



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No. 1524 Vienna, 12 June 2025

#### **EU statement in response to the address by the Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism of Malta, H.E. Dr. Ian Borg**

1. The European Union warmly welcomes back to the Permanent Council the former OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism of Malta, H.E. Dr. Ian Borg, in his current capacity as Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.
2. We take this opportunity to thank you once again for your principled leadership during Malta's OSCE Chairpersonship last year. We strongly support the programme of the Maltese Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, including its determination to continue implementing the commitments made at the highest political level at the Reykjavik Summit in May 2023, and to build on the important work of previous Presidencies - Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, and Luxembourg.
3. The EU highly appreciates Malta's focus on promoting accountability for all crimes committed in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The EU remains at the forefront of efforts within the OSCE and the Council of Europe to ensure accountability for all violations of international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law. The Council of Europe is a key partner in this regard, through its Action Plan for Ukraine, its active efforts aimed at the establishment of a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine, and its leadership in setting up the Register of Damage for Ukraine. The EU will continue to cooperate with the Council of Europe in promoting these efforts and welcomes Malta's commitment to advancing these initiatives during its Presidency.

4. We also greatly value Malta's emphasis on promoting equality, the protection of children and the promotion of their best interests, and empowering youth in democratic life. We welcome the upcoming High-Level Stocktaking Conference on the Children of Ukraine and underline the importance of coordinated efforts to address the war's impact on the most vulnerable, particularly children.
5. The EU reiterates that although Russia ceased to be a party to the European Convention on Human Rights in September 2022, it remains obligated to execute judgments of the European Court of Human Rights related to violations committed before that date. We underline the Court's indispensable work and call for the full execution of its judgments by all its Member States.
6. The EU welcomes Malta's continued commitment to multilateralism and to defending the rules-based international order with the UN Charter at its core, including through its successive leadership roles in the UN Security Council, the OSCE, and now the Council of Europe. As we continue to witness democratic backsliding and rising authoritarianism in parts of the OSCE and Council of Europe regions, we will soon mark the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Venice Commission and the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Convention remains a cornerstone of the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, such as freedom of thought, conscience, religion, expression, peaceful assembly and association, and the right to a fair trial, especially where national justice systems fall short. In this context, we also welcome the New Democratic Pact proposed by the Council of Europe's Secretary General.
7. While we support the existing OSCE-Council of Europe cooperation in areas such as counterterrorism, combating trafficking in human beings, promoting tolerance and non-discrimination, and protecting the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, we believe this complementarity can be further strengthened. In particular, we see scope for enhanced cooperation on accountability, the rule of law, media freedom, democratic institutions, and safeguarding a free civil society.

8. In conclusion, the EU looks forward to continued close cooperation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe, and we wish you, Deputy Prime Minister Borg, every success during Malta's Presidency. The EU also takes this opportunity to thank Luxembourg as outgoing Chair, and looks forward to the Republic of Moldova as the next Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

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