



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Ambassador Philip Remler

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Carol Fuller
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 29, 2010

The United States warmly welcomes you to the Permanent Council, Ambassador Remler, and appreciates your very thorough report.

The United States strongly supports the OSCE Mission to Moldova. The Mission plays an essential role in efforts to broker a comprehensive settlement to the Transnistria conflict – one that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova and provides for an agreed status for the Transnistrian region.

We commend the Mission's role in facilitating meetings between the sides' chief negotiators; promoting progress in expert-level working groups; conducting seminars and other events to build confidence; and facilitating meetings of the 5+2, which includes the sides' chief negotiators and the mediators and observers working to resolve the conflict. We remain committed to the earliest possible resumption of formal negotiations in the 5+2 format and hope the proposed May meeting in Astana will move the sides closer to formal talks. Conflict resolution should remain at the heart of the Mission's mandate.

Turning to other matters, we believe the Mission is well placed to continue to provide advice and expertise as Moldova builds a democratic and prosperous European state. In particular, we commend the Mission's close cooperation with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the High Commissioner on National Minorities and hope to see continued progress on Government of Moldova-led reform efforts.

Finally, we note that the Mission has rightly encouraged the Government of Moldova to follow a responsible, constitutional course to resolve domestic political uncertainties. Respect for the rule of law should remain an essential component of this debate.

We note that your report draws attention to the recent arrests of several individuals in the Transnistrian region, including journalist Ernest Vardanean. The United States – along with the European Union and other participating States – recently urged respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Mr. Vardanean and other detainees, and we reiterate today our continuing concern. Unfortunately, we have not seen any positive movement in this situation. We urge the Mission to play an active role in the international community's efforts to ensure fair treatment for Mr. Vardanean and other detainees.

In closing, allow me to thank you and your staff and reiterate my government's support for the Mission's excellent work. Allow me also to reiterate my government's commitment to working with Moldova as it continues its integration into European institutions. Respect for the rule of law, human rights, and fundamental freedoms – indeed, for the full range of OSCE and international commitments – will continue to be key elements in our relationship.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.