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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANVAR AZIMOV,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

12 October 2010

**In response to the report by Ambassador Philip Remler,
Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to welcome once again Ambassador Philip Remler, Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova. We have listened attentively to his review of the situation in the Republic of Moldova and his assessments of the progress in and prospects for a Transdnestrian settlement. We should like to point out first of all that in accordance with its mandate the promotion of a political resolution to the conflict remains the Mission's priority task. This is the area in which the field presence needs to focus its main efforts.

It is, however, clear – and this is confirmed by the regular reports – that there is a certain tendency to concentrate more on what are strictly internal Moldovan processes. Greater attention is being paid to aspects such as the interparty struggle in preparation for the constitutional referendum and the difficult situation with regard to the media. The fact is that the description of the steps taken by Chisinau and Tiraspol is not always of a balanced nature. For example, in today's report one side's actions are described as pragmatic and professional while those of the other side are seen as unserious. Assessments of this kind are hardly conducive to achieving mutual understanding and restoring trust and confidence between the parties. In this regard, we urge the Mission's leadership to take as carefully considered approach as possible to its coverage of the situation on both banks of the Dniester.

As a guarantor country and mediator, the Russian Federation is dealing responsibly with the subject of a Transdnestrian settlement at various levels, including the highest one. The basic elements of our approach are well known and were outlined recently in our statement made in response to the report to the Permanent Council by the European Union's Special Representative for Moldova, Mr. Kálmán Mizsei. It is our understanding that the achievement of a sustainable, viable and just political solution to the Transdnestrian problem is a task that rests primarily with the leaders in Chisinau and Tiraspol. The mediators and observers, on the other hand, should create appropriate conditions for the resumption of the work of the "Permanent conference on political issues within the framework of the negotiation process for a Transdnestrian settlement", in other words encourage the complete

restoration of direct dialogue between the sides in the 5+2 format, the leading role of which no one is disputing.

The three informal meetings held in Astana and Vienna since Ambassador Remler's last report with political representatives of Moldova and Transnistria along with the mediators from Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE and observers from the European Union and the United States of America give hope that a full-scale negotiation process in the aforementioned format could well be resumed in the near future. The more frequent bilateral contacts between the political representatives of Chisinau and Tiraspol and a stepping up of the work of the expert groups dealing with specific issues of co-operation between the parties in the economy, trade, transport, health, education and law enforcement could both be useful in this regard.

We agree with Ambassador Remler that there is no quick fix or magic cure for the Transnistrian problem. We repeat once again that if the constructive search for a sustainable and viable political settlement is to continue, all the participants, first and foremost Chisinau and Tiraspol, need to take a responsible approach and make judicious use of the experience gained and agreements reached between the parties during the long and difficult negotiations.

The seminars held by the Mission on peacekeeping and guarantees for the settlement process and the seminar for the negotiators at the political level and at the working group level deserve positive mention in this context. At the same time, we should like to alert the Mission to the inadmissibility of the practice of determining the agenda of these events without the agreement of all the participants involved, including the guarantor States. We therefore feel it is wrong to accuse one of the parties of disrupting the planned discussions if that party did not express an interest in holding them in the first place.

We welcome the Mission's intention to observe strict neutrality as regards the political processes taking place within the Republic of Moldova. We hope that this policy will also be maintained with respect to a Transnistrian settlement in general and its participants.

Permit me to conclude by wishing Ambassador Remler and the staff of the Mission every success in their difficult tasks in the current extremely responsible phase in the search for ways to revive the negotiation process.

Thank you for your attention.