

**P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union**  
**on Turkey**

The European Union has noted with regret the ruling of a Turkish Appeals Court to uphold a jail sentence imposed on the Mayor of Istanbul, Mr Tayyip Erdogan, a member of the Facilet (Virtue) Party, by State-Security Court in April 1998.

The European Union understands that Mr. Erdogan may still seek a review of his sentence. It nevertheless expresses concern at the implications for democratic pluralism and freedom of expression, which prosecution of democratically elected politicians for non-violent expression of their view is bound to have.

While recognising the independence of Turkish court authorities, the European Union underlines the importance it attaches to respect for human rights by all countries, and especially by those which are concerned by the Copenhagen criteria.

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