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**Permanent Council No. 741
November 20th 2008**

EU statement on the law on "Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organisations in the Kyrgyz Republic"

The European Union notes with concern the approval of the amended law on "Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organisations" by the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic, as described in the spot report published by the OSCE Centre in Bishkek on 7 November 2008 and that the new law contains several provisions not in line with OSCE standards and commitments.

Against this background, the EU regrets that recommendations included in the expert opinion that had been requested by the Speaker of the Kyrgyz Parliament and were submitted by the OSCE Centre in Bishkek on 14 October were not reflected in the amendments to the law.

As the new law would restrict religious freedom in the Kyrgyz Republic, the EU appeals to the President of the Kyrgyz Republic not to sign the text as it stands, but to send it back to Parliament for reconsideration, in view of the expert recommendations listed in the aforementioned spot report.

La Turquie, la Croatie* et l'ancienne République yougoslave de Macédoine*, pays candidats ; l'Albanie, la Bosnie - Herzégovine, le Monténégro et la Serbie, pays du processus de stabilisation et d'association et candidats potentiels ;

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l'Islande et la Norvège, pays de l'Association Européenne de libre-échange et membres de l'Espace économique européen ; ainsi que l'Ukraine et la République de Moldavie se rallient à cette déclaration.

*La Croatie et l'ancienne République yougoslave de Macédoine continuent à participer au processus de stabilisation et d'association.

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