



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **OSCE Permanent Council No 1156 Vienna, 31 August 2017**

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### **EU statement marking the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances**

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Yesterday, we marked the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances. In this context, the European Union would like to reaffirm its strong commitment to the prevention of enforced disappearances, which constitutes a serious violation of human rights that guarantee, inter alia, the right not to be subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Our international commitments are clear: Any forms of torture and ill-treatment are unequivocally prohibited, under all circumstances, and without exceptions.

We remain seriously concerned about the fate of people subject to enforced disappearance in the early 2000s in Turkmenistan's prisons, and we call on the Turkmenistan Government to acknowledge this problem and to take action on the outstanding cases. On August 10, yet another victim of enforced disappearances, the former head of the Security Service of the President of Turkmenistan, died in prison. The fate of the other disappeared people in Turkmenistan's prisons remains unknown.

We are also deeply concerned that – despite clear international norms – we continue to receive reports of enforced disappearances in other parts of the OSCE region. In addition, previous cases of disappearances have failed to be addressed, causing impunity, thus denying justice and effective remedy to the victims.

In light of persisting challenges, we encourage all participating States to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, adopted 10 years ago this year, and to take practical steps to combat enforced disappearances. This includes effectively investigating

allegations of enforced disappearances, bringing perpetrators to justice and providing proper redress to the victims and their families.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE align themselves with this statement.

\* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.