

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

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU
concerning the seizure of Studio B by the Serbian Government**

The EU Presidency is dismayed by the Serbian Government's intensification of the repressive action on media, opposition forces and civil society.

The EU Presidency strongly condemns the seizure of the premises of the TV Station Studio B on Wednesday 17 May 2000. This seizure also impedes the work of Radio B292, Radio Index and the newspaper BLIC, leaving the citizens of Belgrade with no access to independent electronic media.

The EU Presidency expresses its full support to the independent media, their journalists and employees and encourages them to continue their important task. Reporting freely and independently in Serbia is an act of democracy and public service.

In contrast, the Serbian Government's flagrant measures to block free media constitute an unacceptable denial of the right to freedom of expression and clearly demonstrate the wishes of the Government of the FRY to continue the path towards total isolation, despite the democratic aspirations of the Serbian people.

The EU Presidency urges the Serbian Government to reverse its decision to control Studio B and to enable Radio B292, Radio Index and Blic to continue their work.

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