

# DECLARATION ON THE 'GUIDELINES ON THE RECOGNITION OF NEW STATES IN EASTERN EUROPE AND IN THE SOVIET UNION' (16 DECEMBER 1991)

In compliance with the European Council's request, Ministers have assessed developments in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union with a view to elaborating an approach regarding relations with new states.

In this connection they have adopted the following guidelines on the formal recognition of new states in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union:

*The Community and its Member States confirm their attachment to the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris, in particular the principle of self-determination. They affirm their readiness to recognize, subject to the normal standards of international practice and the political realities in each case, those new States which, following the historic changes in the region, have constituted themselves on a democratic basis, have accepted the appropriate international obligations and have committed themselves in good faith to a peaceful process and to negotiations.*

*Therefore, they adopt a common position on the process of recognition of these new States, which requires:*

- respect for the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the commitments subscribed to in the Final Act of Helsinki and in the Charter of Paris, especially with regard to the rule of law, democracy and human rights*
- guarantees for the rights of ethnic and national groups and minorities in accordance with the commitments subscribed to in the framework of the CSCE*
- respect for the inviolability of all frontiers which can only be changed by peaceful means and by common agreement*
- acceptance of all relevant commitments with regard to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation as well as to security and regional stability*
- commitment to settle by agreement, including where appropriate by recourse to arbitration, all questions concerning State succession and regional disputes.*

*The Community and its Member States will not recognize entities which are the result of aggression. They would take account of the effects of recognition on neighbouring States.*

*The commitment to these principles opens the way to recognition by the Community and its Member States and to the establishment of diplomatic relations. It could be laid down in agreements.*