



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1324 Vienna, 15 July 2021

EU Statement on Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation

The European Union welcomes the opportunity to discuss in the Permanent Council environmental challenges and sustainable development in the context of the Mediterranean Partnership.

Following the guidelines set by the United Nations, the 2007 Madrid Declaration establishes the need for the OSCE to address the environment and security nexus, recognizing the necessity to address climate change as well as recognising OSCE's complementary role in this endeavour. Together with the general framework provided by the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 goals, it is a good starting point to seize opportunities in support of sustainable development and common security.

The Mediterranean region is one of the most vulnerable to the impacts of global warming. The Mediterranean Basin is feeling the effects of climate change more than ever. Increased average temperatures and changing patterns of rainfall have a negative effect on water resources, biodiversity and human health. This comes on top of the negative environmental pressures exerted by land-use change, pollution and declining biodiversity. The long term impacts of COVID-19 and the recovery may put additional pressures on the environment. The implementation of green economic policies, in particular in the post-pandemic rebuild, is therefore of great importance for the region to drive sustainable and inclusive socioeconomic development.

For the EU, the Mediterranean region is of prime importance. The latest affirmation of the EU's determination to strengthen its strategic partnership with the region is

the Joint Communication on the Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood – a new agenda for the Mediterranean, approved by the Council in April this year. The objective is to address common challenges, take advantage of shared opportunities and unlock the region's economic potential for the benefit of its people. Funded under the EU's new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument, the EU will mobilise up to €7 billion for the period 2021-2027 to enhance the cooperation of the EU with its Mediterranean partners around five areas:

- Human development, good governance and the rule of law.
- Resilience, prosperity and digital transition.
- Peace and security.
- Migration and security.
- Green transition, climate resilience, energy and environment.

The agenda puts the promotion of credible and sustainable opportunities for youth at the heart of our cooperation as well as the increased efforts in promoting gender equality, strengthening women's rights and women's empowerment. Our renewed partnership will be based on common values and progress on shared socio-economic and political agenda, including in areas such as good governance, the rule of law, macroeconomic stability and the conducive business environment.

We are convinced that working together with our Mediterranean partners can turn climate and environmental challenges, and digital transformation, into major opportunities for sustainable development, contributing to a just and inclusive green transition, spurring sustainable long-term socio-economic recovery and job creation.

As agreed by our Ministers in the Milan OSCE Declaration on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean, we should step up our engagement and strengthen the political dialogue on these issues. We believe that the OSCE with its comprehensive approach to security is a valuable platform in this endeavour. We are looking forward to the discussions also during the upcoming 2021 OSCE Mediterranean Conference and we thank Poland as the chair of the OSCE Mediterranean Group for their work throughout the year.

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, as well as UKRAINE, GEORGIA, ANDORRA, MONACO and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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