

Petro Poroshenko, President of Ukraine
Arsen Avakov, Minister of Internal Affairs, Ukraine
Yuriy Lutsenko, Prosecutor General, Ukraine
Donald Tusk, President, European Council
Jean-Claude Juncker, President, European Commission
Martin Schulz, President, European Parliament
Federica Mogherini, Vice-President of the European Commission, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Johannes Hahn, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations
Ministers of Foreign Affairs, EU Member States
Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General, Council of Europe
Pedro Agramunt, President, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
Nils Muižnieks, Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe
Lamberto Zannier, Secretary General, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)
Dunja Mijatović, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
Ilkka Kanerva, President, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
Michael Georg Link, Director, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)
David Kaye, UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

25 July 2016

**Statement by the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum
on the Murder of Pavel Sharamet**

The Steering Committee condemns the murder of the journalist Pavel Sharamet in Kyiv. We extend our condolences to his family, friends and colleagues. We also express our deepest sympathies to the civil society and independent media community of Belarus, Ukraine and Russia who have suffered an irreparable loss. The SC calls on the Ukrainian authorities to identify the killers and instigators of the crime and to speedily bring them to justice.

Six journalists have been killed in Ukraine since 1992 and those responsible for four of these deaths have yet to be found and punished. The killing of Pavel Sharamet marks a major threat to media freedom both in Ukraine and in other countries of the region and to the general cause of reforms in the EaP countries.

In this sense the authorities must make every effort not only to identify the killers and instigators of this crime but also to ensure the safety of the journalists who have found themselves, in a very real sense, on the front line of the battle for an independent, free and prosperous society.

The authorities must not only do their utmost to solve this crime. They must also extend protection to all journalists who receive death threats and are targets of hate crimes. The authorities must ensure the safety of journalists who are critical of any wrongdoing and of government officials. A free and critical media is the lifeblood of a functioning democracy. A government that is serious about reform must treat the investigation of Pavel Sharamet's murder as a test case of its democratic intentions.

We express our respect and gratitude to all those who have attended Pavel Sharamet's funeral ceremonies in Kyiv and Minsk, including President Petro Poroshenko. We must all spare no effort to ensure that the safety of journalists in the Eastern Partnership is safeguarded in the future.

Members of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum