



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No. 1340

Vienna, 21 October 2021

## **EU Statement on awarding the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize to journalists Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov**

1. The European Union welcomes the decision to award the Nobel Peace Prize to Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov for their efforts in safeguarding freedom of expression, and congratulates them wholeheartedly. We fully subscribe to the Nobel Committee's acknowledgment that freedom of expression is a precondition for democracy and lasting peace worldwide.
2. Maria Ressa has not shied away from demonstrating her commitment to reporting facts as the basis for truth and trust in a democracy. Her dedication to journalism, in the face of numerous ongoing legal actions and her conviction, is an inspiration to all who believe in the importance of free and independent journalism. Her work offers hope not only to the people in the Philippines, but across South-East Asia and the world.
3. Dmitry Muratov has been defending free press and freedom of speech for decades. We are especially glad that Nobel Committee has recognized the commitment of Dmitry Muratov and his newspaper, *Novaya Gazeta*, to defend freedom of speech in Russia under increasingly challenging conditions. It is symbolic that the award came a day after the 15th anniversary of the murder of Anna Politkovskaya, one of six *Novaya Gazeta* reporters killed in retribution for their journalistic work.
4. Mr. Muratov's award is also an acknowledgement of the courage and commitment displayed by the independent journalists in Russia who continue to work under unprecedented pressure, when more and more of them, as well as media outlets and civil society organizations, human rights defenders, are designated as "foreign agents" or "undesirable". In this regard, we reject the 8 October 2021 decision of the

Russian Ministry of Justice to add eight journalists, as well as the Netherlands-based investigative outlet *Bellingcat* to the list of “foreign agents”.

5. Independent journalism, including investigative journalism, is one of the strongest tools our democracies possess to hold governments accountable, monitor democratic processes, counter disinformation and relentlessly challenge the abuse of power, human rights violations and corruption. The European Union calls on the Russian Federation and on all other pS to fully implement all OSCE commitments and international obligations related to freedom of expression and media freedom, including on the safety of journalists.

The Candidate Countries the REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, and ALBANIA\*, the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, GEORGIA and CANADA align themselves with this statement.

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