



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1050 Vienna, 7 May 2015

EU Statement on political prisoners in Belarus

The European Union deplores the decision by a Belarusian Court to extend political prisoner Mikalay Dzyadok's prison term by one year for allegedly violating prison rules and the rejection of his appeal. Mr Dzyadok was due to be released on 3 March 2015. The prolongation of his sentence just before his release was particularly capricious and cruel.

We also deplore the decision of a Belarusian court of 4 May to toughen the punishment of Mykola Statkevich.

The importance the EU attaches to the question of political prisoners in the context of EU-Belarus relations remains unchanged. We reiterate our call on the Belarusian authorities to reconsider sentences of all remaining political prisoners in Belarus and release and rehabilitate them immediately.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+ 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 align themselves with this statement.

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

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.