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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the agreement between Nicaragua and Honduras**

The European Union warmly welcomes the agreement between Honduras and Nicaragua, signed on 7 February in San Salvador in the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States, which provides for a set of measures aimed at building confidence and easing tension in the Caribbean. The EU also welcomes the decision by the two parties to submit to the International Court of Justice the dispute that arose following the ratification of the Ramirez-Lopez Treaty on the demarcation of maritime borders between Colombia and Honduras.

These decisions will play a part in sustaining stability in the region and will make it possible to consolidate the important results that have been achieved regarding political and economic integration in Central America.

The European Union once again calls on Honduras and Nicaragua to focus on the task of reconstruction and development of the region, in accordance with the declaration adopted by the Stockholm Consultative Group its meeting in May 1999.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the EFTA countries, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.