

**P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

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**Declaration of the European Union on the coup d'état in Niger**

The European Union condemns the coup d'état that took place in Niger on 27 January 1996, interrupting abruptly the process of democratization launched in 1993 with legislative and presidential elections. The EU deplors the decision of the military to take over power, to overthrow democratically elected authorities and to suspend the constitution and political parties.

The perpetrators of the coup will be held responsible for the safety of the members of the legitimate authorities who are currently being detained. The European Union demands their liberation and the restoration of constitutional law.

In accordance with Article 366a of the Lomé Convention, the European Union has decided to suspend its development cooperation with Niger for a period of six months, except for humanitarian assistance and aid directly benefiting the poorest sections of the population.

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