



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU statement – Plenary session 7 Tolerance and Non-Discrimination II

FINAL (432 words)

1. Against the backdrop of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the OSCE commitments on combating all forms of intolerance and discrimination, and protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons in full equality before the law are more relevant than ever.
2. Providing early warning and seeking early action with regard to tensions involving persons belonging to national minorities is central to the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security. We reiterate our support for the mandate of the autonomous institution of HCNM, which forms a core OSCE conflict prevention instrument. We also reiterate the importance of the effective implementation of OSCE commitments related to human rights, including those of persons belonging to national minorities, and their non-discriminatory treatment throughout the territory of participating States. We highly value the HCNM's crucial role in engaging where tensions involving national minorities arise and protecting our shared principles and commitments, including through clear messages and quiet diplomacy when these are violated.
3. As per the Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations [on National Minorities in Inter-State Relations], the protection of minority rights is the responsibility of the State where the minority resides. We emphasise that the presence of persons belonging to Russian speaking or other minorities on the territory of another state must not be exploited as justification for undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of that state. Russia is obliged by international law to observe human rights, including those of persons belonging to national minorities.
4. With the number of forcibly displaced persons increasing in recent years,

ensuring tolerance and non-discrimination has become a more pressing challenge. EU's relevant policies are founded on the principles of non-discrimination, solidarity and responsibility, as well as upholding the principle of non-refoulement.

5. In this sense, the EUMS are also committed to ensuring a non-discriminatory treatment of Roma and Sinti persons, including those displaced in the context of Russia's war of aggression, and preventing stereotyping and segregation.
6. The 4th Status Report on the Implementation of the OSCE Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area indicated that, despite progress in legislation and policies across the OSCE, more needs to be done to eradicate discrimination and bring about equality of opportunities. We therefore need to strengthen our efforts to implement the existing OSCE commitments. For this reason, the EU for instance, continues to work on the implementation of the EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation for 2020 – 2030. We continue to welcome the persistent efforts of the Contact Point on Roma and Sinti Issues (CPRSI) in supporting participating States to this end.

[Alignments]