

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 situation in FYROM**

The European Union firmly condemns the violation of the ceasefire in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It urgently appeals for calm and for the full restoration of the ceasefire.

The European Union reiterates once again that it is only through dialogue and negotiation that a lasting solution can be found to the difficulties which the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is currently experiencing. It enjoins the parties concerned to relaunch negotiations and to show the necessary spirit of compromise.

The European Union reiterates its full support for the new mission in Skopje today by the High Representative, Mr SOLANA, who will be accompanied by the Secretary-General of NATO, Lord ROBERTSON and the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Mr GEOANA. All the parties, which are now more than ever faced with their responsibilities, must conclude negotiations and agree on the necessary political reforms.

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The European Union reiterates its attachment to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It hopes for continued rapprochement between FYROM and the European Union, in the context of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
