

**STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE
1155th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

20 July 2017

**On the situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex
persons in Chechnya**

The European Union continues to closely follow the situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in Chechnya. The statements by Ramzan Kadyrov about homosexual men in Chechnya during a recent interview are worrisome and serious. I quote: “We don’t have those kinds of people here. We don’t have any gays. If there are any, take them to Canada. Take them far from us so we don’t have them at home. To purify our blood.” He went on: “They are devils. They are for sale. They are not people. God damn them for what they are accusing us of.”

We should like to recall the commitments undertaken by the participating States in successive Ministerial Council decisions, including in Madrid in 2007, to “combat all forms of discrimination.” In Maastricht in 2003, the participating States confirmed that “practices related to discrimination and intolerance both threaten the security of individuals and may give rise to wider-scale conflict and violence.” They have also recognized the key role of political leaders in combating manifestations of hate and intolerance and their special responsibility in that regard.

We therefore call on the authorities of the Russian Federation to condemn these hateful words spoken by the President of Chechnya. We reiterate our appeal for the allegations of arrests, illegal detention, torture and murder of people in Chechnya on account of their real or perceived sexual orientation to be fully investigated. It is up to the Russian authorities to do everything possible to guarantee the safety of all of their citizens without exception, to ensure the rehabilitation of victims and to prosecute the perpetrators.

The EU recalls its commitment to equality and against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity throughout the world.

The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹ and Albania¹, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Norway, as well as Ukraine, Georgia, San Marino, the United States of America, Australia and Canada, align themselves with this statement.

¹ The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.