



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No.1483 Vienna, 18 July 2024

EU Statement on Russia's Detention of OSCE Officials as part of its War of Aggression Against Ukraine

1. On 12th July, we witnessed another grave act of injustice by Russia, executed through its subordinate unlawful structures in the illegally and temporarily occupied territories in the Donetsk region of Ukraine – the so-called “sentencing” of a third OSCE official, Vadym Golda, to 14 years in prison on fabricated espionage charges. This adds to the long list of Russia's breaches of its international obligations and OSCE commitments, including the “sentencing” in September 2022 of the other two arbitrarily detained OSCE officials – Maxim Petrov and Dmytro Shabanov.
2. The three OSCE officials were working under a mandate consented to by all participating States, including Russia, and enjoyed functional immunity for fulfilling their official responsibilities. Their right to immunity has been confirmed by, *inter alia*, the latest Moscow Mechanism report on Russia's arbitrary detention of Ukrainian civilians, which concluded that Vadym, Maxim and Dmytro's continued detention by Russia is incompatible with its OSCE commitments.
3. In view of this, we add our voice to the public communication by OSCE Chair-in-Office Minister Borg and OSCE Secretary General Schmid, which unequivocally condemned Russia's injustice and demanded the immediate release of our OSCE colleagues. Russia must assume its responsibility as an OSCE participating State and immediately and unconditionally release them.

4. We also join the calls of Secretary General Schmid for OSCE participating States and third parties to support efforts to secure the immediate release of Vadym, Maxim and Dmytro. We stand firmly with the Maltese CiO and Secretary General Schmid in their tireless efforts to reunite our OSCE colleagues with their loved ones.
5. On a broader note, we will continue to demand the immediate release of all those who, as part of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, have been arbitrarily detained by Russia or forcibly transferred to Ukrainian territories, temporarily and illegally occupied by Russia, or deported to Russia or Belarus, including children. Russia must ensure that all Ukrainians in Russian detention are treated in full compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law.
6. We request regular updates from the Secretary General and other OSCE structures and institutions regarding this situation.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA*, and GEORGIA, the EFTA country ICELAND, member of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA, MONACO and 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.