

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

Brussels, 15 April 1996

6403/96 (Presse 86)
P. 34/96

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the Situation in the Middle East**

The European Union expresses grave concern at the recent increase in tension in Galilee and Lebanon which has already led to serious material damage and innocent victims. The EU hopes that the recent explosion of violence in the region will not result in a chain reaction which could bring about new crises; and will not threaten the Peace Process, the continuation and reinforcing of which are of the greatest importance to the Fifteen.

While reaffirming its commitment to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425, the EU calls on all parties to show the greatest moderation and to cease military activities, in the conviction that violence assists only the enemies of peace. The EU also calls on all parties to the Peace Process, each using the influence at its disposal, to contribute to reducing tension in order to create a more relaxed climate, in the interests of all the people in the region.