

STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 831st MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

Vienna, 12 October 2010

In response to Ambassador Philip Remler, Head of the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Moldova

The European Union (EU) welcomes Ambassador Philip Remler and thanks him for his excellent report to the Permanent Council.

The EU seeks to intensify and strengthen the political association and economic integration of the Republic of Moldova within the Eastern Partnership. It welcomes the progress made in negotiations on a future Association Agreement, which includes the aim of a full and enhanced free trade zone and the initiation this June of dialogue on the liberalization of the visa regime.

The Republic of Moldova's rapprochement with the EU requires that the Moldovan authorities resolutely continue the reforms to ensure complete fulfilment of their commitments in the human dimension, particularly with regard to freedom of expression, freedom of the media and the rule of law. The Moldovan authorities are urged to continue their close co-operation with the OSCE Mission, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and to pursue their involvement in the human rights dialogue between the EU and the Republic of Moldova.

The EU stresses the importance for Moldova's future of the parliamentary elections on 28 November. It calls on the Moldovan authorities to ensure that the elections are free and democratic and welcomes the positive indications it has received from them in this regard. It emphasizes the importance of constructive dialogue with the involvement of all parties represented in Parliament with a view to electing a new president.

The EU hopes that the Astana Summit will accelerate progress towards a settlement of frozen conflicts.

It remains strongly determined to help seek a political settlement to the Transdnestrian conflict based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. It will continue to make a full contribution, in particular through its Special Representative Mr. Kalman Mizsei and by continuing the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM). As soon as a comprehensive political agreement

has been reached, the EU will study the most appropriate way of supporting its implementation in the field.

The EU calls for the unconditional resumption by the end of the year of the formal negotiations in the 5 + 2 format, the only framework that guarantees the transparency and legitimacy necessary for an enduring solution.

The EU supports the helping hand policy of the Moldovan Government towards the authorities in Tiraspol and has decided to assist it, in particular by temporarily suspending the visa prohibition with regard to certain Transdniestrian officials and significantly increasing its support in the field for confidence-building measures. In return it continues to expect significant progress by Tiraspol in the free movement of persons, the question of educational establishments for Romanian speakers in Transdniestria and the resumption of formal negotiations in the 5 + 2 format.

The EU welcomes the stepping up of dialogue between the parties thanks to the efforts of the Chairperson-in-Office and the OSCE Mission. The increase in contacts through the informal meetings in the 5 + 2 format and the bilateral meetings between the parties has boosted confidence and produced some specific results, particularly with regard to freedom of movement and guarantees for the negotiation process. The EU urges the Mission to continue unrelentingly in this direction.

The EU remains concerned by the human rights situation in Transdniestria, particularly regarding the trial of Messrs. Vardanian and Cosac. It calls for full respect for fundamental freedoms in the region and urges the Mission to continue its activities in this area.

In conclusion, the EU reiterates its full support to the OSCE Mission to Moldova and to its work towards a settlement of the Transdniestrian conflict and the democratic development of the Republic of Moldova.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia¹, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹ and Iceland², the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association country and member of the European Economic Area Norway, as well as Georgia and Andorra align themselves with this statement.

1 Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

2 Iceland continues to be a member of the European Free Trade Association and the European Economic Area.