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ENGLISH only

**PERMANENT MISSION
OF TURKEY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY TURKEY IN RESPONSE TO MR. MIKLOS HARASZTI,
REPRESENTATIVE ON THE FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA**

(Permanent Council, 3 July 2008)

Mr. Chairman,

We have aligned ourselves with the EU statement. As Mr. Haraszti had specific comments on Turkey, I feel that it will be useful if I clarify some points:

We thank Mr. Haraszti for his comprehensive report. We have taken careful note of his remarks on the recent piece of legislative reform which aims to strengthen protection of free speech in Turkey.

Upon Mr. Haraszti's draft report circulated last Friday, we have conveyed to him detailed information on the implementation of the amended Article of the Penal Code and the early results of the reform.

In this context, we have informed Mr. Haraszti that the requirement to seek the permission of the Minister of Justice before launching an investigation under the amended Article is not applicable only to "fresh cases", as mentioned by Mr. Haraszti in his presentation, but also to those which are currently pending. In fact, 6 of those pending cases, which were referred to the Ministry of Justice for permission after reform, have already been dropped due to lack of permission by the Minister.

We hope that Mr. Haraszti will make best use of the detailed feedback we have provided – including through our letter of 30 June 2008 and this statement – in finalizing his report.

Thank you.