

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

Brussels, 17 July 1998

10396/1/98 (Presse 255)
P 76/98
REV.1

Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the Report of the UN Inquiry into Human Rights Violations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire)

The EU is gravely preoccupied with the findings contained in the Report of the UN Secretary General's Investigative Team charged with the inquiry into violations of human rights and humanitarian law in Zaire/the Democratic Republic of Congo; and welcomes the UN Security Council Presidential Statement of 13 July. The EU strongly condemns all massacres and other atrocities committed before, during and after the military campaign which led to the overthrow of the former Zairian regime.

The European Union is concerned about the difficulties the Investigative Team encountered in carrying out its task and supports the recommendation that further investigation of alleged atrocities should be carried out. Recognising that the Governments of the DRC and Rwanda stressed in their reactions the incomplete and inconclusive nature of the report, the EU urges both Governments to make a clear commitment to allow an independent and thorough inquiry without further delay. The EU is looking forward to such a commitment and will follow closely its implementation.

The EU welcomes the UN Secretary General's decision to convey the Report to the members of the International Panel of Eminent Personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide and Surrounding Events, established by the Organisation for African Unity. The EU looks forward to any recommendations of this panel regarding the completion of the investigation into human rights violations in the region.

The EU stresses the importance of putting an end to impunity if reconciliation and lasting peace is to be achieved in the Great Lakes region. Investigating all allegation of human rights violations and bringing those responsible to justice are indispensable parts of these efforts.

10396/1/98 (Presse 255 - G)
REV. 1

EN

Without prejudice to the need for the completion of an independent inquiry, the EU urges the Governments of the DRC and Rwanda to investigate within the framework of their own judicial systems the allegations contained in the report of the UN Secretary General's Investigative Team, and to bring to justice those responsible for crimes against humanity and other violations of human rights and humanitarian law. In this respect, the EU welcomes the commitment of the Government of the DRC to carry out its own inquiry. The EU is ready to provide technical assistance to support this initiative.

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