



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No. 1410 Vienna, 9 February 2023

#### EU Statement in response to the Presentations by the Chairpersons of the Three Committees

1. The European Union thanks the Chairpersons of the Security, the Economic and Environmental and the Human Dimension Committees for presenting their work plans for this year and for ensuring a collaborative approach among the Committees and with participating States. As Russia's brutal and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine approaches the one-year mark, your stewardship of the three OSCE Committees will not be an easy task. Be assured of the EU's full support in addressing the negative cross-dimensional impact of Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, the OSCE area and beyond.
2. The European Union congratulates Ambassador Stoian and his team on assuming the Chairpersonship of the Security Committee. We attach great importance to the Security Committee, as a forum for discussing non-military security issues and a platform for advancing OSCE commitments related to transnational threats. The first meeting of the Committee on 30 January provided an excellent opportunity to reflect on topics for the work of the Security Committee in 2023. We appreciate the Chair's commitment to focus the work of the Committee on addressing the impact of Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine across the first dimension and we strongly support the flexible approach by the Chair to adapt the programme in light of the developments on the ground. In this context, the EU welcomes the topics selected for the meetings in the first half of the year, in particular the protection of critical infrastructure, the implications of cyberattacks on security, conflict-related disinformation, addressing border security and management, countering trafficking

in human beings, in particular children. We also welcome the attention placed on gender mainstreaming and the inclusion of the Women, Peace and Security agenda into the work of the Committee.

3. Regarding the working methods of the Committee, we commend your inclusive and consultative approach. We support your intention to promote interactive discussions and your commitment to ensure the full, equal and meaningful representation of female experts in the first dimension, as well as the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders from civil society, academia and field operations, including representatives from Ukraine.
4. We would like to welcome Ambassador Raunig's continuation in his role as the Chair of the Economic and Environmental Committee. We appreciate your dedication to the activities and topics of the Second Dimension and we support your vision of upholding the balance of economic and environmental topics. We commend your intention to keep the focus on the most pertinent issue, which is the risks to security from environmental degradation and damage to critical energy infrastructure resulting from Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. In addition, Russia's senseless war against Ukraine has triggered unprecedented spikes in global energy prices and increased vulnerability to climate change, and we remain determined to support Ukraine's resilience and reconstruction. We are happy to see a variety of relevant topics in the EEC work plan, such as energy security and resilience of energy infrastructure, food security, as well as the impact of digitalisation and new technologies on human capital development, transboundary water management, connectivity, the fight against corruption and the protection of the environment and biodiversity.
5. In regard to the working methods of the Committee, the EU looks forward to including relevant stakeholders, such as civil society and the private sector, including from Ukraine, in our discussions, and continuing our active engagement with the field operations, which are essential for getting a clearer picture of concrete economic and environmental activities on the ground.
6. We are pleased that Ambassador Callan and her team have taken up the important task of chairing the Human Dimension Committee and look forward to our good

cooperation in the Human Dimension, which should remain at the forefront of our work. We welcome the extensive choice of topics, in particular the focus on fundamental freedoms and gender equality. We value your intention to keep the focus on the most pertinent issue: Russia's unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, and its deplorable impact on the human rights situation in the region. As Russia continues its brutal war of aggression, we fully trust your guidance and judgement in offering us the opportunity to reflect on the most pressing issues. In this context, we see topics such as: the rights of children in conflict; the reported forcible deportations and transfer of Ukrainian citizens, including children, to Russia and to Ukraine's territories temporarily occupied by Russia; the reported forced adoptions of Ukrainian children into Russian families; political prisoners; torture and ill-treatment; sexual and gender-based violence in conflict, as well as international accountability as needing our particular attention, together with the priorities already introduced by the Chair.

7. We appreciate your intention to continue to involve a broad range of stakeholders in the HDC, and encourage interactive discussions. We also welcome plans to continue the practice of voluntary reporting. We encourage participating States to make full use of this agenda item, for example to follow up on ODIHR's electoral recommendations.
8. In conclusion, we express our full support to the Chairs of the three Committees and their teams and thank them for their leadership. Allow us also to express our gratitude to Ambassadors Kinnear and Karlsen and their teams for their excellent work in steering the work of the Security and Human Dimension Committees last year. The Committees' work embodies the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security and we look forward to actively supporting and contributing to it.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, ALBANIA\*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA\*, the Potential Candidate Country GEORGIA, and the EFTA country LIECHTENSTEIN, member of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA, MONACO and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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