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## **Council of Europe: 46 Heads of State and Government in Reykjavik in May 2023. Jakobsdóttir (Iceland), “the war has changed us. Now we have a big project”**

The Heads of State and Government that are members of the Council of Europe will meet in Reykjavik on 16-17 May 2023 for the 4<sup>th</sup> summit in the over 70-year history of the institution, which today brings together 46 States. The third summit was held in Warsaw 18 years ago. The decision, taken at the meeting of the Committee of Ministers today, was announced at a joint press conference by Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney and by Icelandic Prime Minister Katrín Jakobsdóttir. Indeed, today marks the last day of the Irish presidency which will hand over the baton to Iceland. “Six months ago in Turin, as we took over the presidency”, Mr Coveney recalled, “I asked whether it was not high time to renew our commitment to fundamental values, democracy, and the rule of law”. Today, on the last day of our semester, “I got an answer: the Heads of State and Government will be meeting in Reykjavik in May”. “We are a small country”, said Iceland’s Prime Minister, “and we have a big project. We will approach it with humility and ambition” in the hope that the summit will be “an opportunity for us to recommit to our values and advance stronger and more united”. Russia’s “brutal aggression against Ukraine has changed everything in Europe. But even the previous crises have threatened democracy and rights”, Ms Jakobsdóttir explained. That is why we now need a debate even with countries that have different views, to “recreate” a favourable “ecosystem”, Mr Coveney said, where rights, democracy, and the rule of law can continue to exist.

Valentina Bombelli