

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

Brussels, 30 July 1996

9455/96 (Presse 224)

P. 66/96

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the terrorist bomb attack in Sri Lanka**

The European Union condemns in the strongest terms the terrorist bomb attack which took place on 24 July 1996, on a train at the Dehiwela railway station, near Colombo and which has claimed the lives of many innocent civilians. The European Union extends its sympathy to the Sri Lankan Government and to all those bereaved and injured during this and other recent violent events in Sri Lanka.

The European Union, deeply concerned about the recent terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka, urgently appeals to the LTTE to enter into political negotiations with the Sri Lankan authorities as quickly as possible, with a view to reaching a peaceful political settlement to the tragic ethnic conflict. The European Union remains of the view that the Sri Lanka Government's wide ranging proposals for constitutional reforms at present under discussion in the Sri Lankan parliament could constitute a solid basis for a peaceful solution.

Iceland, Norway, the Central and European countries associated with the European Union and the associated countries Cyprus and Malta align themselves with this declaration.