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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union  
on Burundi: Arusha peace process**

The European Union welcomes the continuing talks within the Arusha peace process, intended to find a peaceful solution to the conflict within Burundi. The European Union considers this process as an essential option for reaching agreement. It has taken note of the resolve of the Government of Burundi, declared on several occasions, to conclude negotiations successfully in 1999. The EU encourages all parties to contribute constructively to this goal and underlines that agreement must be based on their willingness to accept compromise.

Regional states, by suspending their embargo against Burundi in January 1999, signalled their support for the talks.

Nevertheless, the European Union is deeply concerned about reports of continued violence by rebel groups and the security forces, causing numerous civilian victims. It appeals urgently to both sides to cease their acts of violence immediately.

Several EU Member States and the European Commission are providing financial support to the peace process. After nine months of negotiations, the EU urges the parties to organise the talks in a way that will help to achieve the desired result as soon as possible. On such a basis, the EU Member States and the European Commission are willing to consider favourably further financial support and appeal to other donors to act likewise.

The European Union is providing substantial support to Burundi. In response to positive political steps and in order to promote development in Burundi, the EU has expressed its willingness to assist in a more long-term manner to socio-economic rehabilitation and reconstruction. The EU underlines that such support is linked to a successful pursuance and accomplishment of the peace process.

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