

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Brussels, 27 March 2000

7349/00 (Presse 88)

P. 36/00

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the election of Mr. Vladimir Putin as President of Russia**

The European Union congratulates Mr. Vladimir Putin on his election as President of the Russian Federation.

The European Union hopes that the election of Mr. Vladimir Putin will give a new impetus to the partnership relations between the Russian Federation and the European Union and reinforce the dialogue in all matters of common concern.

The European Union expects that Mr. Vladimir Putin will continue to move forward on the path of decisive economic and democratic reforms in the whole of the Russian Federation. In this context, the strengthening of the rule of law and the improvement of the investment climate in Russia are essential. The ending of serious breaches of the Partnership and Cooperation agreement would contribute to this aim.

The European Union trusts that the election of Mr. Vladimir Putin as President of the Russian Federation will lead to the achievement of a lasting and comprehensive political and peaceful settlement and for the respect of human rights in Chechnya, as referred to in the conclusions of the Lisbon European Council on 23/24 March 2000.

**Internet: <http://ue.eu.int/Newsroom>
E-mail: press.office@consilium.eu.int**