



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No. 1253 Vienna, 19 December 2019

#### **EU Statement following the ECHR's verdict on Mr. Kavala, still detained in Turkey**

1. The European Union continues to closely follow the case of Osman Kavala, a businessman and human-rights defender, Chairman of Anadolu Kültür, as this case alongside others has raised concerns as to the adherence of the Turkish judiciary to international and European standards.
2. In the Kavala v. Turkey case, the European Court of Human Rights found on 10 December a violation of Articles 5 and 18 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Court called for the immediate release of Mr. Kavala.
3. This verdict reinforces all our previous calls for his immediate release, including within the OSCE. We expect the Turkish authorities to put an end to Mr. Kavala's detention and secure his immediate release. The implementation of this verdict is also important for the ongoing judiciary reform.
4. As the European Union has repeatedly said, the decision to indict participants of the 2013 Gezi Park protests and to seek life sentences for them contributes to the creation of a climate of fear and undermines the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression and the overall role of an active civil society.
5. Systematic detentions with insufficient evidence, use of prolonged pre-trial detention and criminal prosecution of people exercising their fundamental rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly cast serious doubts as to whether the judicial process in Turkey respects the principle of the presumption

of innocence and right to a fair trial. We call again on the Turkish authorities to ensure every person's right to a fair trial, and to uphold the principle of the presumption of innocence, as agreed in the Copenhagen Document of 1990.

The Candidate Countries TURKEY, REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* 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 ARMENIA align themselves with this statement.

\* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.