

Brussels, 23 August 2000
10771/1/00 REV 1 (Presse 286)
P 116/00

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the installation of the Constituent and Legislative Assembly
in the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

The European Union takes note of the installation of the Constituent and Legislative Assembly on 21 August 2000 in Lubumbashi.

However, it has decided not to attend the opening ceremony of the Assembly on the grounds that it is not certain that this new institution is compatible with the national dialogue provided for by the Lusaka Agreement.

The European Union reaffirms that the national dialogue is the basis for genuine reconciliation among the Congolese and an essential feature in resolving the current conflict. A number of Member States have provided financial contributions towards preparing for it, and the European Union has set aside appropriations for that purpose.

The European Union calls upon the members of the Constituent and Legislative Assembly to ensure that, in their proceedings, they do not prejudice the new political order and, in particular, the creation of the new transitional institutions which will have to be put in place according to the agenda for the national dialogue.

The European Union hopes that the functioning of the Constituent and Legislative Assembly will provide a positive contribution to preparing for the national dialogue without taking its place.

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.

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