



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF TURKEY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN ILDEM
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY
(870th Permanent Council Meeting, 23 June 2011)**

Mr. Chairperson,

We join others in welcoming Representative Mijatovic to the Permanent Council. Her regular report, as were the case for previous ones, will be the subject of a thorough and careful examination of the Turkish authorities. We attach importance to the activities of her Office and support the Representative in fulfillment of her mandate.

The detailed presentation that the Representative offered us today and the written report for which I thank her, are a testimony to the fact that none of the participating States is immune from instances which eventually raise concerns for the exercise of freedom of expression and the media. This fact should lead us to be progressively more objective and comprehensive in reviewing and reflecting the state of media freedoms in the OSCE's entire geography.

As far as the written report is concerned, in the section pertaining to Turkey, we observed few missing points particularly with regard to the responses provided by my Mission in the course of the reporting period.

In order to fully reflect the main elements of our letter dated 24 March concerning the conviction of journalist Bogatekin under the charges of Anti-Terror Law, it is important to underline the fact that his case is pending before the Court of Cassation.

I should also like to draw the kind attention of the Representative and the Council that the latest letter of 11 May addressed to Turkish Foreign Minister has been partially replied with two consecutive letters of this Mission on 13th and 25th of the same month respectively. We believe that those letters deserve to be mentioned in the report at least on the basis of their timeframe of correspondence.

We also thank the delegation of Hungary on behalf of EU for repeating their concerns. This delegation had the opportunity to respond on previous occasions. In the interest of brevity, I would just like to reiterate that the great majority of the individuals referred to as "imprisoned journalists" are charged of being a member or making propaganda of illegal armed terrorist organizations. In those cases, their imprisonment has no relation to their professional activities. As regards the ongoing trials, the suspects, including the journalists, will certainly enjoy presumption of innocence and their cases will be duly handled by the independent judiciary.

On 26th of May, this delegation also provided the Permanent Council with explanation on new Internet regulations planned to be introduced. In brief, these regulations do not classify Internet users, nor restrict access to information. Furthermore, quite contrary to the EU statement, filtering options will be purely on a voluntary basis, rather than mandatory.

Mr. Chairperson,

It is our sincere expectation that the active communication the Representative has established with us and through us with the authorities in Turkey will enable mutual understanding and impart greater clarity to the goals of the Office. As the Turkish Mission we intend to keep this line of communication open and mutually useful. We believe that the visit of Representative Mijatovic to Turkey will further contribute to our existing dialogue.

In concluding, we wish every success to Representative Mijatovic in her valuable endeavors across the OSCE area.

Thank you.