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**STATEMENT BY
THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 758th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

23 April 2009

**Response to the report by 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 and well-considered report to the Permanent Council on the recent political developments in the Republic of Moldova and on the prospects for a settlement of the Transnistrian conflict.

The European Union has taken note of the preliminary conclusions drawn by the International Election Observation Mission to monitor the Moldovan parliamentary elections of 5 April. The Mission notes: "Many of the OSCE and Council of Europe electoral commitments were met. Further improvements are required to ensure an electoral process free from undue administrative interference and to increase public confidence". Special efforts should be agreed upon in a number of areas: the drawing up of voter lists, the regulation of access to the media and balanced media coverage, the prevention of attempts to intimidate or exert pressure on candidates or voters.

While reiterating its commitment to freedom of assembly, the European Union is concerned at the events that occurred after the election, specifically the violent disturbances triggered by the demonstrations held in Chisinau, and at the response by the security forces. The EU calls on the Moldovan authorities to identify and bring to justice those responsible for the violence on both sides.

The European Union is also concerned at the allegations of mistreatment of the demonstrators detained. These allegations must also be looked into and, where necessary, the appropriate sanctions applied. In addition, the European Union calls on the Moldovan authorities to give the National Preventive Mechanism and international and independent observers unrestricted access to all places of detention.

Furthermore, the European Union agrees with the observations made on 14 April by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media regarding the need to guarantee freedom of movement for representatives of the international press and to place no undue restrictions on the work of journalists, whatever the circumstances.

The European Union calls on all the political forces in the Republic of Moldova to act in a spirit of responsibility, to overcome the current tensions through dialogue, and to pool their efforts to continue democratic reform and to strengthen the rule of law. The EU urges the Moldovan authorities to re-establish full respect for human rights and basic freedoms, in conformity with their OSCE commitments, and to co-operate to that end with the OSCE Mission and the relevant international bodies. It recalls in this connection the efforts undertaken by its Special Representative to find a political solution to these difficulties.

The European Union expresses its concern at the unilateral actions taken by the authorities in Chisinau with respect to Romania, a member States of the EU. In this context, the Union calls on the authorities of the Republic of Moldova to normalize relations with Romania and engage in dialogue in a spirit of good-neighbourliness.

Madam Chairperson,

The European Union remains firmly determined to contribute to the search for a settlement of the Transnistrian conflict on the basis of respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova. It calls for the resumption, as soon as possible and without conditions, of negotiations in the “5+2” format, the only forum capable of guaranteeing the transparency and legitimacy needed if a lasting solution is to be reached. Further, it actively encourages the parties to redouble their efforts to achieve progress in their work regarding confidence-building measures, in particular in the economic and social areas. The EU supports the holding in the near future, at the initiative of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, of a seminar on confidence- and security-building measures in the military field.

In conclusion, the European Union reiterates its full support for the OSCE Mission to Moldova and for Ambassador Remler’s efforts to resolve the Transnistrian conflict and to promote the democratic development of the Republic of Moldova.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Norway, as well as Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

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