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## **Council of Europe: World Forum, “Democracy: a new hope?”. Ukraine “the frontline of freedom”**

“We need young leaders to take a stand. There is hope in young people”, said the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejčinović Burić, in her address to the World Forum for Democracy which opened in Strasbourg today. “Democracy: a new hope?” is the main topic of the debate that will continue until Wednesday, 9 November, at the headquarters of the pan-European institution for an event that brings together intellectuals, politicians, activists, experts, and many young people from all over the world. A minute’s silence was observed to honour those Ukrainians who have lost their lives from 24 February to date. Ukraine has often been referred to in the speeches as the “frontline of democracy and freedom”. Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, leader of the Belarusian Democratic Movement, approached the debate from a concrete perspective: we need a “united, firm, and consistent world in our fight against tyranny”, Ms Tsikhanouskaya went on to explain, insisting on the need for tech companies to take action “to fight hostile propaganda and educate people about what democracy is”. Thanks to the contributions of young people from all over the world, discussion also touched on the fragilities of democracies around the world, from the Balkans to Afghanistan, from Iran and China to Mongolia. A young Afghan woman spoke of the suffering of her people and denounced “the international silence” on the matter.

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