

PRESS RELEASE

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**Declaration by the European Union
and the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe,
the associated country Cyprus
and the EFTA countries members of the European Economic Area
on progress towards a legally binding protocol to strengthen compliance with the
Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC)
and the intensification of work in the Ad Hoc Group to that end**

The associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the associated country Cyprus and the EFTA countries members of the EEA, declare that they share the objectives of the Common Position defined by the Council of the European Union on 4 March 1998 on the basis of Article J.2 of the Treaty on European Union, relating to progress towards a legally binding protocol to strengthen compliance with the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) and the intensification of work in the Ad Hoc Group to that end. They will ensure that their national policies conform to that Common Position.

The European Union takes note of this commitment and welcomes it.