

**PRESS RELEASE**

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

The European Union expresses its grave concern about the persisting impasse in the Angolan peace process and in the implementation of the 1994 Lusaka Agreements, which have resulted in a serious deterioration of the overall political, military, security, social and economic situation in Angola. The EU deeply regrets that, in spite of several public appeals, including by the UN Secretary-General and the UN Security Council, it has not been possible to avoid major fighting in the central part of Angola. Only a political solution through the full and unconditional implementation of the Lusaka Protocol and relevant UNSC Resolutions may bring a lasting peace to Angola and avoid more suffering of her people. Therefore, the EU urges the parties to refrain from military actions.

Clearly, the main responsibility of this situation is to be attributed to UNITA and its leadership under Dr. Savimbi, which has unjustifiably failed to demilitarise its forces and facilitate the extension of state administration throughout the national territory (its main commitments under the Lusaka Protocol), in defiance of the pressing demands of the Security Council and the international community.

The EU reiterates its urgent appeal to UNITA to implement unconditionally and without further delay its commitments under the Lusaka Protocol. It further urges UNITA to withdraw immediately from territories which it has reoccupied through military or other action.

Against this background, the EU regrets the increase in minelaying activity in Angola, a country that so far has been a major focus of the Union's demining efforts in Africa. The EU calls on the Government of Angola as a signatory of the Ottawa Convention and particularly on Unita to cease minelaying activity immediately and to ensure that valid records exist so that these weapons can be removed.

14456/98 (Presse 461 - G)

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In the present situation, the EU stresses the importance of maintaining strong international pressure on UNITA, particularly through the effective and universal application of the measures decided upon the organisation by relevant Security Council Resolutions, as a means to lead UNITA to comply with its obligations. The EU will look at ways to improve the implementation of existing UN sanctions against UNITA and stands ready to consider what further measures against UNITA might be adopted by the UN Security Council.

The EU encourages all Angolan political forces and members of the civil society who favour peace and democracy to unite their efforts to ban violence and consolidate a peaceful and democratic Angola that dedicates its main energies to the welfare of its people.

The EU remains convinced of the continued need of a strong UN involvement in Angola and welcomes the recent decision of the UN Security Council to extend the mandate of MONUA until 26 February. It calls on the Government and UNITA to assist the Special Representative of the UNSG, Mr. Issa Diallo, in fulfilling his mandate for the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, and remains ready to support the UN Secretary General, his Special Representative and the Troika of observer countries in their task to bring that Protocol to a successful conclusion.

The Union finally appeals to the Government of Angola and in particular to UNITA to respect human rights and to cooperate with MONUA and the humanitarian organisations in the delivery of emergency relief assistance and to guarantee the safety and freedom of movement of their personnel, as well as access to affected populations. The EU reiterates its will to continue to provide humanitarian aid to the victims of the conflict, the people of Angola.

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

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