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Delegation**

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United Kingdom Presidency of the Council of the European Union

**Permanent Council No. 565
28 July 2005**

EU Statement on Tajikistan

The European Union takes note with regret that on 13 July 2005 the Tajik authorities again seized circulation of the independent newspaper Nerui Sukhan. We urge the Tajik authorities to refrain from any form of structural censorship – using e.g. tax laws and regulations - to exert pressure on independent media and to take the necessary steps to create an environment in which Tajik media can fully exercise their rights and freedoms.

The European Union encourages the Tajik authorities to strengthen their ongoing cooperation with the OSCE centre in Dushanbe in the field of the media and to seek advice and active support from the office of the Representative on the Freedom of the Media with a view to promoting a free, independent and vibrant media sector.

The Accessing Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia ¹, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro, as well as Ukraine and Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

¹ Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process