

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 9 August 1995

9388/95 (Presse 242)

P. 75/95

**DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDENCY ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
ON SRI LANKA**

The EU from the outset supported the government of Sri Lanka in its efforts for a peaceful settlement of the ethnic issue.

The EU has already condemned the breaking of the cessation of hostilities agreement by the LTTE on 19th April. A real chance to reach a negotiated settlement was then missed.

In the wake of the bombings that took place on the 7 August, the EU deplores once again the loss of life and destruction resulting from the war and urges both the government and the LTTE to make every effort to avoid civilian casualties.

The EU welcomes government assurances that its aim remains a lasting and honourable political settlement and urges all parties to recognize quickly that this is the only route to lasting peace.

In this context, the EU warmly welcomes the government's efforts to draw up a set of devolution proposals aimed at satisfying the aspiration of all Sri Lankans. The EU hopes that the far-reaching proposals the government has set out will be considered carefully and constructively by all parties. This could open the way for an early return to peace, normality and development throughout the entire country.

The Central and Eastern European Countries associated with the Union align themselves with this declaration.