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**DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDENCY ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
ON INDEPENDENT MEDIA IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA**

"The European Union is gravely concerned about the recent decision which has led to the loss of independence of TV station Studio B in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as well as about the rumours of imminent negative measures against other independent information sources in the FRY. It is also strongly concerned for the recent withdrawal of the registration of the Soros Yugoslavia Foundation in Belgrade.

It deems that such initiatives are not consistent with the commitments undertaken by the Belgrade Government in the framework of the process of pacification and stabilization in the area, which imply behaviours respectful of democratic standards.

The Union underlines the great importance it attaches to the consolidation of democratic principles in all the countries of former Yugoslavia and, in this context, to the freedom of independent media, which is a basic element of a really democratic society.

Such an important aspect will have its weight in the development of future relations between the EU and the countries of the area."
