

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 10 October 2000

12007/00 (Presse 359)

P 149/00

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on Côte d'Ivoire**

The European Union has taken note of the Supreme Court's published list of five candidates, out of nineteen, who have been approved to stand in the 22 October presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire.

The European Union reiterates that it has repeatedly declared its wish for a rapid transition and the proper conduct of elections. In particular the European Union has stressed the great importance of a free, open and transparent election process, especially in order to ensure that all political parties are treated fairly.

The European Union can therefore only regret a decision which, although within the sphere of responsibility of the Côte d'Ivoire judicial authorities, severely limits the choice open to Côte d'Ivoire electors and threatens the credibility of the elections on 22 October.

The European Union appeals to the sense of responsibility of all citizens of Côte d'Ivoire to ensure that the return to constitutional legality, pursuant to commitments entered into under the provisions of Article 366a of the Lomé Convention, takes place in an atmosphere of calm and in unimpeachable conditions.

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.

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