



## **EUROPEAN UNION**

### **OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°1105 Vienna, 14 May 2025**

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#### **EU Opening Statement**

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1. Dear Secretary General Vseiov, thank you for joining the Forum for Security Co-operation today and for presenting Estonia's priorities for the next months under your FSC Chairpersonship. The European Union and its Member States congratulate Estonia on assuming the Chair, and we look forward to cooperating with Ambassador Tael and her able team over this trimester.
2. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and its repercussions for European and global security rightly remain at the top of this Forum's agenda. It remains a key matter for us to address in our weekly meetings, also evidenced by Russia's attacks we witnessed since this Forum last met. The EU remains steadfast in its commitment to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, grounded in the principles of the UN Charter and international law and welcomes all efforts towards achieving such peace. We join Ukraine and international partners, including the United States, in calling for a full, unconditional ceasefire of at least 30 days. This pause in hostilities could serve as a vital step toward reducing civilian suffering and allow space for meaningful talks for genuine peace aimed at ending Russia's war of aggression and restoring a comprehensive, just and lasting peace. As in the past, it is now for Russia to show its willingness to achieve peace. The EU also underlines its unwavering commitment to help Ukraine exercise its inherent right of self-defence against the Russian aggression and to build a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future.
3. The three topics which you have chosen for the Security Dialogues clearly merit our attention. The Code of Conduct is a fundamental OSCE document addressing the issue of democratic control of the armed forces and emphasises the principles of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in the use of force and requiring the participating States to adopt measures to ensure compliance with, and the consistency of their defence policies with IHL. In this context, we encourage further

efforts to ensure accountability for all international crimes and human rights violations and abuses.

4. We welcome your specific focus within the Women, Peace and Security agenda on the role of women in strengthening defence and ensuring resilience. The significant role of women in political-military processes, peacebuilding and security structures has already been recognised by participating States in the OSCE Action Plan for the promotion of Gender Equality from 2004 and three further OSCE ministerial decisions. These are commitments that we all have agreed on and continuing to address this matter is key as we strive for their implementation.
5. Your proposed joint FSC-PC meeting focusing on protection of children in armed conflicts remains very timely. Armed conflict and situations of violence impose immense suffering on children as children living in war and conflict zones, including Ukraine, are the primary innocent victims of armed conflicts.
6. We would like to thank Spain for guiding our work over the past four months and wish it all the best in its Troika duties, now joined by Finland. We also thank Denmark, now departing the Troika, for its work over the past year.
7. Dear Ambassador, please rest assured of the full support of the EU and its Member States for your Chairpersonship. We look forward to working with you and your team, and we count on your leadership as we continue to address the politico-military matters that this Forum is mandated to deal with.

Thank you.

*Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.*