



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No. 1231 Vienna, 6 June 2019

## EU Statement on Safety of Journalists in Turkey

The European Union is concerned about a series of assaults on journalists in Turkey. On 25 May, Odatv columnist and commentator Sabahattin Önkibar was beaten up in front of his house in Ankara. On 24 May journalist Hakan Denizli, founder of the local daily Egemen, was shot in the leg when he was leaving his home in Adana. The editor-in-Chief of the Güney Haberci news website, Ergin Çevik, was attacked in Antalya on 20 May. Earlier the same month, journalists İdris Özyol and Yavuz Selim Demirağ were also victims of physical assaults. According to reports, police detained suspects in the cases of Önkibar, Çevik and Demirağ, all of whom were later conditionally released.

The EU condemns these attacks. We are deeply worried about the repercussions for freedom of opinion and expression in Turkey of acts like this and subsequent lack of accountability. This string of assaults against critical voices adds further to our deep concerns about the climate for free speech and media freedom in Turkey.

In Milan 2018 the Ministerial Council noted “with concern the climate of impunity that prevails when violent attacks committed against journalists remain unpunished” and called on participating States to “condemn publicly and unequivocally all attacks and violence against journalists”. The EU fully agrees with the Representative on Freedom of the Media that impunity for attacks against journalists is unacceptable, that the Turkish authorities need to do their utmost to

ensure safe working conditions for journalists and that public condemnation at the highest level is crucial. We call on Turkey to fully implement all OSCE commitments and international obligations related to freedom of expression and media freedom, including on the safety of journalists.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* 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 ARMENIA, ANDORRA and CANADA align themselves with this statement.

\* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.