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STATEMENT
delivered by H.E. Mr. Andrei STRATAN,
Deputy Prime-minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the
Republic of Moldova
at the 15th OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting
(Madrid, 29-30 November, 2007)

Dear Mr. President,
Dear colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to express my pleasure to meet you again in this welcoming city and to thank the hosts for good organization of our meeting.

My delegation aligned itself with the declaration made by Portugal on behalf of the European Union and, in the national capacity, would like to mention the following.

Despite its achievements during more than 30 years of activity, OSCE faces today difficulties generated by the process of institutional adjustment launched in order to respond to new challenges and objectives. One of the hardest challenges in the address of the security of our countries is unsolved conflicts within ex-soviet states. In the conditions of deep changes on European continent, OSCE can demonstrate its viability by contributing effectively to the resolution of “*frozen*” conflicts on the basis of respect for principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the states. Fulfillment of the pertinent commitments assumed within the framework of the Organization is also an indispensable requirement in this sense. Taking into account the decrease of potential for a military confrontation in OSCE area, it is not to understand the persistence of some positions on the “*freezing*” of the processes of conflict resolution, particularly of the Transnistrian conflict settlement.

Mr. President,

As far as you all know, Moldovan authorities, together with their partners, continued efforts on Transnistrian conflict settlement in a peaceful way, with political means. I will invoke, first of all, elaboration and presentation for discussions in 5+2 negotiations format of proposals on resolution “*in a package*” of the core problems related to the conflict. I would like to mention, at the same time, intense consultations held between the actors involved, inclusively in 3+2 format, as well as attempts to organize an informal meeting in 5+2 format. We have promoted and will consequently promote the idea of the resolution of the Transnistrian conflict through defining of a special status of the Transnistrian region, on the basis of respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. Regrettably, because of

unconstructive attitude, shown by some of the factors involved in the process, the purposes followed were not achieved.

In this order of ideas, I would like to highlight the initiatives of the President of the Republic of Moldova on security and confidence building between the two banks of the Nistru River, which are directed towards the facilitation of conflict resolution process. These proposals look into a number of joint projects in the field of economy, infrastructure, transport, social security, demilitarization etc. A special attention is paid to ensuring of free movement of persons, goods and services between the two banks of the Nistru River. The initiatives were welcomed by virtually all the actors involved in the settlement process. In this context, I would like to emphasize the measures taken already by the Moldovan authorities in order to consolidate confidence and security through delivering pertinent information with military character and destruction of some types of weapons. I would like to use this occasion to thank all the countries involved for the assistance offered in this sense.

Mr. President,

I do not think I would have to convince anybody in this room of the irreversibility of Moldova's European project. At the same time, as Minister Moratinos, the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, justly mentioned during his recent visit to my country, Moldova's approximation with the European Union makes it more attractive for the population from the left bank of the Nistru River. In this context, we mention with satisfaction effective contribution of the EU to the efforts of introducing a legal framework on Moldovan-Ukrainian border and successful activity of Border Assistance Mission, especially on its Transnistrian segment. The joint efforts undertaken by the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and EUBAM led, without any doubt, to growth of legitimacy and transparency of economic activity in the region, as well as of economic security of the two countries. At the same time, the responsibility of the business from the Transnistrian region has risen significantly, whereas the fact of registration by the constitutional authorities of the greatest part of producers from the region and substantial growth of their external economic activity points clearly at the support provided by the business environment in the Transnistrian region for the course taken. The possibility to be included in the system of Autonomous Trade Preferences offered by the EU also has a positive impact in this sense. At the same time, the final end of these activities ought to be not only benefits for the companies from the region, but also their definite inclusion in the legal field of the Republic of Moldova. In these circumstances, political speculations about an "economic blockade" or "pressure" upon the region, invoked by some of the actors to imperil the mechanisms of conflict settlement, are lacking any substance.

Mr. President,

I would like to reiterate our deep regret in connection with unilateral decision of the Russian Federation to suspend its participation in CFE Treaty, which we all consider to be the corner stone of European security. We consider that the most rational and

efficient way to overcome the difficulty we are facing and to implement the Adapted Treaty remains to be the unconditional, complete and transparent fulfillment in good faith of the commitments made by the Russian Federation at 1999 Istanbul Summit. The withdrawal of Russian military forces from Moldova and Georgia has to be conducted unconditionally, in a complete and transparent manner. We are eager to remain within the framework of a constructive dialogue on these issues. We highly appreciate continuous commitment of OSCE Member States that contributed to Voluntary Fund for Moldova in order to support the process of withdrawal.

I would like to underline once again the special importance that we pay to the implementation of relevant Istanbul decisions on Moldova, which will have a positive impact on the process of political settlement of the Transnistrian problem. As a neutral state, the Republic of Moldova will insist on a substantial decrease of the military component of security building mechanisms in the conflict zone. Taking into account lack of any real premises for the appearance of hostilities between the two banks of the Nistru River, we plead for the immediate transformation of the so called peacekeeping operation into a multinational civil mission under OSCE mandate. In this context, we welcome USA initiative to launch a mission supervising the actual peace keeping troops in the Security Zone.

Mr. President,

The application of democratic values and standards in all spheres of social life with the major purpose of the cooperation within the framework of our Organization is promoted consequently by the Republic of Moldova. Continuous reforms in the field of electoral system, audiovisual, public administration and the rule of law prove our serious approach towards this dimension, in the context of European integration of the Republic of Moldova. At the same time, we underline with concern continuous violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Transnistrian region, as well as persistence of serious obstacles in the way of democratic institutions and civil society building. In this sense, we reiterate our conviction that concrete steps are necessary to democratize Transnistrian region.

As a responsible member of OSCE Community, the Republic of Moldova will further promote democratic reforms in order to consolidate common values and principles adopted within the Organization. We express gratitude to our partners for the efforts made for political settlement of the Transnistrian conflict. We reiterate our readiness to cooperate closely with all partners involved in this process, in particular with OSCE Mission to Moldova and with EU Border Assistance Mission.

In conclusion, I would like to wish success to the future Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Finnish Minister Ilkka Kanerva, offering, at the same time, the assurances of our full support for the actions that will be taken during his mandate.

Thank you for your attention.