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**Statement by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
concerning second round of the Presidential elections held in the Republic of Croatia
on 7 February 2000**

The European Union congratulates Mr. Stipe Mesic on his election as President of Croatia which brings to an end a chapter in Croatian history and marks the beginning of a new era for the country.

Following Mr. Mesic's recent positive statements the EU looks forward to the support he will give to the necessary internal reforms, to the new relationship with neighbouring countries and to bringing his country closer to full integration into European structures.

While recalling the EU Declaration on Croatia of 24 January, the European Union reiterates its willingness to work very closely with the new authorities, namely with its new president-elect, in their quest for making Croatia a full fledged member of the "Euro-atlantic community".

The European Union also congratulates the people of Croatia for the calm and orderly manner in which they expressed their democratic will.

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