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DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDENCY
ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
ON BURMA

The European Union is deeply concerned at the continuing deterioration of the political situation in Burma (Myanmar). It expresses continued strong concern with regard to restrictions on the fundamental rights of freedom of speech, movement and association.

The EU reiterates its call upon the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) to implement without delay respect for Human Rights. It strongly urges the SLORC to release, immediately and unconditionally, those members of the National League for Democracy (NLD) who are still detained, including Mr Aye Win and Mr Win Htein, and all other political prisoners. In addition, the EU calls upon the United Nations Special Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and Imprisonment to visit Burma.

The EU calls upon the SLORC to enter into meaningful dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other representatives of pro-democracy groups as well as with national minorities in Burma to bring about national reconciliation and democratic reform respecting the aspirations of the Burmese people as expressed in the elections of May 1990.

The EU expects a full and satisfactory explanation from the Burmese authorities of the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the death in custody, on 22 June 1996, of the late Mr James Leander Nichols, who had served as honorary consul for several European States. The EU calls for an investigation by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Myanmar into the death of Mr Nichols.

The EU urges all parties in Burma to refrain from actions which would cause a further deterioration in the situation.

The EFTA countries members of the EEA, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland and Romania align themselves with this declaration.