



EUROPEAN UNION



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**Declaration by the High Representative Catherine Ashton on behalf of the European Union on violence against journalists in the Russian Federation**

The European Union condemns the brutal attack on Russian journalist Oleg Kashin of *Kommersant* on 6 November 2010, and on the activist for the preservation of the Khimki forest Konstantin Fetissov on 4 November 2010.

The EU welcomes the prompt reaction by President Medvedev to these attacks.

The attacks against Mr Kashin and Mr. Fetissow are the most recent cases in a highly worrying trend of violence, intimidation and insecurity faced by journalists, bloggers and activists in the Russian Federation.

The EU urges the Russian authorities to thoroughly and effectively investigate these as well as other cases of aggression against journalists and human rights defenders, to do everything in their power to ensure their protection, and to bring those responsible to justice. It welcomes the announcement of the head of the investigative committee to reopen unaccounted cases of attacks like the one on the journalist Mikhail Beketov of *Chimkinskaya Pravda* from November 2008.

These attacks highlight the necessity to guarantee effectively the respect for freedom of expression in Russia, in line with her multilateral obligations, notably as Party to the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and as Participating State in the OSCE.

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