COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
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Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the peace process in Guatemala

1. The European Union welcomes the "Encounter for Peace" convened by the "Comission de Acompanamiento" as a further expression of the joint efforts by different sectors of Guatemalan society to promote the implementation of the Peace Agreements. The EU congratulates all those involved with the achievements so far in the peace process.

2. The peace process started more than ten years ago hand in hand with the process of democratisation. The end of the armed conflict and the signing of the Peace Agreements were brought about by the efforts of various successive governments in cooperation with social, economic and political organisations. Equally, the implementation of the Peace Agreements requires the joint efforts of all sectors of Guatemalan society for a sustained period to turn the agreed measures and objectives into lasting reality, including full respect for human rights, equal opportunities for the indigenous population, reform of the judicial system, fiscal reform, and reconciliation based on truth, among others.

3. The EU has fully committed itself to support the implementation of the Peace Agreements, whilst recognising that the bulk of the efforts to eradicate the underlying causes of the armed confrontation have to be shouldered by the Guatemalans themselves. The EU stands ready to continue its efforts to help bring about the profound changes needed to secure lasting peace on the assumption that Guatemala is fully prepared to go ahead with the peace process.

4. The EU therefore calls upon all Guatemalans to clearly commit themselves to the continuation of the peace process and to full implementation of the Peace Agreements.