

**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 the re-election of President Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia**

The European Union congratulates Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze on his re-election as President of Georgia.

The European Union hopes that the tenure of Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze in office will contribute to the stability and to the furthering of political, economical and judicial reforms, with a view to establish a democratic and market oriented society in Georgia.

The European Union expects that the re-election of Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze will promote the partnership between the European Union and Georgia.

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The European Union regrets nevertheless that the electoral process did not take place in accordance with the commitments given by Georgia as a participating state of the OSCE and the Council of Europe. Moreover, the European Union regrets that Georgia has not yet implemented in this regard the conclusions of the Cooperation Council of October 1999 and of the Cooperation Committee of February 2000.

The European Union notes the OSCE statement on preliminary findings and conclusions on the Presidential elections in Georgia issued on 10 April 2000. In this context, the European Union deplores the serious irregularities in the conduct of these elections, including instances of ballot stuffing, media bias, lack of transparency in vote counting and tabulation as well as the multiple obstacles faced by international observers. These elections stressed the need for Georgia to further the reform of its electoral system in close cooperation with the OSCE.