

PRESS RELEASE

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the arrest of Mr. Nurberdy Nurmamedov and his son**

The EU regrets the arrest on 5 January 2000 of Mr. Nurberdy Nurmamedov leader of the "Agzyrbilik" organisation on charges of hooliganism and attempted homicide. It also regrets the arrest, later in January, of his son Murad, also on charges of armed hooliganism. The EU calls upon the Turkmen authorities to urgently review the case of the Nurmamedovs and to allow the participation of international observers in this process.

It also requests that European Embassies accredited in Ashgabat and ICRC representatives be allowed direct contact with Mr. Nurmamedov and his son.

In view of the fact that no complaint has been made by any private citizen against Mr. Nurberdy Nurmamedov and his son Murad, the EU appeals to the Turkmen authorities to release them from detention pending review of their case.

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The EU considers that the principles set out by the OSCE in the 1990 Copenhagen Document, specifically with respect to the establishment of a free, independent and effective judicial system and to the conditions of detainees, are paramount and hopes that the Turkmen authorities will abide by these standards. In this context the EU appeals to the Turkmen authorities to provide access to foreign representatives to follow this type of case.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus and Malta, and the EFTA countries, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.
