



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council No 1101
Vienna, 26 May 2016**

**EU Statement on the cases of Aramais Avakian and his
lawyer Odil Kobilov in Uzbekistan**

The European Union is concerned about the imprisonment in Uzbekistan of Odil Kobilov, a lawyer, earlier this month. Mr. Kobilov, who was sentenced to seven years in prison, appears to have been targeted for prosecution due to his work defending Aramais Avakian.

The selective prosecution of lawyers, in response to their legitimate work in representing their clients, undermines the rule of law and the credibility of the criminal justice system.

Mr Avakian, a fish farmer, was himself sentenced to 7 years imprisonment on 19 February, 2016. There are concerns regarding the treatment of Mr. Avakian, including allegations of torture and violations of his right to a fair trial.

The European Union encourages Uzbekistan to review both cases, and to act in full accordance with its OSCE commitments and international standards on legal processes.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* 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, align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.