



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No. 1296 Vienna, 17 December 2020

#### **EU Statement in response to the Presentation by the Special Representative on Youth and Security, Ms Keisi Seferi**

The European Union warmly welcomes the Special Representative of the Chairperson in Office on Youth and Security Ms Keisi Seferi and thanks her for her presentation.

We commend the work of Ms Keisi Seferi and Ms Alba Brojka throughout the year as well as the continued support of the Albanian Chairperson in Office to the youth and security agenda. We second their call on the OSCE participating States to join international efforts in upholding the role of youth in contributing to the culture of peace, dialogue, justice, trust and reconciliation.

We consider it important to reflect on the way to enhance young people's role in the implementation of commitments in all three dimensions of the OSCE, having in mind the occasion of the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, the recently adopted UNSCR 2535 (2020), and the 2018 Ministerial Council Declaration on the Role of Youth in Contributing to Peace and Security Efforts. We stand ready to explore and contribute to developing options for the OSCE's enhanced engagement with the youth.

Young people, in particular those already vulnerable, have been disproportionately affected by the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic. The impact on youth employment has been severe, resulting in loss of opportunities and worsening quality of jobs. Education systems and social protections systems have been gravely affected. Yet across the OSCE region, many young women and men have led innovative initiatives aimed at building resilient communities. The webinar "COVID-19 Generation", organized by the Albanian Chair and the Office of the

OSCE Secretary General, highlighted the need for intergenerational solidarity and global, innovative and inclusive policy solutions in order to avoid that the youth affected by the pandemic becomes a COVID-19 lost generation.

We continue to encourage the OSCE and its participating States to explore ways in which the 2017 Malaga Decalogue could be fully integrated into the work of the OSCE, such as the GEMS awards initiative launched by the Italian Chairmanship in 2018. We look forward to other initiatives of this kind and stand ready to support them.

We continue to encourage participating States and Partners for Cooperation to use the platform of the OSCE Group of Friends of Youth and Security, chaired by Spain, and to actively engage in the debates in order to advance the youth and security agenda. We wish to thank the Office of the OSCE Secretary General as well as successive Chairpersonships and Troikas for the support provided to the Chair of the Group.

We welcome the work of the OSCE executive structures and field operations on the exchange of best practices on youth related issues. We encourage initiatives aimed at giving youth a voice, such as the “Debating Perspectives 2030 Roadshow”, launched in Albania, and promoted in Central Asia and Poland.

We acknowledge the valuable work that has been done since 2015 by the Youth and Security Special Representatives and we commend the intention of the incoming Swedish Chairpersonship to continue to support their work. We look forward to the fruitful co-operation with the Special Representative on Youth and Security Rosaline Marbinah in the coming year.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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