



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No.1447 Vienna, 19 October 2023

EU Statement on the International Day of the Girl Child

1. On 11 October, we marked the International Day of The EU remains committed to protecting the rights of girls across the world.
2. Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine continues to cause enormous suffering for the Girl Child, highlighting the needs and challenges girls around the world are facing, while at the same time promoting girls' empowerment and their full enjoyment of human rights. Ukrainian girls and boys – from violence and abuse to loss of crucial livelihoods and rising poverty levels. Children are losing their parents and loved ones and bearing witness to the cruelest of situations. Children continue to be killed, injured, and deeply traumatised by the indiscriminate Russian attacks on Ukraine.
3. According to reports, at least 508 children have been killed and 1135 have been wounded since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. More than 2 million Ukrainian children have been forced to flee the country, and over 1 million children have been displaced within Ukraine. According to the Ukrainian government, a total of 19,546 children have been deported or forcibly displaced. The OSCE Moscow Mechanism reports and ODIHR monitoring have documented cases of rapes and other sexual abuse of Ukrainian girls and boys committed by the Russian Armed Forces in Ukraine.
4. The education of about 4 million schoolchildren in Ukraine is severely affected by Russia's war of aggression. According to the Ukrainian government, only 45% of the students can study face-to-face, 30% learn in a mixed form, and 25% study completely remotely. Thousands of children have never set foot in classrooms or

even met with their teachers and classmates in person. According to UNICEF, the ongoing violence across the country has created a long-lasting child rights crisis.

5. We call on Russia to immediately stop violating international human rights law and international humanitarian law, to stop its illegal, unprovoked, unjustified and brutal war of aggression against Ukraine and to withdraw its forces and equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. The EU remains firmly committed to ensuring full accountability for all war crimes, crimes against humanity and other crimes committed by Russia in connection with its war of aggression against Ukraine, including for the crime of aggression.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA*, the Potential Candidate Country GEORGIA, and the EFTA country ICELAND, member of the European Economic Area, as well as SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.