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**STATEMENT BY  
THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1374th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

19 May 2022

**On the occasion of the International Day against  
Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia**

On 17 May, we celebrated the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. The European Union pays tribute on this occasion to human diversity in all its richness, and to the right of every individual to be proud of who they are, to define their own identity and to love the person they choose. It condemns all discrimination and harassment and all forms of violence, especially the most extreme forms such as murder and acts of torture, committed on the grounds of a person's real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics.

We deeply regret the particularly severe impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine on people in vulnerable situations, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons, as illustrated in the report prepared on 13 April under the OSCE Moscow Mechanism. We emphasize the importance of protecting the safety, dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms of all those fleeing the conflict, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

We remain deeply concerned about the situation in Chechnya, where crimes committed against LGBTI persons are a flagrant violation of Russia's international commitments. We again urge the Russian authorities to conduct a prompt, transparent and thorough investigation into all of these acts and to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice in accordance with the recommendations of the report prepared in 2018 under the Moscow Mechanism.

The European Union remains concerned that sexual orientation and gender identity are still used to justify serious violations of human rights throughout the world and that same-sex sexual relations are still criminalized in some OSCE participating States.

We welcome the contribution of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in supporting civil society organizations working to promote mutual respect and to combat intolerance and discrimination, including hate crimes. We urge the ODIHR, the other autonomous institutions, the field operations and the Secretariat to step up their co-operation in this regard and to deepen their relations with civil society organizations.

In closing, we reiterate our commitment to the promotion and defence of the universality of human rights and emphatically reaffirm that LGBTI persons have the same rights as all other individuals.

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Montenegro<sup>1</sup> and Albania<sup>1</sup>, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

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1 The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.