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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of
the European Union on the elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The European Union welcomes the fact that elections have taken place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that no serious incidents of violence were reported during the poll. Preliminary reports indicate that a large majority of the Bosnian people availed of the opportunity to exercise their vote on 14 September.

The European Union congratulates the Provisional Election Commission and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe for their work in supervising preparations for and overseeing the election process.

The European Union also commends the very important contribution to the process which was made by the International Implementation Force (IFOR) and the UN International Police Task Force (IPTF) in relation to security issues and freedom of movement.

It is important now to await the final assessment of the coordinator for international monitoring, Mr. Van Thijn, on the conduct of the elections, and the decision of the Chairman of the Provisional Election Commission, Ambassador Frowick, on their validity.

It will then be vital that those who have been elected move quickly to establish the common institutions of the state and the European Union fully supports the efforts of the High Representative, Carl Bildt, to ensure a smooth transition over the coming weeks. The European Union urges all parties to cooperate fully in these efforts and to ensure the full implementation of the constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The European Union reaffirms its commitment to making a major contribution to efforts to consolidate peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the crucial period which lies ahead.