



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Head of Mission to Moldova

As delivered by Ambassador James S. Gilmore III
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 17, 2019

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ambassador Neukirch, we welcome your report to the Permanent Council. Your Mission's dedicated and objective reporting is useful, and we would like to see even more reporting in order to help participating States provide informed guidance to the Mission.

Your appearance at the Permanent Council today comes on the heels of a round of 5+2 talks in Bratislava on October 9 and 10 as reference has been made to that meeting. These talks were a stark reminder of the need for strong political will from all sides. We thank the Slovak Chairmanship and the Mission to Moldova for their dedication and hard work towards moving this process forward.

The United States believes 5+2 talks should be held when there has been real progress on the ground. We urge the sides to conclude the protocol and to finalize implementation of the remaining Package of Eight confidence building measures and to commence working on additional steps as outlined in the Mission's report to the Permanent Council.

The United States stands ready to work creatively with your team on the destruction and removal of ammunition and armaments at Colbasna, under the OSCE aegis and with U.S. and other international participation, to ensure full

compliance with the 1999 Istanbul summit declaration, which includes the withdrawal of troops of the Russian Federation.

The United States supports Moldova's anti-corruption and justice sector reforms. We believe that Moldovans deserve a justice system that holds all individuals – regardless of wealth or status – accountable for any criminal or corrupt act as we believe should apply throughout the OSCE community.

We value the Mission's work assisting survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, promoting tolerance and respect for the human rights of members of minority groups, training legal defenders, and promoting best practices in multilingual education. Moldova's action plan addressing Holocaust education and its national plan on the human rights of members of minorities are examples of the progress Moldova has made in becoming an inclusive society. The United States encourages Moldova to build on this momentum by implementing these plans. The OSCE Mission to Moldova serves as a useful conduit for Moldova to benefit from the full range of resources the OSCE has to offer.

This has been an eventful year in Moldova, as the country experienced a peaceful, democratic transfer of power that reflected the will of the Moldovan people. We encourage Moldova to work with the OSCE and the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe to implement recommendations for future elections, including clarifying elements of the electoral code.

The United States will continue to support a democratic Moldova, firmly anchored in Europe, secure within its internationally recognized borders, and enjoying the benefits of an effective and accountable government.

Thank you, sir, for your work. And thank you, Mr. Chair, for the opportunity to speak.

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