



**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY**

ON FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA IN TURKEY

908th PERMANENT COUNCIL

19 April 2012

Mr. Chairperson,

I thank the distinguished Permanent Representative of Denmark for sharing views on the freedom of the media in Turkey on behalf of the EU. The content of the statement will no doubt be examined by my authorities with the attention that it deserves.

At our last gathering on 29 March, on the occasion of the presentation made by the Representative on Freedom of the Media, I had the opportunity to inform the Council of the facts as well as the measures that are planned to be taken on the question of imprisonment of journalists in particular, and on the freedom of expression in general.

In this respect, I am inclined to spare my colleagues an overdose of repetition and instead, simply to refer to my statement which was distributed among the participating States. When and if read, my statement, among others, underscored the following elements:

- The great majority of individuals referred to as `imprisoned journalists` are charged with terrorism offences which are not related to their professional activities. Also the list which was published by the Representative's Office on 2 April confirms this fact.
- The Ministry of Justice recently presented new measures intended to improve the effectiveness of the judiciary. In this context, legal amendments are planned to be made in various laws, such as Anti-Terror Law, Press Law and Penal Code. New changes will improve media freedom, particularly in relation to suspensions of publications, offences when committed via press and detentions. They also include postponement of certain judicial fines, prosecutions and verdicts imposed on journalists.

Turkey is in close cooperation and consultation with relevant international structures, such as the Representative's Office and the Council of Europe. As manifested during the visit of Ms. Mijatovic to Turkey last December, the Turkish authorities are willing and determined to continue their cooperation with her Office. Our contacts and cooperation also comprise the question of imprisoned journalists. We have already shared our data with the Office concerning the abovementioned list and expect that it will be updated accordingly.

Thank you.