



## **EUROPEAN UNION**

### **OSCE Permanent Council No. 1502 Vienna, 12 December 2024**

#### **EU Statement in response to Presentation by the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in- Office on Combatting Corruption, Prof. Anita Ramasastry**

1. The European Union warmly welcomes Special Representative Professor Anita Ramasastry to the Permanent Council and thanks her for her valuable work and her insightful presentation.
2. As we have heard, corruption erodes trust in public institutions, the rule of law and fundamental rights, and is highly damaging to economies and societies as a whole. Moreover, corruption constitutes a threat to security by enabling organised and other serious crime. In this regard, the risks of corruption have been exacerbated not only by the COVID-19 pandemic, but also by economic recovery measures, the green transition, and food insecurity, as a consequence of Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine.
3. These challenges underscore the need to prioritise anti-corruption efforts within the OSCE. The EU reiterates its strong commitment to combating corruption at all levels as a cornerstone of the rule of law in the OSCE area and beyond.
4. We emphasise the importance of integrating a gender-sensitive approach and civil society engagement in anti-corruption efforts. In particular, we commend the important work of the Aarhus Centres in addressing the risks of corruption and

promoting transparency in the renewable energy sector, which is vital for the clean energy transition.

5. Good governance and anti-corruption measures foster a favourable investment climate, while contributing to inclusive, sustainable and better-integrated economies. Moreover, transparency is essential for a safe and responsible economic recovery. In this context, the EU Anti-corruption Package presented in May 2023 aims to enhance accountability and build a culture of integrity in the public sector. Anti-corruption is also an important component of the EU Recovery and Resilience Plans, which include built-in mechanisms to prevent fraud, corruption and conflicts of interest.
6. The EU also prioritises good governance and anti-corruption efforts in its neighbourhood policy and accession processes, as these are essential for progress towards EU membership.
7. We reiterate our support for the OSCE's autonomous institutions, field missions and the Secretariat's work in this field, including the OCEEA's best practice guide on developing a positive climate for business and investment. We also welcome the first OSCE conference commemorating International Anti-Corruption Day, organised jointly this week, on 9 December, by OCEEA and ODIHR. We look forward to the OSCE's progress report "From Commitment to Action: OSCE's Anti-Corruption and Good Governance Progress Report 2023-2024".
8. Lastly, we highlight the significant financial and expert support provided by EU Member States for OSCE extra-budgetary projects, and we welcome the concrete support provided to several OSCE participating States in combating corruption and illegal activities with the use of virtual assets and cryptocurrencies.

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

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