

PC.DEL/286/10
22 April 2010

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 806th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

Vienna, 22 April 2010

Regarding the case of the journalist Ernest Vardanyan

The European Union is closely following the case of the journalist Ernest Vardanyan, who was arrested on 7 April 2010 in the city of Tiraspol. The European Union draws attention to the fact that human rights, and in particular freedom of expression, as well as the fundamental rights of detained persons must be fully respected. It emphasizes in particular that these rights include the right to choose one's lawyer, to be present or to be represented by a person of one's own choice at the hearings to determine whether the detained person is to remain in provisional custody, and to contact one's family. The European Union notes with deep concern that Mr. Vardanyan has until now been deprived of these basic rights.

In more general terms, the European Union emphasizes that the detention of persons on the grounds that they have been judged undesirable by the authorities constitutes a violation of human rights and that provisional detention should not be permitted except for specific and concrete offences. Moreover, the European Union expresses its concern at the questioning experienced recently by a number of representatives of civil society in the Transdnestrian region of the Republic of Moldova. The European Union recalls the vital importance of civil society for socio-economic development and underscores the fact that its members must be able to work freely and without fear of being subjected to arbitrary reprisals.

The European Union will continue to follow this situation closely and will return to it at the time of the examination by the Permanent Council of the report of the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova.