



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**EN**

Brussels, 20 November 2009  
16393/1/09 REV 1 (Presse 345)  
P 131

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union  
on the occasion of the installation of President Hamid Karzai**

The European Union congratulates President Hamid Karzai on assuming office for a second consecutive term and welcomes the commitments made to the Afghan people in his inauguration speech.

The European Union emphasises that these commitments now need to be turned into action and developed into a contract with the Afghan people. The President and his new Government must show the way forward and deliver rapid and tangible results focused on improved security based on Afghan sovereign responsibilities; improved governance at all levels through institutional development and decisive action against corruption and drug trafficking; promotion of economic growth, including agricultural development, peace and reconciliation and increased stability through regional integration and cooperation.

Serving the Afghan people by improved protection of human rights, especially for women, access to justice and better access to social services should form part of the contract. In this context the EU underlines the importance of improved higher education and vocational training, in addition to support to primary and secondary education. Training the Afghans for the future will also give the people hope of a better outlook.

**P R E S S**

The European Union welcomes the fact that in his speech President Karzai reached out to his political opponents to achieve national unity. The challenges in the country require political consensus.

The European Union looks forward to a rapid formation of a cabinet and agrees with President Karzai that ministers need to be appointed on their merits, have integrity and a professional approach to serving the nation.

The European Union underlines the imperative need to review and improve the implementation of the electoral system, based on the lessons learned from the 2009 elections, before the elections in 2010. Recommendations from the observation mission, notably the EU EOM, could provide the basis for such a review.

The European Union expresses its readiness to continue to support the Government of Afghanistan and its commitments to the people of Afghanistan. In order to do so, the EU will step up its engagement in line with its recently adopted Plan for Strengthened EU Action.

The Candidate Countries Croatia\* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as 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.