



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 940 Vienna, 7 February 2013

EU statement on the conviction for the murder of Ukrainian journalist Georgyi Gongadze

Strengthening freedom of expression and freedom of the media, online as well as offline, including ensuring the safety of journalists, is a top priority for the European Union. We welcome therefore the recent conviction by the Pechersky District Court in Kiev, of former police general Aleksei Pukach for the murder of Ukrainian journalist Georgyi Gongadze who was killed in 2000. We concur with the statement of 30 January by the Representative on Freedom of the Media, in which she urged the Ukrainian authorities to continue to pursue the instigators of this crime.

The EU would like to reiterate its deep concern that numerous attacks against journalists and editorial offices continue to be observed throughout the OSCE region, and we urge the authorities in all participating States, to prevent attacks on media professionals, prosecute those responsible when such attacks have occurred and fight a climate of impunity. The EU strongly supports all efforts by OSCE structures to assist participating States to fully implement their commitments on freedom of expression and freedom of the media.

In conclusion, the case of Georgyi Gongadze once again demonstrates the crucial importance of ensuring safety of journalists if media freedom is to be guaranteed. We hope therefore that, following on from the Lithuanian and Irish Chairmanships, this issue will continue to get the attention it deserves under the Ukrainian Chairmanship in 2013.

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 the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, and San Marino, 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.