

PRESS RELEASE

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**DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDENCY
ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S OBJECTIVES
AND PRIORITIES REGARDING BURUNDI**

The European Union's objectives and priorities regarding Burundi are to consolidate the process of national reconciliation and a return to normal democratic life, in particular by restoring the rule of law, and to promote the economic and social recovery of the country.

Following the appointment, by the President of the Republic of Burundi, of Mr Nduwayo as Prime Minister and the forming of a new Government, the European Union wishes them both every success in their task.

The European Union is however still concerned at the way the political situation is developing and the worsening of security conditions in Burundi. That concern prompted it to send a mission to Bujumbura on 10 and 11 February 1995.

The European Union is determined to give strong backing to the "Government Convention" concluded on 10 September 1994 with provisions forming the institutional framework for necessary national reconciliation, and would urge all political parties, military forces and sectors of civilian society to respect and implement it in a spirit of dialogue, moderation and compromise.

The European Union supports the action being taken in Burundi by the international community, and in particular by the United Nations Organization and the Organization of African Unity, and is resolved to step up the efforts which it is already making to help strengthen stability in Burundi.

The European Union is therefore prepared to:

- assist the Burundi Government in organizing a "national debate" of the kind provided for by the "Government Convention" with the participation of all sectors of the Burundi nation in order to consolidate national reconciliation and reconstruct democracy,
- help strengthen the action already being taken by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, inter alia by a support to the sending of experts as provided for in the 1995/90 Resolution adopted on 8 March 1995 by the United Nations Commission for Human Rights,

- contribute to restoring the rule of law and strengthening the Burundi legal system, inter alia by giving help with the training of magistrates,
- in view of the role which could be played by an International Commission of Enquiry into the attempted coup in 1993 and the massacres which followed, the European Union hopes that the United Nations will be able to adopt a position quickly on the request submitted to it by the Burundi Authorities,
- it also pays tribute to the action taken by the OAU, which it hopes will be extended further and is prepared to support.

The European Union is convinced that the economic and social recovery of Burundi will facilitate a return to stability and its consolidation for the future, and it would like a round table of donors to be organized swiftly with the participation of international institutions and all countries which are friends of Burundi.

The European Union is also prepared to help implement and follow up the action plan adopted by the regional conference on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in the Great-Lake region held in Bujumbura from 15 to 17 February 1995.

By way of support for the Burundi Nation in its search for peaceful and democratic solutions, the European Union would encourage all partners to take any measures they deem necessary against extremist elements in Burundi in order to prevent them travelling abroad and receiving assistance.

The European Union is aware of the close links which exist between the various humanitarian and political problems facing the region and the considerable danger of destabilization which persists, calls for the organization of the conference on peace, security and stability desired by the United Nations Security Council and reiterates its strongest support for all forces in Burundi which are working towards peace, dialogue and national reconciliation.