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**Statement by Ambassador Renatas Norkus, Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the OSCE and Chairperson of the Permanent Council, in response to the statement made on 20 January 2011 by the delegation of the Russian Federation on the media situation in certain Member States of the European Union**

Lithuania thanks the Russian Federation for raising media freedom issues for discussion in the Permanent Council. We too regard this forum as an important platform for deliberations on media freedom and the safety of journalists, as well as on other issues related to democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law.

With regard to the specific cases raised by the Russian delegation in the Permanent Council on 20 January 2011, Lithuania would like to emphasize that all the cases referred to were investigated by the authorities in a timely and proper manner.

In 1994 four suspects were found guilty of the murder a year earlier of Mr. Vitas Lingys, a reporter for a major Lithuanian daily newspaper. Mr. Lingys was murdered after having revealed organized criminal activities.

In 2008 the District Court of Vilnius found three persons guilty of murdering photo reporter Viktoras Kapočius in 2007 when carrying out a robbery at his home. The motives for the criminal act were not related to Mr. Kapočius's professional activities.

In 2006 Mr. Aurimas Drižius, editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Laisvas laikraštis*, was subjected to investigations with regard to unauthorized possession of information constituting a state secret. The pre-trial investigation was completed without indictment. In a civil case Mr. Drižius brought an action for libel against the State Security Department. The Department lost the case and refuted the information it had held against Mr. Drižius.