



**EUROPEAN UNION**

**OSCE Permanent Council N°1090  
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**EU Statement on the Law related to NGOs in Kazakhstan**

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The European Union wishes to express its concern at the law related to NGOs in Kazakhstan adopted in late 2015. Introducing an operational financial control on the state and non-state, domestic and foreign grants through a newly created government controlled body could have a negative impact on NGO activities. The law provides for administrative liability in the form of a fine or a temporary suspension of activities for NGOs failing to submit accurate information to a database, which places a severe and unnecessary burden on NGOs.

The European Union regrets that Kazakhstan has not consulted international experts on the preparation of the implementing regulations, despite having indicated that it would do so. We would therefore call on Kazakhstan to consult international bodies, such as ODIHR, in order to ensure that the implementation of the law does not limit freedom of association and is in line with Kazakhstan's OSCE commitments.

A vibrant and independent civil society is essential for ensuring respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights. The participation of a strong civil society is also a key factor for Kazakhstan to achieve success in the ongoing process of national modernisation and institutional reform, which the European Union welcomes and supports. We believe that the Kazakh authorities should work closely with civil society, particularly when adopting legislation that concerns its activity. We welcome that Kazakhstan consulted civil society on the implementing regulations to the law related to NGOs, and we strongly encourage Kazakhstan to also take their recommendations into account.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, 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.