



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE CiO Warsaw Human Dimension Conference Warsaw, 26 September – 7 October 2022

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#### EU statement – Plenary session 5 Tolerance and Non-Discrimination II

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1. Against the backdrop of Russia's unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, the OSCE commitments on combating all forms of intolerance and discrimination, and protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons in full equality before the law are more relevant than ever. The EUMS remain resolute to their full implementation, holding them to be crucial to regional peace and stability. We thank the speakers and reiterate our full support to the autonomy and mandate of the autonomous institutions.
2. Providing early warning and seeking early action with regard to tensions involving persons belonging to national minorities is central to the OSCE concept of comprehensive security. We underline the crucial role of the HCNM's mandate and the importance of the effective implementation of OSCE commitments and legislation on the protection of human rights, including those of persons belonging to national minorities, and their non-discriminatory treatment throughout the territory of participating States.
3. We condemn Russia's misuse of minority issues to justify its military aggression against Ukraine. The Russian Federation is obliged by international law to observe human rights, including those of persons belonging to national minorities, in all territories temporarily under its illegal military control or held by Russia-backed armed formations.
4. Russia's war of aggression has caused millions of people to flee their homes. The EU and its Member States have reacted swiftly and will continue to provide protection –

humanitarian, medical and financial, to those seeking shelter, as well as well as grant access to education and labour markets.

5. This approach has been consistent with the EU and its MS resolute commitment to protect and promote the rights of refugees, displaced persons and migrants – with women and children warranting particular protection from gender based-violence and all forms of exploitation and trafficking. The EU's action focuses on providing protection in humanitarian crises, facilitating access to international protection, combatting trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of migrants, combating the instrumentalization of asylum seekers and refugees, as well as addressing the root causes that compel people to leave their homes. The EU remains committed to actively promoting the integration of migrant workers in societies where they are lawfully residing. Successful integration policies promote stability and cohesion within our societies.
6. The EUMS are also committed to ensuring a non-discriminatory treatment of displaced members of Roma and Sinti communities, and preventing stereotyping and segregation, a matter underlined also by ODIHR Director in the beginning of the war. We commend the work of civil society that has been providing assistance to Roma refugees.
7. Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine underlines also the urgent need to redouble our efforts in addressing sexual violence as a tactic of war, condemned as such by UN Security Council resolution 1820. The Moscow Mechanism experts, and others, reported widespread rape, sexual violence and sexual harassment committed by Russian armed forces, including against children. These flagrant and unacceptable violations of human rights and international humanitarian law must be investigated and full accountability ensured. The use of sexual violence in armed conflict is a war crime. The EU will support Ukrainian and international investigations aimed at holding accountable the perpetrators of these crimes.
8. Finally, gender equality is a core principle of the European Union. We share a vision of a gender-equal Europe by 2025. We stand ready to work tirelessly, inside the EU and with our international partners, to make it a reality.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, ALBANIA\*, UKRAINE and REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, the Potential Candidate Country

GEORGIA, the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

\* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.