

**OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL, 29 JULY 2004
NORWEGIAN STATEMENT ON MOLDOVA**

Mr. Chairman,

Norway has aligned herself with the European Union's Declaration on Transnistria as read out by the distinguished ambassador of the Netherlands a few minutes ago.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to refer to the recent statement by the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Jan Petersen, as Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

The Minister urges the Transnistrian authorities to enable all schools in Transnistria, including those that teach in the Latin script, to function normally. I quote from the statement: "These actions are clearly in conflict with European standards on human rights and minority rights, and may furthermore adversely affect the ongoing negotiations between Tiraspol and Chisinau. I call on all the parties involved to seek constructive solutions through the established negotiation format."

In closing, Mr. Chairman, Norway would like to underline the importance of ensuring that vulnerable groups such as children are not being involved in political conflicts.

I thank you

Council of Europe Committee of Ministers Chairman deeply concerned by closure of Moldovan schools in Transnistria

Strasbourg, 28.07.2004 - Jan Petersen, Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, is concerned by the closure of a Moldovan school in Tiraspol and by the recent decisions by Transnistrian authorities to close three more schools that teach in the Latin script in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova.

Mr Petersen urges the Transnistrian authorities to enable all schools in Transnistria, including those that teach in the Latin script, to function normally.

“These actions are clearly in conflict with European standards on human rights and minority rights, and may furthermore adversely affect the ongoing negotiations between Tiraspol and Chisinau”, says Mr. Petersen. “I call on all the parties involved to seek constructive solutions through the established negotiation format”.

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