

Original: ENGLISH



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Response to the Head of Mission of Moldova**

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Kate Byrnes  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
March 30, 2016

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The United States warmly welcomes you, Ambassador Scanlan, to the Permanent Council. We thank you for another detailed report on the work of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, and we applaud your efforts to advance the 5+2 Settlement Process on the Transnistrian Conflict. The OSCE Mission to Moldova also has played an important role in supporting Moldova's reform program, and in providing unbiased reporting on the political and security situation, including in the Transnistrian region.

The United States remains committed to working with the 5+2 partners to find a comprehensive conflict settlement that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova and affords a special status for the Transnistrian region. In this regard, we encourage the OSCE Mission to Moldova to continue to facilitate direct and substantive dialogue between the sides, and support confidence-building measures that address concerns in all three OSCE dimensions. We underscore the importance of full access by the OSCE Mission to all of Moldova in order to facilitate its work.

Ambassador Scanlan, the 2016 Ministerial Council declaration on the 5+2 process reflected the full support of the OSCE's 57 participating States for progress towards the resolution of the conflict. To this end, both sides should translate public commitments to the settlement process into concrete actions that generate tangible results. The agreement to continue a rail line connecting both banks is a welcome example of the tangible progress that can be made. We hope for similar progress on license plates, telecommunications, Latin-script schools, freedom of movement, and other issues under consideration.

We recall the readiness of the Moldovan authorities, as the Deputy Prime Minister stated at the Ministerial Council in Hamburg, to give a meaningful definition to a special status for Transnistria, and we reiterate our calls for the Moldovan authorities to make good on this promise. Likewise, it is also critical that the parties address the political and security issues of the settlement agenda.

We would like to see progress in the political-military dimension, particularly with respect to the completion of withdrawal and destruction of ammunition and armaments from the Transnistrian region, and support your continued efforts in this area. Our experts are ready to

work with your team and with key players in the region to facilitate the removal and destruction of military equipment.

Recognition of the past and hope for the future are the building blocks for ensuring stability and protecting well-being. We welcome the Mission's efforts to help Moldova foster a truly tolerant and inclusive society for all in Moldova. We encourage Moldova's parliament to adopt amendments to national legislation that would affirm the status of Gagauzia as an autonomous territorial unit within Moldova. We commend the Government of Moldova for adopting a strategy on the integration of members of national minorities that meets OSCE standards, and we encourage Moldova to draw on assistance from the OSCE Mission to Moldova and the High Commissioner on National Minorities when developing the action plan on the strategy's implementation. We also commend the Government of Moldova for its remembrance of the Holocaust through the adoption of an action plan on commemoration and education, and for convening the second annual Holocaust Remembrance Day.

In closing, Ambassador Scanlan, allow me to thank you and your capable staff, and to reiterate the United States' support for the Mission's excellent efforts. We will remain committed to working with Moldova as it strives to make progress on reforms that ensure respect for the rule of law, and human rights and fundamental freedoms for all – indeed, for the full range of its OSCE and international commitments – that are essential for the country's political transition and European integration.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

###