



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council N° 1190
Vienna, 21 June 2018**

**EU Statement on International Day for the Elimination of
Sexual Violence in Conflict**

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict on 19 June 2018, the European Union would like to reaffirm its strongest support for zero tolerance to any form of sexual violence. Sexual violence is a flagrant and unacceptable violation of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Indeed, as has been declared in a joint statement of the European Commission on that day, sexual violence against women and girls, boys and men is a despicable crime, and even more so when it occurs in situations of conflict, or as a tactic of war. It is a grave violation of human rights and international humanitarian law. For this reason, the European Union always has and will continue to condemn and fight sexual violence in conflict with the strongest commitment.

All survivors must be guaranteed access to comprehensive psychological and health care services, as well as justice and reparations. We expect all states to conduct effective investigation of those crimes, to bring perpetrators to justice and to ensure accountability for past crimes, also to prevent future atrocities.

Children born following wartime rape and their mothers need to be protected and granted rights, as they often face exclusion and stigmatisation from their own communities and families. We should never forget those victims of war and stand in full support with them.

The EU has been working hand in hand with international partners and civil society to enshrine the respect of fundamental human rights in peacebuilding efforts worldwide.

We cannot be passive witness of crimes having such deep and long-term consequences on human beings, communities and entire societies. We will continue investing in raising awareness, while building more equal, educated and respectful societies within and outside our borders. This is and will stay at the core of the EU institutions and with partners around the world.

We are fully determined to continue taking concrete actions to prevent and eliminate sexual and gender-based violence, in times of peace or conflict.

Elimination of sexual violence in conflict is also included in the OSCE commitments, in particular Ministerial Council Decision 7/14 on preventing and combating violence against women and all participating States should focus on their implementation. The EU would like to recall that in this Decision agreement was reached in five areas: legal framework, prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership. It would be useful to take stock of the progress in these areas, also to better focus the OSCE's work in this respect.

The implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and subsequent related resolutions is highly relevant for the OSCE, not least with regard to preventing sexual violence in conflict. We recall in this context the UNSCR 2242, which underlines the important role of regional organisations to implement fully the relevant provisions of Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. We feel there is more that can and should be done and restate our support for the adoption of an OSCE-Wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ARMENIA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.