



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council Nr 848
Vienna, 27 January 2011**

EU statement on the situation in Albania

The European Union, recalling the statement issued on 21 January 2011 by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Štefan Füle on the situation in Albania, strongly regrets the loss of human life occurred during last Friday's events in Tirana and deplores that a political demonstration has spiralled into violence.

The European Union supports the call by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Albania's government and opposition to refrain from using violence and provocative statements and avoid any actions that might aggravate the situation.

The EU urges all sides to resume dialogue and co-operation as soon as possible and appeals to all parties not to risk further escalation and recalls their responsibility for a non-violent democratic political process. To this end, parties should respect and make full and exclusive use of existing democratic institutions, allowing for the political discourse to be restored in a peaceful and constructive manner. In this context, it is highly unlikely that demonstrations in the next few days will help defuse current tensions and bring back calm.

We call on the relevant Albanian institutions to spare no efforts to shed full light, through a credible and independent investigation, on the tragic occurrences of

January 21 and to bring all perpetrators of criminal offences to justice. The EU urges all parties involved to co-operate with the investigation.

The European Union commends the recent contributions of the OSCE Presence in Albania to deescalate the situation and its ongoing efforts to contribute to consolidating democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The EU is looking forward to co-ordinating its efforts with the OSCE Presence and other international actors in Tirana in the coming days and to examining all possibilities to step up our common engagement to overcome the current situation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA*, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, ICELAND** and MONTENEGRO, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ARMENIA, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

*Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

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