



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1564 Vienna, 14 May 2026

EU Statement in response to the report by the Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan

The European Union warmly welcomes Ambassador Antti Karttunen to the Permanent Council and commends him and his team for their outstanding work.

We commend OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan (PCUz) for its balanced and impactful engagement across all three OSCE dimensions, supporting Uzbekistan's reform agenda and upholding OSCE commitments. We appreciate the PCUz's close cooperation with national authorities and international partners, while underlining the importance of activities across all three dimensions and of maintaining a country-wide presence. The PCUz's work remains vital, particularly as Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine continues, with far-reaching socio-economic repercussions also for Central Asia.

Visits of the OSCE high level representatives to Uzbekistan, including the visit of the former Chairperson-in-Office, Finnish Foreign Minister Ms Elina Valtonen, and of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, have further underscored the long-standing cooperation between Uzbekistan and the OSCE.

We welcome PCUz's work on countering terrorism and violent extremism, including the media literacy training for 150 young professionals and the first Regional Expert Meeting of the OSCE Network for Women Professionals. We commend efforts to strengthen cybersecurity, including the training for e-government specialists and judicial representatives on digital evidence and cybercrime investigations. We further commend PCUz's capacity-building efforts in the area of border management and the assistance provided in combatting illicit drug trafficking and organized crime. We appreciate the PCUz's support in organizing the first *Fergana Peace Forum* in October 2025. We also positively note the engagement of youth in the Forum, as well as the wider activities aimed at engaging youth in the peace and security agenda.

PCUZ's support for good governance and anti-corruption is particularly noteworthy, as well as the efforts to reinforce professional integrity, support public administration reform, and anti-corruption practices among central and local officials. We welcome the promotion of inclusive economic development, notably the continued support to regional and international forums on women's entrepreneurship, implementation of the Extra-Budgetary project on female labour migration and the organization of IT, e-commerce, and entrepreneurship trainings in Bukhara and Karakalpakstan, which benefitted 550 women and young people. We also appreciate activities aimed at promoting environmental sustainability and climate resilience, especially PCUZ's support to Uzbekistan's transition towards a green economy and strengthened monitoring of water pollution and biodiversity loss.

We appreciate the PCUZ's efforts to advance protection and respect for human rights, to strengthen the rule of law and fight against torture and ill-treatment. The EU welcomes all activities aimed at strengthening judicial oversight and the capacity of investigative judges. We welcome organization of training workshops for journalists and media actors, including on emerging technologies. In the area of combatting trafficking in human beings, the EU values the trauma-informed approach and the focus on protecting vulnerable groups. We appreciate the work on advancing gender equality and highlight PCUZ's engagement in consultations for the new National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS).

The EU takes note of the PCUZ's plans to develop a new Joint Road Map for 2027–2028 with national partners. We encourage a continued focus on strategic priorities where the OSCE expertise can make the most tangible difference.

Mr. Chair,

Uzbekistan is an important strategic partner for the EU in Central Asia. Our relations reached a historic milestone with President Mirziyoyev's visit to Brussels in October 2025 and the signing of the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA), which embeds cooperation on the rule of law, human rights, climate action, digitalisation, and critical raw materials.

In conclusion, the European Union thanks Ambassador Antti Karttunen and his team for their valuable work and wishes them every success.

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