

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

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the recent general elections in Nicaragua**

The announcement by the Consejo Supremo Electoral of Nicaragua of the official results of the national elections of 20 October 1996, which took place in a correct and calm fashion and to which the European Union (EU) sent a mission of 93 observers, concludes an important phase in the history of Nicaragua.

The EU offers its sincere congratulations to the President-elect, Dr. Arnaldo Aleman, and expresses the hope that under his mandate Nicaragua will continue to consolidate its democracy and advance its economic and social development.

The EU wishes to congratulate all parties which participated in the elections for the respect for democratic principles and the adherence to the norms of the Nicaraguan electoral law. The EU hopes that the results will be accepted by all in order to foster a climate of national reconciliation. The EU welcomes the willingness expressed by President-elect Aleman to cooperate with all political forces for the benefit of the country.

The EU offers its respects to the Consejo Supremo Electoral for its endeavours in managing a complicated electoral process, and for the efforts to overcome the difficulties involved and encourages Nicaragua to continue to strengthen the functioning of the electoral system.

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The EU congratulates the Nicaraguan people for the enthusiasm with which they exercised their rights of suffrage, and for the exemplary civic responsibility they displayed in waiting to vote on polling day, and in waiting for final results in the period since 20 October.

The European Union takes this opportunity to reiterate its support for institutional reform, social and economic development and the inclusion of Nicaragua in the international economy.

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