

PRESS RELEASE

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the situation in Somalia**

The EU notes with concern the recent outbreak of conflict in Mogadishu, lower Shabelle, Puntland and other parts of Somalia and calls upon all parties to exercise maximum restraint in order to avoid further bloodshed and create a climate conducive to national reconciliation.

The EU renews its appeal to the Transitional Government (TG) to pursue its efforts towards national reconciliation along the lines of the EU declaration of 8 September 2000 with a genuine spirit of compromise, by peaceful means and with due respect to all entities that have achieved a certain degree of stability.

The EU also stresses the importance of the UN arms embargo (UN resolutions 733, 751 and 1356) on Somalia and calls upon all parties involved to fully respect this embargo. At the same time the EU recalls the UN Presidential Statement, adopted on January 11th 2001 by the UN Security Council, which insists 'that all States should refrain from any military intervention in the internal situation in Somalia and that the territory of Somalia should not be used to undermine the stability in the subregion'. The EU believes that such interventions could jeopardize the sovereignty, political independence and unity of Somalia.

The EU welcomes the creation of the National Committee for Reconciliation and Return of Property, as foreseen in Article 30/1/a of the Transitional Charter adopted in Arta. The EU calls on the TG to create the conditions for the National Committee for Reconciliation and Return of Property to operate in an independent manner. The EU encourages all parties of Somalia that have not participated in the Arta process to enter into dialogue, including via this Committee, with the same genuine spirit of compromise and with a view to advancing and completing the reconciliation process among all Somalis.

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11218/01 (Presse 303 - G)

The EU also encourages IGAD and its member states to enhance their efforts towards encouraging the process of reconciliation in Somalia, on the basis of the achievements of the Arta conference so as to assist the Somalis to achieve peace and national reconciliation.

Finally, the EU wishes to draw the attention of all parties involved to the need and the obligation for a guaranteed safety of all humanitarian agencies, and its personnel, operating in Somalia.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus and Malta, and the EFTA countries, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.
