

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on Slovakia**

The European Union welcomes the clear commitment of the Slovak electorate to the democratic process as expressed in the high level of participation of voters in the parliamentary elections held on 25 and 26 September 1998. It takes note with satisfaction of the preliminary assessment by the OSCE observer mission that the elections as such were carried out in an apparently correct and acceptable manner.

The European Union welcomes the acceptance of the election results by all political parties and appreciates preparations to form a stable government committed to the rule of law, democratic principles and the stability of political institutions. It calls upon all political forces involved, including the present government, to adopt a constructive attitude.

The European Union recalls its longstanding commitment to the process of integration of the Slovak Republic. The manner in which the parliamentary elections were conducted constitutes a positive step towards the integration of the Slovak Republic into European structures. Bearing in mind the political priorities enumerated in the Accession Partnership, the European Union encourages the future government and parliament of the Slovak Republic to rapidly address those shortcomings which have so far hampered the Slovak Republic's accession process, thereby renewing its dynamism.