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EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council Nr 833
Vienna, 4 November 2010**

EU statement on the freedom of the media and expression in Turkey

The European Union welcomes the fact that Turkey has lifted its three year long ban on the Internet video website YouTube, as reported by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media in her press release of 1 November 2010. We would ask the Representative to be updated on any further developments.

We concur with the Representative in hoping that this is a first step in the lifting of bans on Internet websites, of which a large number still remain blocked. We also encourage Turkey to bring its Internet legislation in line with OSCE commitments and international standards on freedom of expression.

The EU also recalls the press release issued by the Representative on Freedom of the Media on 14 September 2010 and expresses its concern about the large number of imprisoned journalists and the ongoing lawsuits against several hundred others in Turkey.

The EU welcomes the engagement by the Representative and calls on her to continue following developments in cooperation with Turkey's authorities. We encourage Turkey to make use of the assistance offered by her Office.

Finally, the EU reaffirms its commitment to Turkey's negotiation process and offers its full support to the continued implementation of Turkey's reform agenda.

The candidate countries CROATIA*, the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA* and ICELAND**, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, MONTENEGRO and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association country and member of the European Economic Area NORWAY, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and ARMENIA 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.