



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council Nr 981 Vienna, 23 January 2014

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#### EU Statement on Ukraine

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The European Union would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to the statement of High Representative Ashton of 22 January 2014 on the violence and reported deaths of protesters in Kyiv:

"I strongly condemn the violent escalation of events in Kyiv overnight leading to casualties. The reported deaths of several protesters is a source of extreme worry and my sympathy goes to all those affected.

I call on everyone involved to ensure restraint. The use of force and resort to violence is not an answer to the political crisis. All acts of violence must come to an immediate end and be swiftly investigated. Those responsible will have to be held to account.

Ukrainian citizens' rights of assembly, freedom of expression and media must be fully respected and protected. I am deeply concerned about attacks on journalists and about reports of missing persons.

I call on the government and the opposition to engage in a genuine dialogue at the highest level. The solution needs to meet the aspirations of the Ukrainian people."

The European Union would also like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to the European Union Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions of 20 January 2014. Let me quote the following from these:

"The Council expresses deep concern about the legislation passed by the Verkhovna Rada on 16 January under doubtful procedural circumstances. These legislative acts would significantly restrict the Ukrainian citizens' fundamental rights of association, media and the press, and seriously curtail the activities of civil

society organizations. The European Union calls on the Ukrainian authorities to ensure that these developments are reversed and that legislation is brought in line with Ukraine's European and international commitments.”

Mr Chairman,

We express our deep disappointment that core OSCE commitments promoted by Ukraine in its previous capacity as Chairman of the OSCE have been violated by the government of Ukraine.

We support the engagement of the Swiss Chairmanship and the offer made by the Chairperson-in-Office contained in his statement of 22 January 2014, in which he says that: “The OSCE has the necessary tools and mechanisms to act as an impartial broker in such situations, and is ready to support the Ukrainian authorities in order to lower tensions and prevent further escalation.” We call upon Ukraine to make use of this offer of support.

We also encourage the authorities of Ukraine to work with the OSCE Chairmanship and executive structures, including the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the Representative on Freedom of the Media, in order to ensure that the legislation is in line with OSCE commitments.

In this context, we also recall the statement of 17 January 2014 by the Representative on Freedom of the Media, Ms Dunja Mijatovic, in which she expresses her concern that the new legislation might lead to disproportionate restrictions on media freedom, stifling debate and critical views. Furthermore, the deterioration in recent weeks of the situation for safety of journalists in Ukraine is a matter of deep concern. We strongly condemn the attacks that have taken place in the last few days against media workers covering the unfolding events. We also recall the brutal attack against journalist Tatiana Chernovil on December 25 2013. We join the Representative on Freedom of the Media, in her statement on 22 January 2014, in urging the Ukrainian authorities to take immediate action to prevent further violence against journalists and to bring all those responsible to justice to prevent an environment of intimidation, fear and impunity, in line with Ukraine's OSCE and other international commitments.

Mr Chairman,

The European Union will continue to monitor developments in Ukraine very closely.

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 LIECHTENSTEIN align themselves with this statement.

\* 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.