

Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union

680th Meeting of the Permanent Council
20th September 2007

Statement of the European Union on the Suspension of
the participation of the Russian Chechen Friendship
Society at the OSCE meetings

I would like to recall the statement delivered by the EU in the closing session of the High Level Meeting on the Victims of Terrorism, 14th September. I quote:

“The EU remains firmly committed to NGO participation in OSCE events, such as the High-Level meeting on Victims of Terrorism, along the existing modalities as set out in the Helsinki 1992 Document.

I would like to take this opportunity to refer to the statement of the EU on the Closure of the Russian Chechen Friendship Society delivered in the 648th Permanent Council on the 1st of February, and I quote: “The Russian Chechen Friendship Society, laureate of the 2004 Recognition Award of the International Helsinki Federation, was one of the few remaining organizations in Russia reporting on human rights conditions in Chechnya and the Northern Caucasus. The EU has previously raised the harassment of this non-governmental organisation, inter alia in the context of the murder of Russian journalist Anna Politovskaya, with whom the Russian Chechen Friendship Society had co-operated closely.”

End of quote.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.