

## **STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 959th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

Vienna, 4 June 2013

### **Regarding the promulgation by President Putin of the law on propaganda advocating non-traditional sexual relations**

The European Union expresses its deep concern at the definitive adoption of the draft law on propaganda advocating non-traditional sexual relations following its promulgation by President Putin.

It recalls in this regard the wording of the statement by the spokesperson of the High Representative Catherine Ashton on the draft law on 20 June 2013: "... this law could stigmatise particular groups and individuals and lead to discriminatory practices and discourse against them, and is therefore in contradiction with the European Convention on Human Rights." The implementation of the law could also have an "impact on the activities of LGBTI organisations in Russia, also in the context of the on-going pressure on civil society in the country."

The European Union recalls that the commitments in the human dimension of the OSCE such as freedom of expression, freedom of opinion and freedom of association apply to all persons without distinction. These freedoms should not be subject to restrictions other than those provided for by international law. The European Union likewise underscores that the commitments that we undertook together in Copenhagen in 1990 call on all participating States to ensure that "the law prohibits any discrimination and guarantees to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground."

The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Montenegro<sup>1</sup> and Iceland<sup>2</sup>, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the European Free Trade Association country Norway align themselves with this statement.

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1 The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

2 Iceland continues to be a member of the European Free Trade Association.