



## EUROPEAN UNION

DELEGATION TO THE STATE OF ERITREA

The Head of Delegation

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### **Subject: your letter of 22 February 2012**

Thank you for your letter of 22 February on the case of Yirgalem Fisseha and of the other journalists once active in Radio Bana.

In the past, Radio Bana has received EU financial support and has represented a valuable partner for the EU. The EU remains deeply concerned about the whereabouts and situation of those journalists of Radio Bana who were arrested three years ago and are still under arrest. The matter has been raised regularly at various political dialogues, most recently on 24 November 2011.

In its regular contacts with the authorities - at all levels - the EU continues to invite the Government of Eritrea to live up to its own obligations under human rights law as well as to its commitment to implement the recommendations stemming from the Universal Periodic Review. In the context of this exercise, Eritrea officially stated its engagement to "respect the right to information and freedom of expression and opinion".

Moreover, during the last session of the UN Human Rights Council, in its statement on country human rights situations, the EU expressed deep concern at continued reports of widespread and systematic human rights violations in Eritrea, including severe restrictions on freedom of expression. On this occasion, the EU reiterated its public call upon the Eritrean authorities to immediately stop these practices, release all political prisoners and guarantee the respect of all fundamental rights.

In line with the EU Human Rights Strategy on Eritrea, the EU will continue to support the promotion and protection of freedom of expression in Eritrea, using all available tools at its disposal, and to continue to engage in this respect with the Eritrean authorities and with all relevant stakeholders.

  
Marchel Gerrmann  
Ambassador