



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1135 Vienna, 2 March 2017

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#### **EU Statement on the case of Ildar Dadin in the Russian Federation**

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The European Union welcomes the release from prison of Ildar Dadin following the decision last week by the Russian Supreme Court to overturn his conviction for a series of peaceful protests. He was the first and only person to date to be convicted under Article 212.1 of Russia's Criminal Code which penalises persons who are found to have violated Russia's protest laws at least three times during 180 days.

The EU has on a number of occasions raised the case of Mr. Dadin and called on the Russian authorities to review the Article 212.1 of Russia's Criminal Code, in order to abide by its obligations under domestic and international law and to ensure an open and safe environment for civil society activity and peaceful dissent. While welcoming the release of Mr. Dadin, the EU reiterates its call on the Russian authorities to carry out a swift, thorough and impartial investigation of the serious allegations that Mr. Dadin was subjected to torture and mistreatment in prison and take steps to eliminate the use of torture and other ill-treatment in penitentiary facilities.

Freedom of assembly is fundamental to democracy. It is protected by the European Convention on Human Rights, to which Russia is a party, and is central to the commitments OSCE participating States freely signed up to in Copenhagen in 1990. Any restrictions on the exercise of these rights must be prescribed by law and be consistent with international standards. As such we also note the judgment by the Russian Constitutional Court that repeated violations of rules on public gatherings should not be seen as a criminal offence.

Despite the release of Mr. Dadin, we note that a large number of political prisoners remain behind bars in Russia. We commend the work of civil society groups such as Memorial Human Rights Centre for their work to identify and bring to wider public attention information about prisoners of conscience in Russia. We call on the Russian authorities to ensure that

no-one is criminalised for exercising their human rights, including the right to peaceful protest.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\* 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 UKRAINE and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

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