



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of
the European Union on the verdict against the Sri Lankan
journalist, Mr J.S. Tissainayagam**

The European Union is troubled by the severe sentence of 20 years hard labour in prison passed by the Colombo High Court on journalist Mr J.S. Tissainayagam on 31 August.

The verdict and the disproportionate sentence against Mr Tissainayagam give rise to concern with respect to freedom of expression and freedom of the press in Sri Lanka.

The EU is concerned by continuing serious shortcomings with regard to freedom of expression in Sri Lanka, and by the further negative impact of the verdict on media freedom.

The EU is concerned about the state of Mr Tissainayagam's health and calls on the authorities to ensure that he is afforded full access to medical care.

P R E S S

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, and the EFTA country Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

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