

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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**Declaration by the European Union on the presidential and senatorial elections
in Haiti**

The European Union takes note of the announcement by the Provisional Electoral Council of the election of Mr Jean-Bertrand Aristide in the presidential poll held in Haiti on 26 November 2000.

It deplores the fact that the presidential and senatorial elections on 26 November 2000 were preceded by a wave of violence, including a series of explosions which claimed many victims, killing two children in particular.

The Union regrets that the efforts of the Organisation of American States (OAS) did not lead to an agreement, particularly on two vital issues:

- setting up an independent Provisional Electoral Council, representative of the range of opinion in the country;
- addressing and resolving the disputes arising from the contested elections held on 21 May 2000.

The opposition refused under these circumstances to present any candidates, and no international observer mission could be organised.

The European Union stresses the need to respect human rights and democratic pluralism. It urges the resumption of dialogue amongst all sections of Haitian society.

The European Union points out that, following the refusal of the Haitian authorities to take account of the OAS's findings on the elections of 21 May 2000, it initiated the consultation procedure provided for in Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement in order to seek measures to remedy the situation, but it does not rule out the possibility of readjusting its cooperation with Haiti if no acceptable solution were to be found.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.

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