



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council 1419 Vienna, 20 April 2023

EU Statement under the Current Issue raised by the US on the Political Repression in Russia

1. The European Union strongly condemns the sentencing by a Moscow court on 17 April 2023 of opposition politician, journalist, human rights advocate, and outspoken Kremlin critic, Vladimir Kara-Murza, to 25 years in prison on politically motivated charges.
2. This outrageously harsh court decision once again clearly demonstrates the political misuse of the judiciary to repress political opponents, activists, human rights defenders, and any voices opposing Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. This "trial" did not meet the international standards of a fair and public hearing by a competent, impartial, and independent tribunal. The court hearings were inaccessible to observers. In his final statement to the court, Vladimir Kara-Murza noted that his trial resembled the show trials of the Soviet Union in the 1930s.
3. We are extremely concerned about the worsening health situation of Vladimir Kara-Murza. Russia should ensure access to appropriate health care for him and all others in prison. The EU stands in solidarity with him and his family, as well as all Russians prosecuted, imprisoned or intimidated for fighting for human rights, speaking the truth, and criticising the regime.
4. We call on Russia to immediately and unconditionally release and rehabilitate all those imprisoned for politically motivated charges, including Evan Gershkovich and other journalists and media actors, who should be able to exercise their profession freely and enjoy the protection of the state authorities where they

perform their professional tasks. We also urge Russia to repeal its oppressive legislation, including laws censoring truthful information about Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and laws on so-called "foreign agents" and "undesirable organisations" that are only used to suppress civil society, media and independent voices.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA*, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

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