

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 Democratic Republic of Congo**

On 16 July 1999, the European Union expressed its willingness to support the Lusaka Agreement provided that the parties themselves complied with the terms thereof. It again declares itself firmly resolved to support implementation of the agreement, in its various components, including the Joint Military Commission and the national dialogue, the peace-keeping operations by the UN and the OAU, the reintegration of refugees and displaced people in their countries of origin and the process of democratisation, rehabilitation and reconstruction in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The European Union remains concerned at the slow pace at which the main provisions of the Agreement are being applied and at which the bodies and mechanisms for implementing it are being established. It urges the parties to support this fragile peace process and to avoid returning to conflict.

The European Union welcomes the fact that the first meeting of the Joint Military Commission, a key element of the Lusaka Agreement, is to be held on 11 October 1999 and is considering the possibility of providing it with financial support as soon as it is able to function.

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