



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE 101st Joint FSC - PC meeting
Vienna, 15 July 2026**

**EU Statement on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of
Security: Conflict related Human Rights Violations**

Chairs, the European Union and its Member States commend you for holding this important Security Dialogue on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico Military Aspects of Security, with a focus on conflict related human rights violations. We also thank the invited speakers for their insightful presentations. The Code of Conduct is a fundamental and unique OSCE document in the politico-military security dimension fostering democracy. Through the Code of Conduct, the participating States commit themselves to the principles of the democratic control of armed forces, the rule of law with regard to national security policies and doctrines, the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of armed forces personnel, as well as individual accountability under international humanitarian law.

The Code provides normative, ethical and political standards to guide all participating States in strengthening and upholding comprehensive and indivisible security in the OSCE area through clear standards applicable to inter-state and intra-state behaviour, including commitments relating to human rights. It is crucial to emphasise that the commitments outlined in the Code of Conduct remain vital, and all participating States have a responsibility to implement them both in letter and spirit.

The Russian Federation is violating the Code of Conduct for the fifth year of its illegal, unprovoked and unjustifiable war of aggression including its flagrant disregard for the Helsinki Final Act (CoC Paragraph 7), its disregard of sovereign equality and the right of states to freely to choose its own security arrangements, in accordance with international law and with commitments to CSCE principles and objectives. (CoC Paragraph 10)

Independent reports, including from the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, ODIHR and under the Moscow Mechanism, show that Russia's war of

aggression against Ukraine has caused grave and widespread violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Paragraph 34 of the Code specifies that each participating State will ensure that its armed forces are, in peace and in war, commanded, manned, trained and equipped in ways that are consistent with the provisions of international law and its respective obligations and commitments related to the use of armed forces in armed conflict, including as applicable the Hague Conventions of 1907 and 1954, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the 1977 Protocols Additional thereto, as well as the 1980 Convention on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons. According to paragraphs 29 and 30 of the Code of Conduct the participating States are required to instruct members of the armed forces in international humanitarian law of war. We condemn in the strongest terms Russia's relentless attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure that demonstrate its blatant disregard for international law and for human life. We also condemn the deliberate targeting of civilians based on fabricated claims of military relevance. This exploitation of fake pretexts constitutes a flagrant violation of the principle of distinction under Article 51 and 52 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions.

In agreeing paragraph 31 of the Code, participating States assumed responsibility to ensure that their armed forces personnel vested with command authority exercise it in accordance with relevant national as well as international law and are made aware that they can be held individually accountable under those laws for the unlawful exercise of such authority. The Code unequivocally stipulates that no order may be given that is contrary to national or international law. The responsibility of superiors does not relieve subordinates from any of their individual responsibilities not to carry out unlawful orders. We reaffirm our strong commitment to ensuring full accountability for war crimes and the other most serious crimes committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine including through our support for the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine and the Council of Europe's Register of Damage for Ukraine.

Additionally, paragraph 37 stipulates that the use of the armed forces cannot limit the peaceful and lawful exercise of citizens' human and civil rights or deprive them of their national, religious, cultural, linguistic, or ethnic identity.

Chairs, it is our shared responsibility to ensure that the Forum for Security Co-operation continues to be used to assess and review the necessary implementation of the Code of Conduct and that each case of human rights violations is properly investigated and prosecuted in order to ensure accountability for such violations.

Thank you, Chairs.

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