



## **EUROPEAN UNION**

### **OSCE Permanent Council No.1519 Vienna, 8 May 2025**

#### **EU Statement on Europe Day**

Madam/Mr. Chair,

1. Tomorrow, on 9 May, we celebrate Europe Day – a moment to reflect on the founding vision of the European Union: peace, unity, cooperation, and solidarity among States. It is a reminder that from the devastation of war, we chose integration over division, dialogue over confrontation, and cooperation over isolation, building a union based on shared values and a common future.
2. Today, sadly, we are confronted with the painful reality that war has returned to Europe. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is an existential challenge to European and global security. As we face a more contested and fragmented world, the European Union remains steadfast in its commitment to peace and partnership – both within our borders and promoting these values globally, in particular by supporting Ukraine. In this endeavour, the OSCE continues to provide a unique platform for comprehensive discussions on security across the three dimensions, retaining a large and unique toolbox for conflict prevention and resolution, and the EU reaffirms its strong support for the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security.
3. The European Union believes that peace is not merely the absence of war, but also the presence of, and respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These are not abstract principles. They are the foundation of the European project, the bedrock of peaceful co-

existence, and they are also central to the work of this Organisation, as enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and other core OSCE principles and commitments. Gender equality is directly related to the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security and is a core value of the EU.

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4. The EU is adapting to a rapidly changing world. Global cooperation is increasingly being challenged by geopolitical tensions and rivalries. Yet we remain committed to engaging with partners worldwide to promote shared stability, prosperity and universal values.
5. As European Council President Costa rightly said: *"Europe is a peace project, but peace without defence is an illusion."* In an increasingly changing environment, we must also strengthen our ability to act. The Versailles Declaration of March 2022 and the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence outlined a clear direction: Europe must become more sovereign, more responsible for its own security, and better equipped to deal autonomously with immediate and future challenges and threats with a 360° approach. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has made the stakes abundantly clear. The EU is therefore stepping up its security and defence capabilities – in close cooperation with our partners. This is not just a government effort – it is a society-wide mission.
6. At the same time, we are reinforcing the resilience of our Union – ensuring the competitiveness of our economy, pursuing green transition and upholding a just and ambitious climate agenda, alongside our digital transformation. We do this not in isolation, but in partnership with others. Through initiatives such as the Global Gateway, the EU is investing in sustainable infrastructure that brings benefits for both Europe and our partners – building long-term, mutually beneficial relationships based on trust, transparency and shared interest.

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7. The European Union stands firm on the universal values we have upheld collectively since 1945. History has taught us – often at a painful price – that isolationism and unilateralism breed instability. Eighty years ago, in

response to the horrors of the Second World War, the United Nations was established to ensure that such atrocities would never be repeated. We continue to believe in effective multilateralism, in the power of global institutions to solve the most pressing challenges of our time. We are ready to work with all those committed to shaping a fairer, safer, more sustainable future, an international order founded on international law, with the United Nations at its core. The EU has always upheld, and will continue to uphold, the UN Charter and its fundamental principles, notably sovereignty, equality of states, territorial integrity, political independence, and the right to self-determination.

8. We are a reliable, principled and forward-looking global partner:
  - A partner for prosperity, promoting open economies and fair, rules-based trade.
  - A partner for security, contributing to peace and stability through our missions, operations, and strategic partnerships.
  - And a partner for those most in need, providing life-saving humanitarian assistance across the globe.
9. We are also committed to addressing the defining challenge of our generation: climate change. Climate adaptation is central to our external action, and our investments in clean energy, mobility and water are helping to unlock opportunities for millions around the world. The EU stands ready to work with all partners to maintain momentum on the global clean energy transition and deliver on our shared commitments.

Madam/Mr. Chair,

10. Europe Day is more than a celebration – it is a reaffirmation of our choice to build peace through cooperation, unity through diversity, and strength through solidarity. These principles are as relevant today as they were 75 years ago. And they remain the compass guiding the EU's engagement here in the OSCE and beyond.

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