



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1244 Vienna, 17 October 2019

EU statement in response to the AOB issue raised by Malta

Final (280 words)

As we mark the second anniversary of the horrific assassination of Daphne Caruana Galizia, our thoughts go out to her family and friends. The EU has strongly condemned this heinous crime. In light of the joint statement issued yesterday by Harlem Désir, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatović, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, David Kaye, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, and Agnes Callamard, UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, we remain confident that the Maltese authorities will continue their efforts in order to ensure that justice is fully served and that the launching of a public inquiry into the murder of Daphne Caruana Galizia is a step in this direction.

The EU position on media freedom and safety of journalists expressed many times at the OSCE remains unchanged. The European Union stands firm on the protection of free speech and the media. Democracy cannot survive if journalists are no longer able to report freely. Democracy relies and depends upon their work to criticise and hold the powerful accountable.

All those responsible for violent acts and crimes against journalists must be brought to justice. Accountability and strong judicial processes are key. The EU attaches the highest importance to creating and maintaining a safe and enabling environment so that journalists may perform the work independently, without undue interference, harassment, intimidation or fear of repression. We emphasise the importance of the Ministerial Council Decision adopted last year in Milan on the Safety of Journalists, as well as the need to fully implement it, and we call on all OSCE participating States to uphold their commitments.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and SERBIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.