



## United States Mission to the OSCE

# Statement on Continuing Tensions in Transnistria, Moldova

As delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission, Paul W. Jones  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
September 16, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In the week since our last intervention on the subject of the ongoing tensions in the Transnistrian region of Moldova, there has been no improvement whatsoever. As we stated last week, the Transnistrian authorities appear intent on prolonging the crisis they instigated with their forcible closure and harassment of Moldovan-language Latin-script schools.

The United States appreciates the efforts made by the Chairman-in-Office's special envoy, Petar Stoyanov, during his visit to Moldova last week. It is a shame that Transnistrian leader Smirnov did not meet with him.

The United States would like to express its disappointment with the lack of progress in solving the schools crisis. Over 1,000 pupils have been unable to begin the school year because the Transnistrian authorities seek to use them as pawns in a childish political game.

Like the EU, the U.S. condemns the actions of the Transnistrian militia on Wednesday, yesterday, to block access to the region for the Moldovan Education Minister who was attempting to meet with parents and school officials.

Nor have the Transnistrian authorities heeded the calls of the international community to withdraw from the Bendery railroad station facilities that the Transnistrian militia forcibly seized on September 6.

We again urge Ukraine to follow through on its commitment to cooperate with the Moldovan government's legitimate efforts to bring economic pressure to bear on the Transnistrian leadership and to observe the 2003 Moldova-Ukraine customs agreement by only importing Moldovan goods that have legitimate customs seals.

Mr. Chairman, a situation in which nearly a third of the Transnistrian region's children are unable to attend school, and in which orphans are still huddled inside a building to which water and electricity have been cut off, cannot continue indefinitely. The Permanent Council and the international community should make it clear that this situation remains unacceptable. These aggressive actions must be reversed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.