



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council N°1092
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EU Statement on media freedom in Turkey

The European Union is following closely the reports about last week's developments related to Feza Media Group, including Zaman newspaper, and the ensuing police action. This is serious interference with media freedom and yet another setback in a series of undue restrictions of media freedom in Turkey, intimidating critical voices and media outlets.

We have repeatedly stressed that Turkey, as a candidate country, needs to respect and promote high democratic standards and practices, including freedom of the media.

Free, diverse and independent media constitute one of the cornerstones of a democratic society by facilitating the free flow of information and ideas, and by ensuring transparency and accountability.

Any country, and in particular those negotiating EU accession, needs to guarantee fundamental rights, including freedom of expression, and due judicial process, in line with the European Convention on Human Rights and our OSCE commitments. We join the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media in calling on Turkey to urgently engage in efforts to reverse this negative trend and guarantee respect of its constitutionally enshrined commitment to freedom of expression and of the media.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* 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 ARMENIA align themselves with this statement.

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