



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA
TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT

by the Delegation of the Republic of Moldova
at the OSCE Permanent Council Meeting
29 July 2004

Mr. Chairman,

It is with deep concern and sorrow that I have to inform today the Permanent Council on the aggravation of the situation in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova in a week that has passed since the Special Permanent Council meeting.

The despicable acts of violence against the Moldovan schools teaching in Latin scripts in Bender and Ribnita followed after forced closure of the school in Tiraspol, causing dismay with the entire Moldovan society and abroad. The acts of vandalism undertaken towards the school, persecution against school children, their parents and teachers, has taken aggressive forms, being nothing else but ethnic cleansing and forced assimilation of the indigenous majority population. As mentioned before, one of the assaulted school is an orphanage. By refusing the students entry into this school, the transnistrian militia are denying them elementary living conditions.

Mr. Chairman,

The Republic of Moldova will never tolerate flagrant violation of the rights of the majority population on its proper territory, I stress, Moldovan majority population including on the left Nistru river bank. I call those delegations that falsely refer to it as a minority issue to pay due respect to what I just stressed. The Republic of Moldova will resort to anything it takes to protect the most innocent victims of the Transnistrian regime's paranoid aggression: children.

The recent decisions of the National Security Council that were presented here last week by Minister Shova were aimed at an immediate restoration of the schools and demanded from the Tiraspol authorities respect for previously

concluded agreements. Let me reiterate taking this opportunity: we have suspended our participation in the talks until 1 August 2004 leaving the Transnistrian administration a clear time-span to improve the situation.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished colleagues,

“Business as usual” in the established format with Tiraspol in conditions when 300 orphans are sleeping in the street and the parents and teachers of all Moldovan schools in the region are marching to Chisinau to appeal to the Moldovan authorities for protection and justice, would surely seem unacceptable to anyone of us thinking in the context of one’s own home country.

As recommended in the Chairman’s Statement concluding our discussions last Friday, we have been working in the meantime on an agreement to be signed by both negotiation parties, allowing the Moldovan schools to function freely. Both sides have it for at least two days, Chisinau is ready to sign it now, while there is no answer whatsoever from Tiraspol. Let me stress here the commendable engagement of the OSCE Mission and in particular Ambassador Hill in designing this document and also thank them for being on the spot enduring the same intimidation from the Transnistrian vandals together with the Moldovans.

Mr. Chairman,

We consider that at this critical stage, those who are urging Chisinau to immediately re-engage into the negotiation process in a constructive manner should rather concentrate on at least forcing the Transnistrian side to examine the draft agreement on reopening of the schools presented to them by the Head of the OSCE Mission.

As we speak Mr. Chairman, the Transnistrian militia is occupying the Ribnita school and attacking 16 teachers who isolated themselves in one small school office inside the building, desperately appealing for help from the Moldovan authorities facing the aggression. The Transnistrian barbarians are cutting the door of the school office with the chainsaw in order to extract children and teachers. Minister of Reintegration Shova has stopped the ongoing meeting of the Joint Control Commission and ordered the members of the JCC to leave for Ribnita to rescue children and teachers. I repeat, the dramatic development is happening now as we speak.

As for the existing settlement mechanisms, they continue to eloquently demonstrate their inefficiency in front of Tiraspol’s provocations, or as President Voronin mentioned, totally capitulate.

Mr. Chairman,

We risk compromising the future of the settlement process and waste the efforts undertaken so far if we don't stop the chain of provocations and direct challenges to stability and security in this region. The Republic of Moldova considers it important and timely to intensify the sanctions against the Tiraspol leadership, in particular through total political and economic isolation of the separatist regime by the international community.

In this context, I would like to refer to several Delegations' statements last week and yesterday's Declaration of the EU on that subject and welcome the readiness to consider appropriate measures against the Tiraspol administration at this stage. Let me also express our hope that the border monitoring mission under the auspices of the OSCE and the EU over the eastern border of the Republic of Moldova would be implemented without any delay. And finally, we would like to see the planned high-level consultations among the existing format participants with the EU and USA taking place soon in order to explore additional ways of obtaining progress on the conflict settlement in the Republic of Moldova.

Thank you.