



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1375 Vienna, 26 May 2022

EU Statement in response to the Report of the Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek and of the Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek

1. The European Union warmly welcomes Ambassador Alexey Rogov and Dr. Alexander Wolters to the Permanent Council and thanks Ambassador Rogov for his comprehensive report.
2. We appreciate the Programme Office's achievements in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which is expected to have significant consequences for the economy of the Kyrgyz Republic. We take positive note of the good cooperation between the Programme Office and the host authorities and civil society, including through the Consultative Mechanism and high-level meetings.
3. In the first dimension, we particularly support the capacity-building activities aimed at preventing violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. We endorse the work done in the field of non-proliferation, particularly the Programme Office's work with the Kyrgyz Republic in implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1540 against the proliferation of weapons of mass-destruction and in amending procedures on export control. Furthermore, we commend innovative steps such as the first national "Cyber drills" simulation, organised with the Kyrgyz Coordination Centre on Cybersecurity of the Committee for National Security, and the first countrywide Simulation Exercise on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, organized in cooperation with OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator Richey.
4. Regarding the second dimension, we support the Programme Office's activities to further connectivity, cross-border trade, economic development, anti-corruption, green economy, and combatting climate change. We recognise the tangible results of the support services for local entrepreneurs in the provinces, including the launch

of 22 new businesses with 94 new jobs created, which is particularly important in the light of the economic consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

5. Concerning the third dimension, we welcome the activities related to judicial, electoral and penitentiary reform, including torture prevention. We also welcome the Programme Office's continued efforts to support the Kyrgyz Republic in its constitutional transition and particularly appreciate the capacity-building activities for members of the election commission. The Programme Office's capacity-building seminar for 170 district election commission members is just one example in this regard.
6. We commend the Programme Office for advancing women's participation in all aspects of comprehensive security. Regarding the Programme Office's support to the Kyrgyz Republic in implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325, we would be keen to learn more about the role women can play in the resolution of recurring border conflicts. We continue to be concerned about the continuing tensions at the border between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Tajikistan and see value in deeper cooperation on demarcation and border- and water management.
7. On this occasion, we highlight the EU Strategy on Central Asia and the Global Gateway Initiative, which focus on promoting resilience, prosperity, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and regional cooperation. As expressed by the EU Special Representatives Hakala and Gilmore on their visit to Kyrgyzstan last autumn, the European Union supports the Kyrgyz Republic in its progress towards democracy, the rule of law, sustainable socio-economic development, good governance and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. In addition, we also welcome the appointment of the new Ombudsperson Ms Atyr Abdrahmatova, whose role constitutes a crucial bridge between the State and civil society in Kyrgyzstan.
8. The EU also praises the important work of the OSCE Academy and recognises its positive impact on the region's academic excellence, connectivity, cohesion, and stability. The Academy remains a flagship project for the OSCE. With new Bachelor

and PhD programmes being developed, it is becoming a full-fledged regional centre for higher education and research. We encourage you to continue in this direction.

9. In conclusion, allow me to reiterate our appreciation for the successful work of the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek, as well as of the OSCE Academy, and to wish both Ambassador Rogov and Dr. Wolters and their teams success in their work.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

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