



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the sentencing of Dmitry Dashkevich, a member of the
unregistered Belarusian opposition youth organization Malady
Front, and the situation of Aleksandr Kozulin**

The European Union is deeply concerned about the sentencing of Dmitry (Zmitser) Dashkevich, a member of the opposition youth organization Malady Front (Young front) to 18 months' imprisonment on 1 November 2006. The accusations against Dmitry Dashkevich of running an unregistered organization seem to be politically motivated and show the Belarusian authorities' repeated unwillingness to respect international human rights standards, especially the right to a fair trial. The European Union also expresses its concern about the denial of access of observers to the trial.

The European Union also reiterates its concern about the wellbeing of the former Belarusian presidential candidate Aleksandr Kozulin and urges the Belarusian authorities to grant family members and international monitors free access to Aleksandr Kozulin.

P R E S S

The European Union calls upon the Belarusian authorities to promptly release Dmitry Dashkevich, Aleksandr Kozulin, the members of the Belarusian NGO "Partnership" as well as all other political prisoners.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

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