



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement in response to the report
by the Head of the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Moldova
Dr. Claus Neukirch**

As delivered by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1316th meeting of the Permanent Council,
27 May 2021

Madame Chairperson,

The delegation of Ukraine warmly welcomes Head of the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Moldova Dr. Claus Neukirch to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his report.

We would like to reiterate Ukraine's strong support to the activities of the OSCE Mission to Moldova and praise the Mission's ability to implement all aspects of its mandate under the hardships stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important that the Mission managed to continue all monitoring activities and complete projects planned for 2020.

We have to regretfully recognize that the "5+2" process remained stalled last year. In this regard, Ukraine fully supports efforts already made by the Swedish OSCE Chairpersonship, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting and the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Moldova aimed at creating necessary conditions for constructive dialogue this year for the sake of reaching progress in the Transdniestrian settlement process.

Ukraine hopes that the next round of "5+2" negotiations preliminarily planned for autumn this year will be marked by tangible progress across all three baskets of the agreed agenda for the negotiation process including the political settlement.

We took a positive note of the Mission's assessment that seven agreements signed in the framework of the Berlin-plus package can be regarded as implemented in principle.

Ukraine also takes into account restoration of the 2019 procedures that did not require Moldovan officials to notify in advance of their intentions to transit or to visit the Moldovan Transdniestrian region privately. At the same time, we consider recent actions by Tiraspol aimed at restricting the freedom of movement across the administrative boundary line with the Transdniestrian region of Moldova, including those on deployment and maintaining illegal control posts in the Security Zone, as destructive steps that severely undermined the settlement process.

We believe that progress in implementation of the Protocol Decision on Telecommunication of 25 November 2017 could be more tangible if Tiraspol complied with relevant Moldovan legislation.

As for the process of super-legalization of the university diplomas, issued in the Transdnestrian region of Moldova, we should keep in mind relevant international rules and procedures. As far as we are informed, there were only several cases when Moldovan authorities did not apply the procedure in place for the apostille for the super-legalization. Such cases could have been avoided if Tiraspol had completed accreditation procedure for universities of the region and harmonized their curricula according to relevant Moldovan regulations.

As noted in the Mission's report, Ukraine has prolonged entrance permission to our country for cars with so-called «Transdnestrian number plates» until 1 September 2021. In our view, this step has provided sufficient time for Tiraspol to arrange participation of transport from this Moldovan region in international traffic.

We share the Mission's appreciation of renewal of meetings of the Joint Control Commission Working Groups on Harmonization of posts in the Security Zone and Law Enforcement Cooperation. We hope that result oriented discussions in their framework will shortly bring the parties to practical outcomes.

It is regretful, that the Mission again was unable to monitor and report on the situation at the munition depot in Cobasna as envisaged by its mandate, the scope of which was expanded by the PC Decision 329/99.

We call on the Russian Federation to withdraw its forces and munitions from the sovereign territory of the Republic of Moldova as it recommitted to do at the 1999 Istanbul Summit. Russian messages that there is an unsuitable environment to do so, which all participating States hear twice a year, could only be regarded as intentional obstruction of the above Mission's mandate. We strongly believe that withdrawal of the Russian forces and munitions from the Moldovan territory would serve as an additional confidence building measure, promoting reinvigoration of the Transdnestrian settlement process.

On a separate note, Ukraine would like to draw specific attention to the environmental and security threats that the long time ago deployed ammunition depot in Cobasna poses to both the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that Ukraine, as a state-guarantor and mediator in the negotiation process, will continue contributing to result-oriented negotiations in the "5+2" format and promoting implementation of practical steps aimed at a peaceful and comprehensive resolution of the Transdnestrian conflict with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders with a special status for Transdnestria within the Republic of Moldova.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson.