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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1189th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

14 June 2018

On the results of the “5+2” meeting on a Transdniestrian settlement

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the results of the meeting of the Permanent Conference on Political Issues in the Framework of the Negotiation Process for the Transdniestrian Settlement that took place in Rome on 29 and 30 May.

A frank and substantive analysis of implementation of the agreements reached at the “5+2” format meetings in Berlin in 2016 and Vienna in 2017 took place. The participants outlined the directions for continued efforts to resolve issues of social importance for people on both sides of the Dniester and signed a protocol at the meeting’s conclusion.

The participants noted the conclusion on 24 April of a comprehensive agreement on participation of non-commercial vehicles from Transdniestria in international road traffic. We hope that agreements to build infrastructure in Bendery and Rybnitsa will go ahead, the personnel will be trained, and the mechanism itself will start operating as of 1 September.

There has been partial implementation of agreements to reopen the Gura Bîcului-Bychok bridge to road traffic, provide apostilization of Transdniestrian education documents, and regarding the work of Moldovan schools using the Latin script and the use of farmland in the Dubossary district. A “road map” should be approved by the end of the year for implementing agreements on organizing co-operation on telecommunications. The authorities in Chişinău and Tiraspol confirmed their desire to implement in full their mutual commitments and within the agreed time-frames.

Unfortunately, we have yet to see progress on resolving the issue of politically motivated criminal cases. Despite the Transdniestrian side’s goodwill gesture to end criminal proceedings against ten Moldovan officials, and despite the granting of land use permits to farmers in the Dubossary district and removal of barriers for schools teaching in Romanian, Moldova is not ready to end the pressure on Tiraspol. We believe that such an approach is consistent with neither the “spirit” nor the “letter” of the commitments made under the negotiation process.

The meeting also revealed the clear need to develop a mechanism for implementing agreements reached within the “5+2” format in national legislation. The Transdniestrian representatives presented their vision for such a mechanism, complementing the Russian proposal on this subject made at the “5+2” meeting in 2016. Given the need to obtain practical results in this area by the end of this year, we think it necessary to start discussing the substance of the matter. We believe that such a mechanism would encourage the authorities on both sides to exercise greater discipline with regard to implementing their mutual obligations and would make them irreversible and lasting.

The Rome meeting of the Permanent Conference once again showed that even serious differences between the two sides can be overcome. The international partners in the form of the co-mediators and the observers can encourage a positive dynamic in the negotiation process on settling the Transdniestrian issue. The provision in the Principles and Procedures for the Conduct of Negotiations on convening meetings in the “5+2” format at least six times a year is completely relevant.

Russia confirms its unchanged position regarding peaceful settlement of the Transdniestrian conflict. We believe that responsibility for reaching mutually acceptable agreements lies primarily with the parties to the conflict themselves. We are ready to continue to assist this in close co-operation with the OSCE Chairmanship and other participants in the “5+2” process to make progress in negotiations on a lasting, fair and comprehensive settlement of the Transdniestrian issue.

Thank you for your attention.