



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No.1447 Vienna, 19 October 2023

EU Statement

1. Today, the members of the European Council have adopted a statement that sets the EU's common position on the unfolding situation in the Middle East.
2. The European Union condemns in the strongest possible terms Hamas and its brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks across Israel and deeply deplores the loss of lives. There is no justification for terror. We strongly emphasize Israel's right to defend itself in line with humanitarian and international law in the face of such violent and indiscriminate attacks. We reiterate the importance to ensure the protection of all civilians at all times in line with International Humanitarian Law.
3. We call on Hamas to immediately release all hostages without any precondition. We reiterate the importance of the provision of urgent humanitarian aid and stand ready to continue supporting those civilians most in need in Gaza in coordination with partners, ensuring that such assistance is not abused by terrorist organisations. It is crucial to prevent regional escalation.
4. We remain committed to a lasting and sustainable peace based on the two-state solution through reinvigorated efforts in the Middle East Peace Process. We underline the need to engage broadly with the legitimate Palestinian authorities as well as regional and international partners who could have a positive role to play in preventing further escalation.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, and BOSNIA and

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

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