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**STATEMENT BY
MR. MAXIM BUYAKEVICH, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1511th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

6 March 2025

On the Transdnistrian settlement process

Mr. Chairperson,

The Moldovan representative groundlessly accused our country of “aggression” against Moldova, forgetting to mention in the process that the root cause of the conflict in Transdnistria that broke out in March 1992 was attempts by the authorities in Chişinău to elevate the Moldovan people to the status of a titular nation while at the same time violating the rights of the Russian-speaking population of that country. She also failed to mention that it was through the efforts of the military personnel of the Russian (and until 1991 Soviet) 14th Army, stationed there long before these events, that the bloodshed was stopped.

The professional actions of our military made it possible to establish the conditions necessary for the start of negotiations. The Agreement on the Principles for a Peaceful Settlement of the Armed Conflict in the Dniester Region of the Republic of Moldova was signed already on 21 July 1992. The provisions of this Agreement were developed in a bilateral Memorandum of Understanding between Moldova and Transdnistria on the creation of a common State, signed in 1997. These documents provided the legal basis for the negotiation process and the peacekeeping operation to ensure security in the region.

The difficult but productive dialogue between the parties to the conflict continued with the assistance of mediators until Ms. Maia Sandu came to power in Moldova in 2019, and proceeded to abandon the agreements reached earlier. As a result, the time-tested “5+2” format has been frozen. We should like to point out that this happened years before the start of the Russian special operation in Ukraine. Direct contacts between representatives of the authorities in Tiraspol and Chişinău, although of practical importance for the resolution of urgent day-to-day issues, are nevertheless no substitute for the main “5+2” political format, aimed at achieving a long-term settlement.

We recall that the “5+2” format is recognized by all the Foreign Ministers of the OSCE participating States as “the only mechanism to achieve a comprehensive and sustainable settlement”. This was confirmed, in particular, in the last Ministerial Statement agreed to date of 3 December 2021 on the negotiations on the Transdnistrian settlement process in the “5+2” format. In that document the ministers called for a resumption of the work of the Permanent Conference in the “5+2” format.

It is worth noting that, at the same time, the Moldovan authorities, which do not hesitate to level accusations against Transdniestria and Russia, themselves refuse to fulfil their obligations on such crucial issues for the Transdnistrians as access to banking services, the passage of essential goods to the left bank of the Dniester, and co-operation in the field of telecommunications. A vivid example of this unconstructive line was the recent energy crisis in Transdniestria, which was overcome only after Russia became involved in its resolution.

We believe that the mandate of the current peacekeeping mission, which has proved its effectiveness for more than 30 years, is far from being over. The Russian military presence in the region will need to continue operating in accordance with its mandated tasks until a viable formula for a political settlement of the conflict can be worked out. The peacekeepers must continue their mission, and the question of reconfiguring the operation and changing its status can be raised only when a formula for a political settlement of the situation around Transdniestria has been found.

We should also like to draw attention to the fact that the Operative Group of Russian Forces continues to guard the military depots in the village of Cobasna. The Russian Federation plans to remove and dispose of their contents when the necessary conditions are in place. We will be ready to think about practical steps in this direction after the conclusion of the conflict in Ukraine, through whose territory the relevant logistical routes pass.

Lastly, we note that the current Moldovan authorities have not learned from the lessons of history, preferring pressure to dialogue and abandoning the proven negotiation mechanisms. The past year has merely seen an increase in the cultivation of the so-called “Russian threat” as an excuse for cracking down on democratic freedoms inside the country and with regard to the Transdnistriian settlement itself, which is heading further into an impasse. The authorities in Chişinău, supported by Ukraine and Western countries, continue their efforts to reshape the “5+2” negotiation format to their own taste, and its various participants have directly or indirectly blocked its work. At the same time, the Moldovan authorities have tried to justify their take-it-or-leave-it positions in the dialogue with Transdniestria on the basis of “European integration commitments”. Moreover, the forced militarization of Moldova does not square well with the assurances by its leadership of its intention to settle the Transdnistriian problem by peaceful means.

We should like to clearly warn the “hotheads” in Chişinău and other capitals that Russia will respond appropriately to any provocations and will ensure the protection of Russian citizens in Transdniestria, the peacekeeping contingent, military personnel of the Operative Group of Russian Forces and the military depots in the village of Cobasna.

Thank you for your attention.