

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

Brussels, 19 September 2000

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131/00

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on Burundi**

The European Union,

referring to the agreement signed in Arusha on 28 August 2000 and to the declaration which it made on 29 August 2000:

- warmly welcomes the mediator's decision to hold a further session of negotiations in Nairobi on Wednesday 20 September with the participation of the Burundian Government, representatives of the rebel movements and those parties which have not yet signed the agreement but have undertaken to do so at the Nairobi meeting,
- points to the urgency of finalising a peace accord that has the wholehearted agreement of all parties in Burundi, without which there is no prospect of lasting national reconciliation,
- stresses the need for the political agreement to be swiftly consolidated by an immediate, general ceasefire if the political agreement is to be implemented, the country rapidly reconstructed and above all the fervent wish of all Burundians for the restoration of civil peace throughout the country to become a reality,
- therefore encourages the leadership of the rebel movements to respond to the mediator's invitation, and to his expectations and those of the entire international community, by taking part in the meeting with the Burundian Government and the others on the political scene in a constructive and responsible frame of mind, for the good of the Burundian people and of peace,
- urges all the countries which are friends of Burundi and all those whose advice Burundians value to work actively for the success of this important meeting for the future of the peace process,

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11421/00 (Presse 317 - G)

- reiterates its readiness to help this process succeed and to restore peace in Burundi, in particular through its aid for the rehabilitation and development of the country.

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.
