



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Warsaw Human Dimension Conference 6 - 17 October 2025

EU statement - Opening Session

FINAL (639 words)

1. The EU thanks the Finnish Chairpersonship and ODIHR for the excellent organisation of the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference. Consensus on the annual mandated HDIM was again hindered by Russia and Belarus, therefore we deeply appreciate this opportunity to engage with civil society representatives, many of whom took great risks to speak to us.
2. We recall the centrality of ODIHR's work and mandate in shaping responses to today's challenges. For over 30 years, OSCE ODIHR has played a fundamental role in preserving and strengthening democratic standards and institutions, and promoting respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights. We will continue to firmly support ODIHR activities, autonomy and mandate for the promotion of democracy, the rule of law and human rights in the OSCE area.
3. We also welcome the presence of the RFoM and HCNM, as well as the OSCE Secretary General, alongside the ODIHR Director, at this opening session. It is our shared responsibility to preserve the strong mandates of the autonomous institutions and field missions, guarantee their effective functioning and adequate budgets. We value their crucial work in supporting participating States implement OSCE commitments.
4. We also use this occasion to yet again call on the Russian Federation to cease, without delay, its war of aggression against Ukraine and to abide by the obligations enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. We call Russia to end all violations, provocations and threats against its neighbours' sovereignty and territorial integrity. The international community must stand firm in demanding adherence to the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and peaceful settlement of disputes. We advocate for

the Organisation's continued engagement in and support to Ukraine, in addressing the consequences of Russia's war of aggression. In this regard, we call for accountability for all international crimes and human rights violations and abuses and recall the important contribution that OSCE can make, through the ODIHR Human Rights Monitoring Initiative and Human Dimension Mechanisms, can bring its contribution. We also thank ODIHR for providing technical and administrative assistance to the expert mission under the recently invoked Moscow Mechanism to establish the facts related to the treatment of the Ukrainian prisoners of war.

5. It is with deep regret that we note a shrinking space for civil society across a number of OSCE states, where legislation and policies are increasingly obstructing the work of civil society organisations and human rights defenders. Our fundamental principles and OSCE commitments continue to be violated on a daily basis. We reiterate that human rights and fundamental freedoms are crucial to advancing the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security. We reiterate the vital role civil society organisations and human rights defenders play in ensuring accountability and sustaining vibrant democracies.
6. The EU remains deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Belarus. While we welcome the recent releases of political prisoners in Belarus, with the engagement of our American partners, there are still at least 1,198 political prisoners unjustly detained. We reiterate our calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all remaining political prisoners in Belarus, for their effective rehabilitation, and for an end to further repression against all segments of Belarusian society.
7. Notwithstanding the EU's ongoing commitment to Georgia's security, we are concerned regarding the worsening political and human rights situation in the country. The EU reiterate its readiness to support the Georgian people's European aspirations, and the country's path towards accession should the Georgian authorities reverse their present course of action.
8. We look forward to constructively engaging in the discussions as well as to the record number of side events. We reaffirm that the EU will continue to call on all participating States, including within the EU, to live up to their international human rights obligations and OSCE commitments, as well as to speak up against the shrinking space and reprisals against civil society.

[Alignments]