

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 Togo**

The European Union has duly noted the request for financing by Togo for the parliamentary elections on 14 and 28 October 2001. It welcomes this decision as a new and important step forward likely to improve relations between the European Union and Togo. A decision has therefore been taken to send a fact-finding mission from 9 to 16 July 2001. As it has already stated, the European Union is prepared to consider support to an electoral process that will help to ease the political situation in Togo, in accordance with procedures laid down in the Lomé Framework Agreement signed on 29 July 1999.

The European Union's support could complement the resources of the Independent National Electoral Commission in accordance with the terms of the electoral code approved by all the parties to the intra-Togolese dialogue. The European Union reiterates its wish that the ballot should take place in conditions of maximum transparency and equity. It points out that this will contribute to a resumption of European cooperation with Togo, whatever the choice of the Togolese people, and undertakes to prepare the conditions for such resumption forthwith.

The facilitators of the intra-Togolese dialogue, whose mandate was extended by a Council decision of 14 May 2001, will continue to monitor the process under way.

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.