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PERMANENT DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA TO THE OSCE

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STATEMENT

by Ambassador Valeriu Chiveri, Head of the Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Moldova to the OSCE, in response to the Activity Report of the Head of EUBAM, General Udo Burkholder
(*OSCE Permanent Council, 15 November 2012*)

Mr. Chairperson,

This Delegation warmly welcomes General Udo Burkholder to the Permanent Council and thanks him for very comprehensive and informative report delivered today. Let me underline from the outset that the Moldovan authorities attach a great importance to cooperation with the EUBAM, which has been developing from the very beginning in a constructive and dynamic manner.

As it was rightly pointed in the report, Moldova's cooperation with the EUBAM is an extensive one and includes many areas, such as, helping the authorities in tackling the cross-border illegal activities, providing training and capacity building, offering assistance to the integrated border management process and demarcation of the Moldovan-Ukrainian state border, contributing to Moldova's negotiations with the EU on the DCFTA and Visa Liberalization Action Plan, contributing to the confidence-building measures between the two banks of the Nistru River, etc.

Speaking about institutional capacity building, we would like to express our gratitude for professional trainings organized regularly by the EUBAM for border guards, customs and law enforcement officers. Only this year 241 Moldovan custom officers have benefited from professional trainings conducted with the support of the EUBAM.

In terms of border control operation, as General Burkholder has already mentioned, during the EUBAM mandate 10 Joint Border Control Operations were organized under its auspices, which contributed significantly to securing Moldovan-Ukrainian border. As well, the Moldovan Customs Service benefited from the assistance provided by the EUBAM experts during WCO Operation DEMETER II, SELEC Operation Shadow V and the GREEN Pandora. In the framework of the EU visa

liberalization dialogue, the EUBAM has been assisting the Moldovan Government in developing a mechanism aimed at enhancing control over migration flows through the Transnistrian region.

The EUBAM presence on the field brought its valuable contribution to the interaction between customs and border services of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The existing mechanism of permanent information exchange established between institutions of the both sides in line with Protocol on information exchange from November 21, 2006 has proved its relevance and it should be maintained.

We share the Head of Mission's assessment on the joint operated border crossing points and joint border patrolling in line with EU best practices. The success story of the Briceni-Rososani crossing point confirms the rationale to extend this project on other parts of the common border, including on the Central segment of the Moldovan-Ukrainian state border. Undoubtedly, the EUBAM assistance in ensuring a better control of migration and trade flows particularly on the Transnistrian segment significantly contributes to securing the Moldovan-Ukraine border.

Mr. Chairperson,

I would also like to share a few words on confidence building measures in the framework of the Transnistrian conflict settlement process and the EUBAM's increasing role in this regard. The first few months of this year had been productive, specifically related to the resumption of cargo rail transportation. The EUBAM has continued to be active presenting on many occasions workable solutions on issues discussed between Chisinau and Tiraspol, such as reopening the Gura-Bicului/Bychok Bridge, facilitating conditions for car transportation etc. Let me reiterate on behalf of the Moldovan authorities that the issue of the Gura Bicului Bridge is purely technical one, easy to be implemented without any preconditions, since it will be beneficial not just for Chisinau but also for Tiraspol, as well as for the development of the regional transport corridors in the Black Sea and Danube area. Regretfully, the Tiraspol de-facto authorities continues to link in an artificial manner the opening of the bridge with other issues, particularly, the car plates issued in the Transnistrian region.

General Burkholder has elaborated in the report about the technical opinion on car plates registered in the Transnistrian region. The Moldovan authorities view the proposed model as a good compromise, in line with the international standards and capable to advance a solution that will allow Transnistrian cars to travel without obstacles outside the territory of the Republic of Moldova.

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me inform the Permanent Council that yesterday meeting in Tiraspol of the chief negotiators from the both sides has not produced any results in this respect, on the contrary, we have witnessed radicalization of the Transnistrian position. Nevertheless, we stand ready to continue discussions in order to find a solution for car plates, but this should not be set as a precondition or considered as an impediment on reopening the Gura-Bicului Bridge. We hope that the Transnistrian de-facto authorities will show more openness and pragmatic approach in identifying a solution on car plates issue, taking into account real economic interests of the population in the region and local transport companies.

Mr. Chairperson,

This year the EUBAM continued to have a key role in ensuring a better security on the Moldovan-Ukrainian state border as well as assisting Chisinau and Tiraspol on confidence building measures. During the previous report of General Burkholder in December 2011 we were aiming at resuming cargo rail traffic through the Transnistrian region. In 2012 we have managed to put in a place a mechanism on cargo rail traffic with the EUBAM key role involvement in this regard. We hope to advance in the same manner on other issues currently on the table.

In conclusion, let me express once again our gratitude to the Head of EU Border Assistance Mission and his dedicated team for their tremendous work done in Moldova and Ukraine. We would also like to express our thanks to EU countries seconding personnel, as well as to Ukraine for good cooperation. I wish General Burkholder and his team success in their future activities.

Thank you.