



PERMANENT DELEGATION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA  
TO THE OSCE

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**STATEMENT**  
**by the Republic of Moldova in response to the report**  
**of the Head of the OSCE Mission in Moldova**  
**Ambassador Jennifer Brush**  
*(1002<sup>nd</sup> Permanent Council, May 29 2014)*

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to warmly welcome Ambassador Brush to this meeting of the Permanent Council and thank her for the comprehensive report that comes at the critical juncture of time for the Republic of Moldova.

Let me start by pointing out that the Transnistrian conflict resolution process is currently passing through a period of stagnation and even certain setbacks that are influenced by various domestic and external factors. We believe that in such a period the international partners should play a more prominent role in moving conflict resolution ahead. While we may agree that Chisinau and Tiraspol have the primary responsibility to promote the conflict resolution process, we have an increasingly strong feeling that international partners should step up their efforts to contribute achieving a tangible progress in the Transnistrian settlement. The OSCE Mission to Moldova has always been playing a key role in this regard. A more coordinated contribution of mediators and observers is also needed. Let me assure you that the Moldovan side is ready to support solutions based on good-will and compromise, but such solutions should be aimed at bringing sides closer and be in line with international commitments. Three weeks ago, Deputy Prime Minister Natalia Gherman presented the key-approaches of the Moldovan Government in the Transnistrian conflict resolution and reiterated our commitment to the constructive engagement.

Mr Chairman,

On the 5 and 6 of June the **next round of 5+2 negotiations** will take place here in Vienna. It will be followed by a conference on confidence-building measures in Bavarian Freising, organized by the OSCE Mission to Moldova and German Government. The discussions in 5+2 format will focus on economy and trade, freedom of movement, access by farmers from Dubasari district to their lands, situation of the Moldovan-administered Latin-script schools and other relevant issues. The talks at the CBM conference will be dedicated to economy, education and environment.

Dialogue is at the core of conflict resolution. There are at least three factors which significantly undermine our dialogue. **First** is the generally negative atmosphere generated by the fact that too much emphasis is put on problems and not on solutions. **The second factor** has also been highlighted by Ambassador Brush – in the *political* format we are currently discussing *very technical* issues and trying to find solutions for some very concrete issues, without having a common political ground or agreed basic principles. Therefore, discussions have not produced

major results due to the fact that while talking on technicalities, both sides promote different political objectives. It is getting more and more obvious and this fact reinforces our call for opening the discussion on the “third basket” related to comprehensive settlement, political, institutional and security issues. **The third factor** is that Tiraspol is continuously avoiding dialogue at the high-level by setting various preconditions and paying an exaggerated attention to the formalities. Any negotiator knows how important are the high-level contacts in achieving progress or overcoming impasse. Such contacts proved to be driving force for negotiators on many previous occasions. In current circumstances, when the process is stagnating, avoiding high-level contacts – formal or informal – is very unhelpful, to say the least.

Mr Chairman,

Let me go through a number of concrete issues raised in the report.

*Access of the OSCE Mission to the Transnistrian region.*

The Government of the Republic of Moldova is seriously concerned with Tiraspol’s restrictive measures taken with regard to the OSCE Mission to Moldova’s access to the region. We are also worried to hear that the Mission is forced to stop or close some of its project activities. Ambassador Brush has rightly outlined the risks arising from imposed limitations of access to the region in the current security environment. The Government steadily supports the OSCE efforts in dealing with this matter and we hope that the ability of the Mission to fulfill its mandate throughout the country will be restored.

*Security Zone and military issues*

The situation in the Security Zone remains generally stable but fragile. The potential for unilateral actions causing new tensions in the Security Zone is still significant. Moldovan presence in Bender town remains under continuous pressure. Tiraspol keeps the course towards enhancing its infrastructure along the administrative line. The peacekeeping mechanism is not always able to react properly to occurring incidents, in particular to deploy rapidly military observers to the place of incident due to the fact that the consensus-rule is often misused. As a result, major incidents are not properly and timely addressed. The JCC remains stuck on a number of issues which stay on the agenda over years. The Moldovan Government is taking all actions to ensure stability in the Security Zone.

We also reiterate our longstanding position regarding the need to finalize, without any preconditions, the withdrawal of Russian forces and remaining ammunition stockpiles from Cobasna, in accordance with the relevant international commitments.

*Situation of the Latin-script schools and access to farmlands*

The functioning of the Moldovan administered Latin-script schools remains an urgent issue where we still lack a long-term solution. Pressure on schools and their teaching staff is aimed at bringing these educational institutions under the de-facto control of the Transnistrian administration. We still have time to find a formula that would prevent closure of the schools during the summer vacation. The OSCE contribution in this regard is valuable and is taken into consideration. In the meantime, Tiraspol should refrain from any unilateral action in order to maintain appropriate atmosphere in negotiations.

We have already informed delegations that farmers from Dubasari have been facing again difficulties in accessing their agricultural lands located across the administrative line. We regret to say that intensive dialogue between Chisinau and Tiraspol on this issue has not produced results. The situation around farmlands is a clear example when Tiraspol is simply declaring an existing arrangement as non-functional and tries to impose new realities on the ground by questioning farmers’ property rights over the land and forcing the farmers to accept new rules in

order to bring their activity under its control. Such an approach undermines the very logic of achieving solutions through dialogue. As of now, the farmers were not able to start agricultural works and currently we are calculating the damage. This issue could generate tensions in the Security Zone and a long-term solution is needed.

### DCFTA

The Republic of Moldova is due to sign on 27 June the Association Agreement with the EU including its part on Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade. The provisional implementation will follow later this year. Tiraspol continues to refuse dialogue with Chisinau on this matter. Minister Gherman made a strong point calling on Tiraspol to leave aside its political ambitions and guide its actions by economic interests of the business community. We remain fully open to address all issues Tiraspol would like to raise in relation to the DCFTA. It can be done in direct dialogue with Chisinau or together with EU. We should find reasonable compromise which would take into account both interests of the region but also international commitments contained in the agreement. Chisinau is very much interested to make sure that people and business from both banks of the Nistru river have equal access to benefits provided by AA/DCFTA.

Mr Chairman,

Very briefly on other elements mentioned in the report. We are grateful for the valuable support provided by the OSCE Mission to the national authorities in combating trafficking in human beings, promoting freedom of the media as well as facilitating cooperation between civil society actors. As mentioned earlier, we regret that the Mission is increasingly limited in its activities in the Transnistrian region.

As for the situation in Gagauzia, it indeed causes increased concern. Chisinau is addressing issues in direct dialogue with Comrat through various channels – both on executive and legislative level. We hope authorities in the autonomous unit would demonstrate reasonable approach and keep their position in line with existing legal framework of the Republic of Moldova.

Mr Chairman,

I would like to point out that the Republic of Moldova is passing through a challenging but also promising time. We know that weeks and months ahead will definitively not be easy. We are thankful to our partners for the support and we are ready to talk to those who express doubts regarding our path. We will continue to work with our international partners towards achieving a lasting solution of the Transnistrian conflict on the basis of ensuring sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova with a special status of the Transnistrian region.

In conclusion, Ambassador Brush let me express our appreciation for the work you have done as the Head of the OSCE Mission in Moldova and to thank for positive cooperation you have established with the Moldovan authorities. Indeed, the last two years were quite challenging ones, but under your able and dedicated leadership the OSCE Mission in Moldova has managed to perform very well. We wish you every success in all your future endeavors.

Thank you.