



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **OSCE Reinforced Permanent Council No. 1443 Vienna, 26 September 2023**

#### **Statement by the Secretary-General of the European External Action Service, Mr. Stefano Sannino**

Thank you for the invitation, Minister Osmani. The European Union commends North Macedonia and previous OSCE Chairpersonships-in-Office for their efforts to lead the organisation in challenging times marked by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in breach of the UN Charter and the OSCE founding principles.

The EU's support to the OSCE lies in our strong commitment to effective multilateralism, firmly rooted in the respect for the rule of law and international law. In light of Russia's escalating war of aggression against Ukraine, the EU supports the OSCE's contribution in ensuring full accountability for gross violations of international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

The EU deeply regrets that, due to Russia's obstructive attitude so far, the OSCE has not been able to reach a consensus on the Chairpersonship-in-Office for 2024. We reiterate our support for the Estonian candidacy, which is currently, as you said, the sole candidate on the table.

The EU further recognises and supports the efforts of the OSCE, its Secretariat and Secretary General, field missions and three autonomous institutions - the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, and the Representative on Freedom of the Media. We fully support the extension of the mandates for the current Secretary General and the Heads of the three autonomous institutions beyond 2023.

The EU calls on all OSCE participating States to ensure the prompt adoption of the OSCE's budget, with adequate resources, to allow the effective functioning of the OSCE across all three dimensions. It is crucial that the autonomous institutions, the Secretariat, and the field

missions are all adequately funded in order to fulfil their respective mandates. In the absence of an adequate decision, the EU commends the States that contribute extra-budgetary funds to preserve the OSCE's capacity to act.

Russia's unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine is a violation of the core norms, principles and commitments upon which European security is built. It must end immediately and unconditionally. But even today, when the foundations of our European stability are tested, the OSCE must remain committed to its values. And it must continue to deliver important outcomes for European security such as the launch of the Support Programme for Ukraine to which the EU contributes substantially. We will continue to support Ukraine and its people for as long as it takes.

The OSCE is a key component of the European security order. The EU wants to ensure that the OSCE's unique approach to security remains effective. To achieve this goal, we will continue to support the implementation of the OSCE principles and commitments and strengthen the OSCE's capacities and field activities. Our aim is to keep the OSCE as a capable platform for dialogue on peace and security and contribute to its ability to address protracted or emerging conflicts. For this, it is essential that all participating States engage meaningfully and fulfil their responsibilities.