

Brussels, 26 July 2000

10583/00 (Presse 277)

P 109/00

**Presidency declaration on behalf of the European Union**  
**on the trial of Miroslav Filipovic**

The European Union wishes to express its support for Mr Miroslav FILIPOVIC, an independent Serbian journalist, correspondent for Danas and various other European media and news agencies, who has been held in Nis military prison since the middle of May and on 26 July was sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment by the military court in Nis for having exercised his profession as a journalist.

The European Union deplores the Yugoslav authorities' refusal to receive a local EU Presidency delegation before the end of the hearing, as had been requested. The Presidency had been instructed by the EU to make representations for Mr FILIPOVIC's release and for access by EU representatives to his trial.

The European Union condemns in the strongest terms Mr FILIPOVIC's imprisonment, his trial, the conditions in which it was held, behind closed doors by an expeditious procedure, and the verdict, which marks a further escalation in the repression of the independent press in Serbia and in the flagrant violations of press freedom by the Belgrade régime.

It would point out that freedom of expression, the right and the duty to impart information freely and the right to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal are basic human rights laid down in a great many international texts, of which the foremost is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

---

Internet: <http://ue.eu.int/Newsroom>  
E-mail: [press.office@consilium.eu.int](mailto:press.office@consilium.eu.int)