



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

**Czech Presidency of the EU**

22 April 2009

*For Immediate Release*

**DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDENCY ON BEHALF OF THE EU ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN FIJI**

**The European Union notes with great concern recent developments in the Republic of the Fiji Islands following the decision on 10 April 2009 to abrogate the Constitution.**

The EU calls on the relevant Parties in Fiji to comply with commitments previously made to the EU and to the wider international community, to work towards the early return to full civilian democracy in Fiji.

The EU expresses concern about the wellbeing of the ordinary citizens from communities and attaches the highest importance to respect for the Constitution of the Republic of the Fiji Islands. The EU calls on the political leaders, and all other actors, to act with respect for democratic principles and the independence of the judiciary and freedom of the media. It is also important for Fiji that democratic elections be held as soon as possible.

The EU underlines the need for genuine, inclusive and transparent dialogue with all relevant stakeholders. The EU confirms its decision of 1 October 2007, which stipulates that under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement, an enhanced political dialogue will be conducted with Fiji to ensure the respect for human rights, restoration of democracy and respect for the rule of law until both parties conclude that the enhanced nature of dialogue has served its purpose.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia\* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Montenegro, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

\* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

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"The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".

**The European Commission is the EU's executive body.**