



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1144 Vienna, 4 May 2017

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#### **EU statement on the inclusion of three organisations in the list of “undesirable organisations” in Russia**

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The European Union expresses its concern over the decision by the Russian authorities on 26 April to include three further organisations in the register of “undesirable organisations”. These organisations are: Open Russia; the Open Russia Civic Movement; and the Institute of Modern Russia.

We have previously made clear our concern over this legislation and its negative implications for the protection of human rights, including freedom of association and freedom of expression. There are now ten organisations included in this list.

In Copenhagen in 1990 we all committed to “ensure that individuals are permitted to exercise the right to association, including the right to form, join and participate effectively in non-governmental organizations which seek the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms”. We expect that all States, including Russia, abide by this commitment.

We underline that pluralism and a strong civil society are essential parts of a functioning democracy. This legislation, alongside the "foreign agents" law and restrictions on foreign media ownership, are severely limiting the space for civil society and restricting the exercise of fundamental freedoms in Russia. We therefore urge Russia to remove these restrictions and ensure that civil society organisations are able to contribute fully to Russia’s development.

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 country NORWAY, member 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.