



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No.1467 Vienna, 11 April 2024

EU Statement on the Current Issue to be raised by the UK: “On the second anniversary of the arrest of Vladimir Kara-Murza”

1. Marking the grim two-year anniversary of Vladimir Kara-Murza’s arrest, the European Union continues to strongly condemn this politically motivated sentencing and calls for his and other political prisoners’ immediate and unconditional release. We are gravely concerned about Vladimir Kara-Murza’s health conditions, which have already considerably deteriorated by two poison attempts in 2015 and 2017, and have been critically aggravated by prison conditions and ill-treatment.
2. As the 2022 OSCE Moscow Mechanism report showed, there is a clear correlation between Russia’s internal repression and its external aggression. We are seriously concerned about the continued systematic crackdown on civil society by Russian authorities and their unprecedented disregard for the human rights of their own citizens, which has accelerated with Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine. Sadly, politically motivated trials are one of the primary tools of the Russian authorities in dealing with political opposition figures and critical voices in Russia today. We strongly urge Russia to comply with its OSCE commitments in the human dimension and related procedures.
3. Alexei Navalny’s death on 16 February was yet another confirmation of this systematic repression, pointing to the appalling conditions in which Russian political prisoners are held. Reports of repeated ill-treatment, harassment, and physical and psychological torture, including prolonged periods of solitary confinement by Russian prison authorities, are deeply disturbing. All those involved will be held to account.
4. The EU continues to call on Russia to abide by fundamental rights enshrined in its constitution as well as by international law, including international human rights law.

We strongly urge Russia to abandon its oppressive legislation, including laws criminalising dissemination of so-called “false information” about Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, the penalisation of so-called “discreditation” of Russia’s Armed Forces, and laws on so-called “foreign agents” and “undesirable organisations”, which are used to suppress civil society and independent voices.

5. The EU stands in solidarity with those Russians who want to see an open and democratic Russia, and with those who want Russia to end its illegal, unprovoked and unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine. The EU will continue to support Russian independent media, civil society, and human rights defenders inside and outside Russia.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA*, the EFTA country ICELAND, members of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.