



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 12 August 2009
12642/1/09 REV 1 (Presse 247)
P 98/09

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the murders of Chechen human rights defender Zarema
Sadulayeva and her husband Alik Dzhabrailov**

The EU condemns the murders of the human rights defender Zarema Sadulayeva and her husband Alik Dzhabrailov in Chechnya on 10 August and expresses its solidarity with the families of the victims. This follows a series of killings of human rights defenders in Russia, including Anna Politkovskaya in 2006, Stanislav Markelov in January 2009 and Nataliya Estemirova on 15 July 2009.

It is important that an investigation into these latest murders is conducted promptly, transparently and thoroughly. The perpetrators must be brought to justice. The EU will follow closely the progress of this and other ongoing investigations into the murders of human rights defenders.

P R E S S

These latest crimes demonstrate again the dangers faced by human rights defenders. The EU urges the Russian authorities to do everything in their power to ensure the protection of human rights defenders, as affirmed in the UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.