



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1569 Vienna, 25 June 2026

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

On the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, the European Union solemnly reaffirms its commitment to preventing and addressing conflict-related sexual violence, holding perpetrators accountable and supporting survivors and their communities.

Sexual violence in conflict remains one of the most egregious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. It is used as a tactic of war and repression, aimed at terrorizing civilians, destroying communities, and destabilizing societies. It affects women and girls, men and boys, leaving deep physical and psychological scars that last long after the guns fall silent.

The UN Secretary-General's annual report on conflict-related sexual violence portrays a worsening global crisis. Cases are increasing in scale and brutality, while international capacity to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence is declining. Verified cases more than doubled from the previous year, reaching nearly 10,000, although the true number is likely far higher due to widespread underreporting. Women and girls remain the primary victims, but the report also notes a clear rise in sexual violence against men and boys, particularly in detention settings. The report lists Russian armed and security forces among parties credibly suspected of committing conflict-related sexual violence, pointing to recurring patterns rather than isolated incidents and describes the horrors inflicted by Russia on prisoners of war and civilians. These findings align with evidence of Russia's systematic and widespread human rights violations documented under the OSCE Moscow Mechanism, ODIHR interim reports, the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, and the International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine.

The European Union strongly condemns all forms of sexual and gender-based violence and reiterates its steadfast commitment to upholding international human rights law and international humanitarian law and to ending impunity for international crimes. We call on participating States to conduct effective investigations into these crimes, bring perpetrators to justice, ensure accountability, and provide all survivors with safe and unhindered access to justice, adequate redress, and reparations. We commend the tireless efforts and contributions of civil society and human rights defenders to this end.

We underline the urgent need to strengthen our efforts to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the subsequent UNSC resolutions. OSCE has an important role to play in fulfilling the *Women, Peace and Security agenda*. We therefore commend ODIHR, the Secretariat and the field missions for their continuous engagement in this regard. We welcome OSCE-wide Roadmap on WPS launched last year, to which many participating States have already pledged to. We call on all participating States to step up efforts to fully implement all OSCE commitments related to the *Women, Peace and Security agenda*.

We further call on the international community to redouble the efforts to eliminate all forms of sexual and gender-based violence. Preventing and eradicating conflict-related sexual violence is not only a moral imperative, but a clear obligation under international law.

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