



**EUROPEAN UNION**

**OSCE Permanent Council No 1179  
Vienna, 15 March 2018**

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**EU Statement on the detention of Oyub Titiev, Head of  
Memorial office in Chechnya**

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The EU remains deeply concerned by the continued detention of Mr Oyub Titiev, Director of the Memorial Human Rights Centre in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation.

We set out our concerns in detail in our statements to this Permanent Council on 18 January and 1 February. Since then, on 6 March the Staropromyslovskiy District Court in Grozny, Chechnya, extended Mr Titiev's detention for a further two months until 9 May. We again call on the Russian federation to release Mr Titiev, whose detention follows a long line of arrests, attacks, intimidation and discrediting of independent journalists and human rights defenders working in Chechnya.

We note the statement by the Ambassador of the Russian Federation on 1 February, that working for human rights organisations does not exempt an individual from the duty to respect the law. We agree. However, we again repeat our concerns that the charges against Mr Titiev raise significant doubts and have strong echoes of other questionable convictions on drug-related offences of individuals working on human rights in Chechnya.

We also draw attention to the reports from his lawyer alleging serious procedural anomalies in relation to the search of Mr Titiev's car and the detention of Mr Titiev, who was questioned for seven hours without legal representation before being charged.

We therefore call on the Russian Federation to ensure full respect for Mr Titiev's human rights, including access to a lawyer and medical care and the rights to a fair trial, to physical integrity and dignity, and to protection from judicial harassment, criminalisation and arbitrary arrest, in line with its OSCE commitments. We also note that there have been calls to move the legal procedures to Moscow, where they can be conducted by the federal authorities.

We also take this opportunity to recall the arson attack on Memorial's office in Ingushetia on 17 January, the arson attack on the car belonging to Memorial's Dagestan office and used by Mr Titev's lawyer on 20 January, and the threats made against one of Memorial's representatives on 23 January. We again ask the Russian Federation what steps the authorities are taking to investigate the arson attacks and threats and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

We reiterate our call of 1 February for the Russian Federation to protect human rights defenders, including representatives of Memorial, from abuse by third parties, and to take proactive steps to promote the full realisation of the rights of human rights defenders, including their right to defend human rights.

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 ICELAND, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, GEORGIA, CANADA and AUSTRALIA align themselves with this statement.

\* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.