

Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

**Permanent Council No. 588
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EU statement on the release of Galymzhan Zhakianov

1. The EU has taken note of the Spot Report from the OSCE Centre in Almaty on the release on parole of Galymzhan Zhakianov.
2. The EU welcomes Mr. Zhakianov's release. At the same time, we hope that the denial of the "right to hold responsible state positions", which was part of the sentence imposed on Mr. Zhakianov, will equally be withdrawn. The EU hopes that Mr. Zhakianov will be granted a full opportunity to exercise his civil and political rights in accordance with OSCE principles and commitments.
3. The EU considers that the Zhakianov case has demonstrated the continued need for judicial reform and strengthening of an independent judiciary in Kazakhstan. The EU attaches the utmost importance to ensuring respect of the freedoms of association, movement, and expression, as well as respect for human rights for all, and calls on Kazakhstan to fully implement its OSCE commitments in this respect. The EU stands ready to offer its assistance in this regard and encourages Kazakhstan to make use of the expertise which the OSCE can offer.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia [\[1\]](#) and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

[\[1\]](#) Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process