



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 912 Vienna, 17 May 2012

EU statement on Media Freedom and on arrests of opposition leaders in the Russian Federation

The European Union would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to the statement by the spokesperson of High Representative, Catherine Ashton, expressing concern about the arrests of opposition leaders in Moscow, issued on 11 May 2012 in Brussels and circulated under reference number SEC.DEL/150/12.

Furthermore, the EU shares the concern of the Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatovic, expressed on 10 May 2012, regarding the detention and harassment of journalists reporting on the protests between 6 and 9 May in Moscow. Several journalists were injured by the police. We note that all journalists were eventually released.

We would like to underline that journalists play an important role in reporting on matters of public interest. Authorities have a responsibility to guarantee their safety and protection and ensure that they can report on all public events, including protests and demonstrations, without being obstructed from doing their work.

We also share the concern by the Representative about cyber attacks against mass media websites on 6 May 2012 in the Russian Federation, some of which were planning to broadcast live from the scene of the protests.

We call on the Russian authorities to thoroughly investigate all of these incidents.

The Acceding Country Croatia*, the Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland+ and Serbia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia 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.