

Prohlášení
Statement
Déclaration

Vienna 18 June 2009

Permanent Council No.765
EU Statement on the proposed amendments to the
Azerbaijani Law on NGOs

The European Union has learnt with concern about the planned amendments to the Azerbaijani Law on Non-governmental organisations, which were introduced by the Office of the President and have already passed the Committee for Legal Affairs of the Milli Medjlis, the Azerbaijani Parliament. We believe that these amendments, if adopted in their current form, would seriously restrict the work of non-governmental organisations in Azerbaijan, both domestic and international, and mark a setback in the development of a viable and sustainable civil society in Azerbaijan. Therefore, we encourage the Azerbaijani government and lawmakers to postpone any decision on the proposed amendments and to enter in an open dialogue with NGOs and the international community, including the OSCE, on their possible implications. In this regard, we invite the Azerbaijani authorities to seek the expert advice of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe before reaching any decision on these proposed amendments. The EU would like to recall that the Eastern Partnership, launched in May in Prague, as well as the EU-Azerbaijan-Action-Plan signed in the end of 2006 foresee an important role for civil society in the EU-Azerbaijani relationship.

The EU would appreciate being informed about steps being undertaken by the Azerbaijani authorities regarding this issue. We also would like the Office in Baku to follow-up on this matter.

The candidate countries CROATIA* and FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, MONTENEGRO, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area ICELAND and NORWAY align themselves with this statement.

*Croatia and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.