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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY  
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1514th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

27 March 2025

**On the detention of the Head of the autonomous region of Gagauzia**

Mr. Chairperson,

Once again, we are obliged to draw attention to the actions of the Sandu regime, which is continuing its practice of exerting overt pressure on its opponents, using the State apparatus to eliminate them from the political arena. The latest and most vivid manifestation of such repression was the detention of the Head of the Autonomous Territorial Unit of the Republic of Moldova, Evghenia Guțul, at the airport in Chișinău on 25 March this year under a spurious pretext.

All this is taking place against the backdrop of the country's preparations for the forthcoming parliamentary elections, which, by all appearances, the ruling Party of Action and Solidarity does not even hope to win in a fair fight. It is obvious that Maia Sandu's stooges will resort to any violation of democratic norms and procedures, including political repression, in order to achieve their goal of retaining a majority in the Moldovan legislature. Criminal cases are being opened against undesirable politicians, independent media are being censored or closed down altogether.

Realizing that there is no point in appealing to the Moldovan justice system, the lawfully elected Head of Gagauzia, who is being held in a local prison, has been forced to seek justice outside the country. In this regard, she appealed to the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, for support.

The Russian Federation condemns in the strongest terms the overt pressure that is being exerted on the most senior official of the autonomous region of Gagauzia, who received a mandate from the inhabitants of the region. We call upon Moldova to release Ms. Guțul immediately and to abandon its repressive methods of political struggle going forward. The Moldovan authorities are obliged to create equal conditions for all political forces in the country in order to ensure their full functioning in accordance with the principles of democracy and political pluralism.

We call upon the Chairmanship, the Secretary General and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights to closely monitor the situation with respect to democratic freedoms in

Moldova and to respond promptly to such egregious cases of political repression by the authorities in Chişinău as the detention of the Head of Gagauzia.

Thank you for your attention.