

Spanish Presidency of the European Union

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EU statement on Media Freedom in Azerbaijan

The EU is concerned about various cases in Azerbaijan in which journalists and other individuals exercising their universal right of freedom of expression have been prosecuted on questionable grounds.

Such is the case of Eynulla Fatullayev, former editor-in-chief of Realniy Azerbaijan and Gundelik Azerbaijan newspapers, convicted to more than 8 years of imprisonment in 2007. While Mr. Fatullayev has already lodged a complaint at the European Court of Human Rights, on 31 December 2009 he was ordered to be tried on new charges. The EU calls on Azerbaijan to participate fully in the conduct of the proceedings before the ECHR and to abide by the judgment of the Court.

The EU recalls our statement in the Permanent Council on 19 November 2009 concerning the human rights situation in conjunction with the freedom of the media in Azerbaijan, and refers to the press release published by the OSCE Representative on

Freedom of the Media on 30 December 2009 on media freedom in Azerbaijan, including the case of Mr. Fatullayev. In the wider context, the EU urges Azerbaijan to respect fully its OSCE commitments regarding the freedom of expression and the respect for human rights, to cooperate with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and to resolve the existing legal cases against journalists and media activists by fair, transparent and timely procedures in full compliance with international legal standards.

In conclusion, the EU reiterates its support for further political and legal reforms in Azerbaijan aimed at increased convergence with the values and principles promoted both by the OSCE and the EU as well as the Council of Europe, and stands ready to assist the Azerbaijani authorities in their endeavours in this regard, also including in the framework of the Eastern Partnership.

Los países candidatos CROACIA* y la ANTIGUA REPÚBLICA YUGOSLAVA DE MACEDONIA*, los países del Proceso de Estabilización y Asociación y los países candidatos potenciales, ALBANIA, BOSNIA Y HERZEGOVINA y MONTENEGRO los países de la Asociación Europea de Libre Comercio y los miembros del Espacio Económico Europeo, ISLANDIA y NORUEGA.

*Croacia y la Antigua República Yugoslava de Macedonia siguen perteneciendo al proceso de Estabilización y Asociación.