

14 March 2016, Brussels

**Open Dialog Foundation supports Turkmen journalist Mr Uhmyth Hallyyev's request  
for political asylum in the Netherlands**

The Open Dialog Foundation, an international NGO active in promotion, support and protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in the post-Soviet area supports a political asylum request filed to the Dutch authorities by a Turkmen citizen, journalist and former contributor to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Mr Uhmyt Hallyyev and his family.

The Open Dialog Foundation recognizes that between December 2011 and December 2014, Mr Hallyyev was an independent journalist of the Turkmen Service of RFE/RL, and has since been facing repressions by the Turkmen authoritarian regime.

As informed, before and throughout his journalistic activity for RFE/RL, Mr Hallyyev has been a victim of regular harassment from the Turkmen security service. In 2008 he was thrown out from the Turkmen National Institute of World Languages in Ashgabat because of his father's work for RFE/RL. In 2009 he was denied exit from Turkmenistan to Canada, where he intended to continue his education at the Carleton University in Ottawa. Since then for many years he has remained blacklisted. Personal threats and pressures increased when Mr Hallyyev joined RFE/RL, forcing him and his family to leave the country over serious concerns for their safety and lives.

Therefore, the Open Dialog Foundation calls on the Dutch authorities to grant Mr Hallyyev and his family political asylum in the Netherlands. To date, the Open Dialog Foundation has joined Radio Free/Europe and Reporters Without Borders in their support for Mr Hallyyev's case.

*Restriction of freedom of expression by the authorities of Central Asian states, including direct persecution of independent journalists and bloggers, both in these countries and abroad, is becoming a more and more common practice, says Lyudmyla Kozlovska, President of the Open Dialog Foundation. Our organization has called many times on the EU and the OSCE member states to provide protection to journalists and activists who are being intimidated and persecuted for conveying independent and critical information on developments in their countries.*

The Open Dialog Foundation is committed to further work on Mr Hallyyev's case, including with the Members of the States General of the Netherlands, European Parliament, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) media and other human rights non-governmental organizations.

Through the years the Open Dialog Foundation has been actively engaged in the monitoring of human rights and media freedom situation in the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, along with advocating and organising various events at the European Parliament, OSCE PA, PACE and other international and national forums. On 25 February, 2016, the Open Dialog Foundation raised the case of Mr Hallyyev at an event organized jointly with RFE/RL and focusing on persecution of independent media in Central Asia. The side-event at the OSCE



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Parliamentary Assembly Winter Meeting was hosted by a Spanish Member of the Parliament, Mr Ignacio Sánchez Amor (the Socialist Workers' Party).

**The Open Dialog Foundation** is a non-governmental organization established in Poland, in 2009. The statutory objectives of the Foundation include promotion, support and protection of human rights, democracy and rule of law in the post-Soviet area. The Foundation pursues its goals through the organisation of observation missions, including election observation and monitoring of the human rights situation in the post-Soviet countries. Significant areas of the Foundation's activities also include support programmes for political prisoners and refugees. Based on these activities, the Foundation creates reports and distributes them among the institutions of the EU, the CoE, the OSCE, the UN and other international organisations, foreign ministries and parliaments, think-tanks, media and CSOs. The Foundation has its permanent representative offices in Warsaw, Kyiv and Brussels. The website of the Foundation is [www.odfoundation.eu](http://www.odfoundation.eu)

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