



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council N° 1189
Vienna, 14 June 2018**

**EU statement on the Detention of Oyub Titiev, Director of
the Memorial Human Rights Centre in Chechnya**

The EU remains deeply concerned by the continued detention of Mr Oyub Titiev, Director of the Memorial Human Rights Centre in Chechnya, the Russian Federation.

We set out our concerns in our statements to the Permanent Council on 18 January, 1 February, 15 March and 12 April and we called on the Russian Federation to release Mr Titiev, whose detention follows a long line of arrests, attacks, intimidation and discrediting of independent journalists and human rights defenders working in Chechnya. However, in light of the expected start of his trial, we would like again to bring to the attention of the Permanent Council the many worrying aspects around Mr Titiev's continued detention.

Mr Titiev was arrested on 9 January 2018 in the town of Kurchaloi. He was charged with the illegal possession of drugs and has been remanded in custody since his arrest. We understand from Mr Titiev's lawyers that his trial could start at any time, including with little advance notice. We repeat our concerns that the charges against Mr Titiev raise significant doubts and have strong echoes of other questionable convictions on drug-related offences of individuals working on human rights in Chechnya, such as Ruslan Kutaev in 2014 and Zhalaudi Geriev in 2016. Memorial in particular have been subjected to increased attacks and harassment across North Caucasus region.

We again draw attention to the reports from Mr Titiev's lawyer alleging serious procedural anomalies in relation to the search of Mr Titiev's car and the detention of Mr Titiev, who was questioned for seven hours without legal representation before being charged. We are therefore concerned that there is a serious risk that Mr Titiev will not receive a fair trial, in particular should it be held in Chechnya itself, and that the charges against him are motivated by his work to defend human rights there.

We call on the Russian Federation to ensure that Mr Titiev's human rights are fully respected, and remind the delegation of their OSCE commitments, including the right to a fair trial, to physical integrity and dignity, and to protection from judicial harassment, criminalisation and arbitrary arrest.

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 countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, GEORGIA, CANADA and the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA align themselves with this statement.

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