

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

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

On the occasion of the second Brussels Meeting of the Consultative Group on Guatemala, the European Union congratulates the Guatemalan people, its constitutional and political representatives and all sectors of civil society on their efforts to implement the Peace Accords.

The Union especially welcomes the recent approval in Congress of constitutional reforms. The Union hopes that they will be endorsed by popular vote and encourages the State and society of Guatemala to continue the process towards the full implementation of the Peace Accords.

The Union believes that the Peace Accords bind all Guatemalans and strongly encourages all sectors to contribute to the achievement of their targets, in particular in the socio-economic fields. The attainment of the major fiscal goals and progress towards the establishment of a more equitable tax system will be considered as important indicators for Guatemala's commitment to the peace process.

12120/98 (Presse 350 - G)

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Concerned about unresolved cases of violent crimes, in particular the still unresolved murder of Bishop Gerardi, and human rights violations, the Union calls upon the competent authorities of Guatemala to renew efforts to ensure a full investigation and bring those responsible to justice. The Union believes that strengthening the judicial power will be essential to end impunity.

Trusting in the will and ability of the people of Guatemala to meet the historic challenge, the Union reaffirms its active support for the peace-process and its solidarity with all Guatemalans committed to it.

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