



EUROPEAN UNION

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

**EU statement – Plenary session 4
Rule of Law I**

FINAL (615 words)

1. Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment are abhorrent violations of human rights, human integrity and human dignity that run counter to international law and the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security.
2. Our OSCE commitments and international obligations are clear: The prohibition of torture is absolute and unconditional. Yet, five years on from the 2020 Tirana Ministerial Council Decision that saw all participating states committing to working to further prevent and eradicate it, the use of torture in the OSCE region persists.
3. Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine continues to stand out as the most egregious example in our region of ongoing widespread and systematic use of torture, according to by various international mechanisms including the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU), the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, and the OSCE Moscow Mechanism. The EU will continue to support all accountability efforts, in the OSCE and beyond.
4. Further, while the EU take note of the release of several political prisoners in Belarus, we remain deeply concerned for the remaining 1198 political prisoners often held under life threatening conditions with credible reports of torture and ill-treatment and inhumane conditions of detention. Likewise, we continue to express concern for the ongoing democratic backsliding in Georgia, which

includes excessive use of force by law enforcement officials and urge the authorities to ensure accountability and uphold their OSCE commitments.

5. The European Union reaffirm our strong commitment to preventing and eradicating torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. We urge all participating states to adopt a holistic, victim- and survivor centered and gender-responsive approach, paying special attention to the rights, views and needs of victims and survivors and we stress the importance of documentation as the basis for proper investigation and redress, as set out in the “Méndez Principles”.
6. As we approach the European and World Day Against the Death Penalty, observed on 10 October, we reaffirm the EU’s unequivocal opposition to the death penalty in all cases and in all circumstances as it constitutes a cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, incompatible with the inalienable right to life and with human dignity. We call on those States that still carry out death sentences to introduce a moratorium as a first step towards full abolition. The EU maintains the worldwide abolition of the death penalty at the heart of its priorities and will continue to insist on the upholding of international minimum standards where it is still applied.
7. The application of capital punishment is ineffective, non-deterrent and irreversible, risking the loss of innocent lives, as no legal system is immune to error.
8. More than two thirds of the world’s countries have abolished capital punishment in either law or in practice¹. However, the global trend towards abolition must not be taken for granted. We will not tire of raising awareness to worrying developments regarding the use of this brutal and inhuman punishment and we are committed to ensuring that the whole OSCE area becomes a death penalty-free zone.
9. Finally, the EU reaffirms its fundamental values and principles rooted in international law, in particular international human rights law and humanitarian law and further affirms that the only sustainable response to terrorism and

violent extremism is one based on democracy, the rule of law, transparency, accountability and gender-responsiveness. . Engagement with and inclusion of civil society is crucial to ensuring the effectiveness, transparency and legitimacy of counter-terrorism measures. We recommend all participating States to review counter-terrorism laws and national security related policies, online and offline, and reverse all measures that do not live up to OSCE and international commitments and obligations.

[Alignments]