

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 escalation of violence in the Middle East

The European Union expresses its deep concern at the upsurge in violence in the Middle East.

It condemns both the latest car bomb explosions in Yahud in the suburbs of Tel Aviv and the extrajudicial execution by Israel of 3 Palestinian militants.

With regard to the latest developments in Lebanon, the European Union refers to its statement of 18 April 2001 and also condemns the renewed attacks by Hezbollah on Israeli positions in the Shebaa farms sector and the Israeli's army's launch of missiles against a Syrian radar station in Lebanon.

The European Union urges all parties to show the utmost restraint and to work resolutely to break the spiral of violence, the main victims of which are civilians.

The European Union is convinced that negotiation offers the only solution to the problems that beset the region and considers that all possible steps must be taken to implement in full the recommendations made in the report of the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee (Mitchell report), starting with a strict observance of the cease-fire.

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