



# Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Human Rights Defenders Mobility and Protection in the EU

with the participation of



**Mary Lawlor**

UN Special Rapporteur on  
Human Rights Defenders



**Kajsa Ollongren**

EU Special Representative for  
Human Rights

## Key messages to EU policymakers

- 1 Complex and discretionary visa procedures greatly reduce access to the EU for HRDs at risk. Consistent implementation of the targeted guidance integrated in the revised EU Visa Code Handbook is essential.
- 2 Opportunities for relocation and resettlement to the EU for HRDs at risk remain limited, complex and even risky to access. The EU and its Member States could consider ways to fill gaps and strengthen the legal framework for HRDs mobility to the EU.
- 3 The EU is in a key position to promote legal and policy measures which can enhance protection of HRDs against growing risks of criminalization, online threats and surveillance, and transnational repression, in the EU and beyond.
- 4 Coordinated efforts are needed to enhance holistic protection and support for HRDs on the EU territory. Efforts to strengthen the EU protection ecosystem, including through the creation of an EU protection mechanism, could help meet growing needs amid shrinking resources.
- 5 The upcoming EU Civil Society Strategy offers a key opportunity to strengthen protection efforts, by seeking enhanced engagement of EU, national and local authorities and further empowering civil society.
- 6 Sustained political commitment to HRDs protection, also through public discourse, and adequate funding for protection work, including under the new EU MFF, are vital to a safe and enabling civic space in the EU and beyond.
- 7 Alliances and synergies are key success factors of protection efforts. Spaces for multi-stakeholder engagement and collaboration, such as the OHCHR-led initiative for a Community of Practice on Protection, should be favoured and supported.