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**DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDENCY**  
**ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**  
**ON THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION**

The European Union welcomes the deposit by Hungary on 31 October of the 65th instrument of ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The European Union has on numerous occasions, including at the highest political level, underlined the importance it attaches to the early entry into force of this Convention. All Member States of the Union reiterate their firm commitment to being original states parties to the Convention when it enters into force on 29 April 1997, one hundred and eighty days after the 65th ratification. In the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in the Hague, the European Union will continue to prepare for the entry into force and full and effective implementation of the Convention.

The Chemical Weapons Convention is the first multilaterally negotiated disarmament agreement which bans an entire category of weapons of mass destruction in a verifiable manner. Its entry into force will be a landmark event in the disarmament process. The European Union therefore calls on all states that have not yet done so to sign and/or ratify the Convention. It is important that all possessor states, particularly the two declared possessor states, the United States and the Russian Federation, as well as other states with significant chemical industries and states in areas of tension be among the original states parties at entry into force.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union and the associated countries Cyprus and Malta and the EFTA countries members of the EEA align themselves with this declaration.