

HRDN STATEMENT

Putting Human Rights at the heart of Global Europe: HRDN Recommendations for a stronger EU external action.

The Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) calls on the European Union (EU) to reiterate and strengthen its commitment and engagement as a credible and reliable global leader in promoting peace, human rights, democracy, the rule of law and equality.

Investment in rights-based, democratic and gender-transformative actions and in civil society is critical to advance democracy, foster accountability and the rule of law, protect populations, promote peace, equality, enable sustainable development and address global challenges. Countries that are more peaceful, democratic, prosperous, equal and stable make more reliable and mutually beneficial partners for the EU.

The European Commission's current proposal for a Regulation establishing a Global Europe Instrument (GEI) under the MFF 2028-2034 dilutes core priorities and commitments that are essential for the EU's external action to remain values-driven, people-centred, planet responsive, transparent, predictable and effective.

Specifically, the proposed GEI removes the thematic programmes and financial allocations for Human Rights and Democracy, and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). This leaves significant uncertainty on how these EU Treaty-based obligations will be effectively mainstreamed, operationalised and monitored. Political and financial support is vital to ensure that the EU's values, principles and long-standing priorities remain at the core of EU's external action

HRDN calls on the EU to uphold its values and obligations in the next MFF by adopting the following key commitments:

- **Maintain the indicative financial envelope** of € 200,3 billion for the GEI in the MFF negotiations
- **Preserve the Human Rights and Democracy and the Civil Society Organisations thematic programmes**, with ring-fenced financial allocations at least matching NDICI levels in constant prices.
- **Insert thematic targets** to focus spending on priorities, guarantee predictable funding, ensure efficiency and increase accountability:
 - At least 15% of Global Europe spending in geographic pillars for human rights, democracy and good governance;
 - At least 85% of Global Europe spending should be dedicated to programmes that have gender equality as one of their objectives (OECD marker G1 or G2).
- **Increase democratic scrutiny, transparency and accountability** with stricter reporting on spending by the European Commission, timely public access to information, formal reviews of performance and better inter-institutional mechanisms for scrutiny and oversight.