



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1046 Vienna, 27 March 2015

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#### **EU statement on the Case Against Human Rights Defender Mr. Sarymsakov in Uzbekistan**

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The European Union has noted with concern reports of the detention of Mr. Alikul Sarymsakov, a human rights defender from the civil society organisation Human Rights Alliance of Uzbekistan, shortly after he attended a 3 March meeting with OSCE/ODIHR representatives. Mr. Sarymsakov was located in a psychiatric hospital on 11 March.

The European Union reminds Uzbekistan of its OSCE commitments in the area of freedom of expression, and recalls the particular importance of allowing a free exchange of opinions during electoral campaigns. We encourage Uzbekistan to release Mr. Sarymsakov from his involuntary treatment, and pending his release, to grant him access to legal representation and facilitate visits by family members.

The EU will continue to follow this case closely and calls on Uzbekistan to ensure that human rights defenders and members of civil society can freely express their views and interact with representatives of international and regional organisations, including the OSCE institutions, without facing repercussions.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, ICELAND+ and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

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

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