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## **STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 745th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

18 December 2008

### **Regarding freedom of the media in Moldova**

The European Union is concerned by the announcement by the Moldovan Audiovisual Co-ordination Council that pursuant to article 24 of the Broadcasting Code currently in force the broadcasting licence of the independent television channel PRO-TV will not be renewed after its expiry on 23 December. It recalls in this context the press release distributed by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. The minor violations that PRO-TV is accused of having committed raises the question of the real reasons for this measure, which if confirmed would result in an even greater restriction in the plurality of the Moldovan audiovisual landscape just a few months before decisive elections in the country.

Recalling the importance it attaches to the continuation of sustained efforts to consolidate respect for human rights and democratic freedoms in the Republic of Moldova, the European Union urges the competent Moldovan authorities to reconsider the decision regarding the future of PRO-TV, particularly in the light of the OSCE's commitments on freedom and plurality of the media and those undertaken in the framework of the EU-Moldova Action Plan.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Norway, as well as Armenia, align themselves with this statement.

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