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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union  
on the conduct of the parliamentary elections in Côte d'Ivoire**

The European Union notes that the Ivorian parliamentary elections took place in an atmosphere of calm on 10 December - in those places where it was possible to hold them. However, it regrets that the ballot could not be held throughout the territory, leaving 29 seats unfilled out of a total of 225. It also regrets the acts of violence that took place during the days preceding polling.

The European Union considers the fact that a section of voters did not have the opportunity to voice its opinion to be detrimental to the return of democracy in Côte d'Ivoire. It hopes that the authorities will take all appropriate measures to create a climate conducive to the participation of all Ivorians in the electoral process, especially in the north of the country. It would encourage any initiative acceptable to all Ivorian political parties which allows the electoral process to be completed in accordance with the principles of democracy, transparency and fairness.

In this context, the European Union intends to initiate the consultation procedure provided for in Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement to determine the conditions of its cooperation with Côte d'Ivoire.

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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Internet: <http://ue.eu.int/Newsroom>  
E-mail: [press.office@consilium.eu.int](mailto:press.office@consilium.eu.int)