saeima on 22 June 1998.

The European Union welcomes this farsighted decision which constitutes an important step towards further integration of all inhabitants of Latvia. The implementation of these amendments, which are in full accordance with the respective OSCE recommendations, will increase the possibilities for non-citizens, including stateless children, to acquire citizenship and become fully integrated members of Latvian society.

The result of the referendum is a vote in favour of a future-oriented approach promoting stability and is consistent with the principles and aims of the European Union. The European Union welcomes the fact that the decision of the Latvian electorate takes into account the political priorities enumerated in the Accession partnership. It is therefore of marked relevance to Latvia's relationship with the European Union.

The European Union will continue to cooperate closely with Latvia and to support the integration of non-Latvians into Latvian society.

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Instead of:

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the heading should read:

Declaration by the European Union on Latvia
