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### **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on Fiji**

The EU is encouraged by the recent decision by Fiji's caretaker government to hold elections under the 1997 Constitution beginning on 27 August 2001. The EU calls on the caretaker government to ensure that this timetable is adhered to and that preparations for these elections are started well in advance.

It is vital that these elections are free and fair and that all elements of Fijian society work together in a spirit of reconciliation to restore inclusive democratic rule in Fiji.

The EU will continue to closely monitor progress towards elections and is desirous to pursue the co-operation with Fiji on the basis of the Cotonou Agreement.

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