

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

Brussels, 15 May 2000

8390/00 (Presse 150)

P 63/00

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on Sri Lanka**

1. The European Union is deeply concerned about the increasing intensity of the conflict in Sri Lanka and the serious effect this is having on the country, its people and its economy.
2. The EU calls upon both parties in this tragic, long-running conflict to cease hostilities and begin negotiations with a view to securing a peaceful resolution of the conflict.
3. The EU reminds both parties of their responsibility to ensure the safety of the civilian population in conflict zones, in particular in the Jaffna Peninsula.
4. The EU joins the UN Secretary General in urging both parties to cooperate with the Norwegian Government in its endeavours to facilitate a negotiated settlement of the conflict.
5. The EU regrets the restrictions on civil liberties and press freedom under the emergency regulations introduced by the Sri Lankan government, and calls on the government to lift them as soon as possible.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and Iceland and Liechtenstein, EFTA countries members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this declaration.

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