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S T A T E M E N T

by the Spokesperson on the Central African national reconciliation forum

"The European Union welcomes the signing, by all the parties involved, of the cessation of hostilities agreement on 23 July, at the close of the Central African national reconciliation forum in Brazzaville. It hopes that this commitment will be honoured at all levels and implemented rapidly on the ground, for the benefit of the people and the development of the country.

This agreement owes much to the determination and efforts of the mediator in the Central African crisis, President Sassou Nguesso, together with regional leaders, the African Union and the United Nations. The European Union commends the strong involvement of the Central African authorities and their efforts to ensure inclusiveness, which allowed the key players in the country and the parties to the conflict to be widely represented at the forum.

The forum in Brazzaville represents an important first step in a process in which all stakeholders must resume and deepen the dialogue in order to achieve genuine national reconciliation and set the country on a sustainable path out of the crisis.

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The European Union will continue to accompany this process and supports the transitional Head of State, Catherine Samba-Panza, in her efforts aimed at political dialogue and national reconciliation that are steering the transition towards elections that meet international standards in the best possible conditions."
