

PRESS RELEASE

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**DECLARATION OF THE PRESIDENCY ON BEHALF OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION ON MOSTAR**

The European Union is firmly committed to achieving the objectives of the EU Administration in Mostar, as stated in the Memorandum of Understanding of 5 July 1994. The Union reaffirms its confidence in the European Administrator, Hans Koschnick, and fully supports his efforts to overcome present obstacles. The Union strongly condemns the recent inadmissible attacks against the EU Administrator and his staff, whose safety and role must be fully guaranteed by all parties concerned.

The Union recalls that on 14 January 1996 the parties asked for the arbitration of Mr. Koschnick on the implementation of the Agreement of 10 November 1995 concerning Mostar and that they committed themselves to accept his decision.

The European Union therefore deems that the decision on the delimitation of the municipal boundaries taken by the EU Administrator must be respected. Actions by the European Union will be in support of that decision and will be taken with the agreement of the EU Administrator. To this end the Presidency presented ideas to the parties on 11 February, previously agreed with the EU Administrator. As far as the provisions on the central zone of the city are concerned, the EU Administrator will envisage a gradual implementation of the return of refugees. This will however not affect the timetable planned for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding, namely as regards the holding of elections.

The European Union recalls the obligations for the parties arising from the Memorandum of Understanding on Mostar of July 1994 and the agreement of 10 November 1995. Such obligations bind not only the local parties, but also the governments of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, which have subscribed as witnesses to the agreement of 10 November 1995. The Union considers all the parties responsible for the evolution of the situation in Mostar.

The Union trusts that the authorities of the Republic of Croatia in particular will give full and concrete follow-up to their assurances that they are supporting the functioning of the European Administration.