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## EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council Nr 853  
Vienna, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

### **EU statement on freedom of the media and expression in Turkey**

The European Union wishes to express its concern about the recent police actions taken against several journalists in Turkey. These include the detention of Nedim Şener, Ahmet Şik and others, and the arrests of ODA TV site administrators. We would like to recall the statement by Commissioner Stefan Füle of 3 March on this issue.

The EU welcomes the press statement made by the Representative on Freedom of the Media on 3<sup>rd</sup> March regarding these developments. We share the Representative's assessment that these police actions were in violation of basic OSCE media freedom commitments, recently reaffirmed at the Astana Summit. We also support her call on the Turkish authorities for the immediate and unconditional release of the detained journalists.

In this regard, the EU also recalls its statement to the Permanent Council of 4 November in which we expressed concern about the large number of imprisoned journalists in Turkey and the ongoing lawsuits against several hundred others. The European Commission's annual report on Turkey's progress towards meeting EU membership criteria also highlighted these concerns as well as the need for Turkey to reform its media laws to ensure full respect for freedom of expression and freedom of the media in practice.

The EU encourages the Representative to continue to follow media freedom developments in Turkey. We call upon Turkey to co-operate with the Representative and to make use of the assistance and expertise offered by her Office.

Finally, the EU reaffirms its commitment to Turkey's negotiation process and offers its full support to the continued implementation of Turkey's reform agenda.

The candidate countries CROATIA\*, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\* and ICELAND\*\*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as ARMENIA align themselves with this statement.

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

\*\*Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and the European Economic Area.