

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 demobilisation of ethnic Albanian armed groups
in the Presevo Valley area**

The European Union welcomes the commitment by representatives of ethnic Albanian armed groups to full demobilisation in Southern Serbia (Presevo Valley area), signed yesterday by UCPMB Commander Shefket Musliu. This move is an encouraging step towards a non-violent settlement of the situation in the Presevo Valley. The EU urges all individuals concerned to fully respect this commitment and to hand over their weapons to KFOR and return to civilian life.

The EU encourages FRY/Serbian authorities and ethnic Albanian representatives to continue their constructive talks held in recent days in order to consolidate the implementation of confidence building measures, including the early establishment of a multi-ethnic police force. The EU expects that outstanding issues concerning ethnic minorities in the Presevo Valley area, including the return of displaced persons and the integration of ethnic Albanians in political economic and social structures, will continue to be addressed in a serious manner after the return of Yugoslav forces to Sector B.

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