



**EUROPEAN UNION**

**OSCE Warsaw Human Dimension Conference  
6-17 October 2025**

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**EU statement – Plenary session 10  
Fundamental Freedoms II**

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- **Freedom of peaceful assembly and association**
  - **Human Rights Defenders**
  - **National Human Rights Institutions**
  - **Freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief**
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**FINAL (558 words)**

1. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly, Freedom of Association and Freedom of Thought, Conscience, Religion or Belief are fundamental to open and democratic societies. They, among others, are the basis for the work of human rights defenders and civil society organizations engaged in human rights advocacy, including National Human Rights Institutions.
2. OSCE participating States have committed to guarantee those rights to every individual without discrimination.
3. The EU deeply regrets that the rights of peaceful assembly and of association are being restricted and violated in various parts in the OSCE region. As highlighted by the Moscow Mechanism, violations are particularly widespread in Russia and Belarus, and in the Ukrainian territories temporarily and illegally occupied by Russia.
4. In Russia, drastic measures to suppress opposing voices have created a climate of fear and intimidation. The freedoms of peaceful assembly and association no longer exists in Russia. The EU strongly condemns Russia's continued use of repressive legislation and politically motivated trials, especially the use of laws regarding so-called "foreign agents" and "extremism" or "undesirable organizations". The EU stands in solidarity with those who strive for an open and democratic Russia.

5. In Belarus, the rights to freedom of assembly and association have been severely violated through the repression of peaceful demonstrations, the destruction of a large part of civil society, and the targeting of independent political parties and associations.
6. In Georgia, the authorities have resorted to intimidation tactics and violence to silence dissenting voices. Peaceful protesters have been targeted for exercising their fundamental rights. Hastily adopted legal amendments significantly undermine the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and media freedom. We strongly urge Georgia to continue to constructively engage with OSCE institutions and make use of their expertise.
7. Freedom of religion or belief remains high on the EU's international human rights agenda. We promote and protect the right for everybody to have or not to have a religion or belief, as well as the freedom to change their religion or belief and to manifest their religion or belief, in public or in private, alone or in community.
8. The EU unequivocally condemns all acts of discrimination, intolerance, violence or persecution, including those based on grounds of religion or belief and rejects any form of incitement to religious hatred.
9. The EU will continue to support the work of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI), including those at risk, as well as human rights defenders and civil society organizations. The EU will continue to condemn reprisals against human rights defenders, their families, lawyers and civil society organisations.
10. In Copenhagen 1990, the participating States pledged to "facilitate the establishment and strengthening of independent national institutions in the area of human rights and the rule of law". The EU calls on all OSCE participating states to ensure that NHRIs are independent, receive the necessary human and financial resources, and are systematically consulted in all relevant policymaking and legislative processes.
11. The EU pays particular attention to at-risk NHRIs. The EU Human Rights Defenders Mechanism, as a flagship initiative funded by the EU to protect and support human rights defenders who are at risk, has supported more than 85,000 individuals from 113 countries since its establishment in 2015. This EU's

emergency provides assistance also for people working for independent NHRIs who face risks because of their work defending human rights.

[Alignments]