



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council N° 1212
Vienna, 17 January 2019**

**EU Statement on New Wave of Human Rights Violations
against LGBTI Persons in the Chechen Republic of the
Russian Federation**

The European Union is deeply concerned about recent reports in the media and from civil society organisations of a new wave of arbitrary detentions, torture and killings of people in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

According to credible sources, Chechen law enforcement officers detained around 40 people since late December 2018, and at least two people have died as a result of torture. Furthermore, local police officers are reportedly trying to prevent victims from leaving the region or applying to the courts in the future by confiscating documents, threatening the victims with criminal proceedings against them or their relatives or by forcing them to sign empty forms.

We reiterate our call on the Russian Federation to conduct prompt, effective and thorough investigations into all reports of such acts, in order to ensure that anyone responsible or complicit is brought to justice. We continue to be worried that the sustained lack of action by the federal authorities with regard to the human rights situation in the Chechen Republic will reinforce the climate of impunity as has been documented in the OSCE Rapporteur's report under the Moscow Mechanism on alleged human rights violations and impunity in the Chechen Republic in the Russian Federation.

In this context, it is deeply disturbing to learn of alleged new violations committed only days after the discussion and publication of the Moscow Mechanism report, and we therefore ask the Russian Federation:

- Will the Russian federal authorities open an investigation into the recent reports of human rights violations against LGBTI persons in Chechnya?



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-- If so, will the Russian federal authorities incorporate the recommendations from the OSCE Rapporteur's report under the Moscow Mechanism to ensure an effective, transparent and unbiased investigation?

These serious human rights violations in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation remain an ongoing and grave concern of the European Union. We will continue to raise our concerns until the Russian Federation provides this Council with a constructive and substantive response and puts an end to these violations. The European Union reaffirms its resolute commitment to combat all forms of discrimination worldwide, including on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Thank you.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, UKRAINE, GEORGIA, ANDORRA, SAN MARINO and AUSTRALIA align themselves with this statement.

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