



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1310 Vienna, 22 April 2021

EU Statement on the occasion of Earth Day

Today we celebrate Earth Day to empower and expand the environmental movement. Over the last year, it has become apparent how our health and well-being is closely interlinked with the health of our planet. The climate crisis remains the defining challenge of our time and fighting it requires determined and persistent action on many fronts.

The emphasis of Earth Day this year is on supporting local communities, focusing on areas that are disproportionately affected by environmental issues. We are celebrating with three days of climate action, with global summits focusing on youth engagement, transformative climate education and emerging green technologies.

In the EU, we have agreed to raise our level of ambition and to scale up climate action across our economy and society. The EU will put in place legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 – as part of the EU's Nationally Determined Contribution to the Paris Agreement. This commitment is designed to enable Europe to reach climate neutrality by 2050. The EU is committed to deliver bold climate action in partnership with all countries.

We welcome the Leaders Summit on Climate taking place today and we are looking forward to other major gatherings throughout 2021 to stir up the global climate ambitions and ensure a successful outcome in COP26 preparatory events in Milan and the main conference in Glasgow.

We depend on nature. Our societies and our economy cannot function without it. Yet, we overexploit its resources and undermine its biodiversity, thus threatening our own survival. Biodiversity loss and climate change as well as their respective solutions are

intrinsically linked, therefore we need to develop a new and transformative post-2020 global biodiversity framework at the upcoming COP15 to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Kunming.

We must take urgent, systematic and sustained action to preserve the health, prosperity, security and well-being of our people. Not only that we need to step up our ambition when tackling climate change but we need to operationalise our ambitions, strengthen the implementation efforts, reinforce the enabling governance frameworks and increase the allocated resources.

The impact of climate change on peace and stability will increase in the coming years and its geopolitical consequences must not be underestimated. The EU is convinced that the OSCE is an appropriate platform for deepening our cooperation and furthering the implementation efforts in addressing climate and environmental challenges to tackle them as the security threat that they represent.

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, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, 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.