



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No.1540 Vienna, 30 October 2025

EU Statement in response to the Address by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Alain Berset

The European Union warmly welcomes to the Permanent Council the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Alain Berset.

The Council of Europe continues to play a leading role in the promotion and protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law on the continent. These core values remain fundamental, as we continue witnessing democratic backsliding and rising authoritarianism across our region.

Mr. Secretary General,

You are addressing the Permanent Council in critical times for European and global security and stability. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is ongoing, continuing to cause horrendous suffering, ever-increasing civilian casualties and destruction. The European Union supports all efforts towards achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, grounded in the principles of the UN Charter and international law, as well as of the Helsinki Final Act.

We therefore call for accountability for all international crimes and human rights violations and abuses, in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Council of Europe is a key partner in this regard, through its Action Plan for Ukraine, the establishment of a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine to which the European Union is planning to contribute, and the Register of Damage for Ukraine.

The EU priorities for cooperation with the Council of Europe in 2025-2027 underline the continued commitment to the effective functioning of the European human rights system.

Furthermore, they reaffirm the Union's determination to accede to the European Convention on Human Rights, the cornerstone of the Council of Europe and all its activities. We call for the full execution of the Court's judgments by all OSCE participating States. In this context, we reiterate that, despite the fact that Russia ceased to be a party to the European Convention on Human Rights in September 2022, Russia remains obliged to execute its judgements related to violations that occurred before that date.

We welcome and reiterate our support for the regular dialogue and active cooperation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe. As democratic institutions, human rights and fundamental freedoms face numerous challenges across our region, the two organisations share a common goal in promoting stability and security on the basis of these norms and principles. While we acknowledge the continued relevance of the four identified priority areas for enhanced cooperation, the EU emphasizes the potential for further expansion of cooperation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe to ensure accountability, the rule of law, media freedom, the safeguarding of democratic institutions and a free civil society, as well as to combat violence against women.

In conclusion, the EU looks forward to continuing the close cooperation with the OSCE and the Council of Europe. We would like to take this opportunity, Mr. Berset, to thank you for your leadership at the Council of Europe and wish you success in the exercise of your mandate.

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