

PRESS RELEASE

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the issue of the author Salman Rushdie**

The European Union expresses its satisfaction at the clarifications by the Iranian Foreign Minister Kharrazi on 24th of September 1998 in New York with regard to the position of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the issue of the author Salman Rushdie.

The European Union welcomes the assurances given by the Iranian Government that it has no intention to take any action whatsoever to threaten the life of Salman Rushdie and those associated with his work, nor to encourage or assist anybody to do so and that it disassociates itself from any reward offered in this regard and does not support it.

The European Union has long sought satisfactory assurances in that respect and considers them a very positive step by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran which removes an impediment to better relations between the European Union and Iran and enhances the prospects of closer cooperation to be discussed through the renewed dialogue.

The European Union has taken due note of the proposal made by President Khatami at the UN General Assembly regarding year 2001 as "Year of Dialogue among Civilizations".