



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council N° 1168 Vienna, 14 December 2017

EU Statement on the registration of Radio Free Europe as a Foreign Agent in the Russian Federation

The EU is concerned about the recent registration of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Voice of America (VOA), and several affiliated news services as so called “foreign agents” in the Russian Federation.

Two weeks ago, the EU expressed concern regarding the adoption of the law, which allows the Ministry of Justice to impose a "foreign agent" label against any foreign media receiving, directly or indirectly, foreign funding. We reiterate our concern that media organisations operating in Russia and labelled as “foreign agents” risk becoming stigmatised, fined, and forced to curtail their activities in the same way as we have seen in the case of NGOs, which have previously been labelled.

We reiterate our call on Russia to ensure that all legislation conforms to international human rights standards and obligations, including OSCE commitments.

The EU welcomes the work of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and we call on Russia to draw on the expertise and advice of the Representative.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* 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 UKRAINE and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

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