

STATEMENT

By Mr. Victor OSIPOV, Deputy Prime-minister of the Republic of Moldova
at the OSCE Permanent Council
(Vienna, 24 June 2010)

**Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I would like to thank the acting Kazakh Chairmanship, OSCE Secretariat and also everybody here for the opportunity to address you here in the Permanent Council and share several thoughts concerning the Transnistrian conflict settlement. I am also ready to present the position of the Moldovan authorities with regards to the perspectives of the European security system and other current issues faced by our Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

In spite of the difficulties we are facing for already 20 years in the Transnistrian settlement process, we are firmly convinced that this problem can be resolved rather easily and in relatively short time. This conflict has some significant differences in comparison with other existing regional problems.

In our case there are no contradictions of ethnic or religious character. And this facilitates greatly the task of reintegrating the Republic of Moldova. Of course, a certain negative imprint on the conscience of people has been left by the tragic events of 1992. But we are pleased to see that the people living on the both banks of the Nistru river do not have for each other feelings of hostility. On both banks of this river live the same Moldovans, Ukrainians, Russians and representatives of other nationalities, who are mostly Orthodox Christians. They are united by deep roots, based on history, kinship and culture. They share a common, natural desire to quickly overcome existing difficulties and build a better life.

The population of both banks is compatible from all points of view and can live in peace and understanding in one undivided European democratic state, which we need to build together. Only under this condition all citizens of Moldova will be able to realize their natural aspirations to live in a prosperous and thriving society and receive firm guarantees for the observance of human rights.

Mr. Chairman,

It is absolutely obvious that there are objective premises to resolve the Transnistrian problem. The practical steps undertaken by the Alliance for European Integration, which came 9 months ago to power in the Republic of Moldova, clearly show that that the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict is one of its central priorities.

We consistently advocate in favor of a policy of dialogue, openness and trust. Our efforts are concentrated on developing regular contacts between Chisinau and Tiraspol at the level of political representatives, as well as in the working groups created to build confidence in various areas. Our main goal is to provide the much needed support to the population and businesses in the region, including by the means of international projects and programs.

The procedures related to the declaring goods by Transnistrian enterprises, as well as providing population in the region with personal documentation free of charge were prolonged by the Government for an unlimited period of time. Transnistrian enterprises use actively the privileged trade regimes offered to the Republic of Moldova, including the Autonomous Trade Preferences granted by the EU. Currently, more than 40% of the total exports from this region go to EU member states.

We have pleaded for the temporary suspension of the EU states visa ban imposed against the leaders of the Transnistrian region, aiming to stimulate resolving of other issues. In particular, these issues are related to ensuring the normal functioning of Latin-script Moldovan schools in the region, as well as the creation of necessary conditions for the free movement of persons, goods and services between the two banks of Nistru.

We have rather advanced in the consultations with European experts on the issues of the full resumption of railroad communication through Transnistria. We are fully decided to promote the initiatives elaborated by the EUBAM (EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine) to optimize the regime for the import of raw materials in this region and develop contacts in the sphere of customs control.

Tangible progress is to be noted in the implementation of concrete projects in the field of healthcare. I would like to particularly mention here the contribution made by the European Union and the US aiming to modernize medical institutions in Transnistria by equipping them with modern technology and providing training for medical personnel. Currently in localities on the Nistru left-bank more than 20 projects are being carried out for the development of social infrastructure and local communities, with the support of the World Bank, Sweden, Japan as well as other development partners. Beginning with next year, up to 15% of the financial assistance offered by the European Union to Moldova will be allocated to the development of the Transnistrian region.

Mr. Chairman,

We highly appreciate the efforts undertaken recently by our international partners in support of the Transnistrian settlement process. In this context, I would like to especially mention the statement of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the joint statement by the Presidents of the Russian Federation and Ukraine made public on 17 May. We also welcome the Memorandum adopted on 5 June by the German Federal Chancellor and the Russian President. I am pleased to acknowledge that this positive trend was reconfirmed during yesterday's meeting of countries participating in Weimar Triangle. We also express our

gratitude to the acting Kazakh Chairmanship of OSCE for the firm drive to fulfill its objectives.

In what concerns the final resolution of the Transnistrian problem, we are firmly convinced that it can be achieved only in the framework of the existing 5+2 format. The central goal of negotiations, which is endorsed by all international participants in the format, is the elaboration of a special legal status of Transnistria while respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders.

We plead for the earliest resumption of official negotiations in the 5+2 format without any preliminary conditions. I am glad to underscore the fact that during our informal meeting in Vienna in early March this year a common agreement was reached to resume during the current year official negotiations, which have been interrupted since March 2006.

Looking to elaborate adequate joint approaches with our partners, we carried out consistent consultations in Moscow, Brussels, Washington and Kiev. With this visit to Vienna we close the circle of bilateral consultations. My presentation here is a kind of report about the work done until now. We hope, thus, to open a qualitatively new phase in the Transnistrian settlement process, and impart to it a proper official character.

The existing 5+2 format may become a platform for discussion on other issues pertaining to the Transnistrian settlement. In particular, we propose to discuss in this format the issue of the future transformation of the current peacekeeping operation into a multinational civilian mission under an international mandate; building security and confidence in the military field; ensuring the free movement of people, goods and services; the development of civil society and democratic institutions; the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In this context I would like to underline once again that an important positive factor in promoting the Transnistrian settlement would be the completion of the withdrawal from the territory of the Republic of Moldova of the munitions stockpiles and guarding military personnel belonging to the Russian Federation.

Mr. Chairman,

We assess positively the activity of the OSCE Mission to Moldova. During many years it has been serving as a key instrument in organizing meetings and in seeking for solutions for problems existing in the field.

At the same time, just as before, our expectations with regard to the activity of the Head of Mission and his team are high. We consider that this Mission should pay more attention to the effective carrying out of its monitoring and mediation functions. It would be reasonable to concentrate the available resources on priority directions depending on the changing situation – be it, for example, on the increasingly frequent cases of violations of human rights or on incidents in the Security Zone. The Mission could bring a more tangible contribution to the development of draft proposals to resolve concrete problems that pertain to free movement, observance of human rights, normal functioning of schools, removal of tension sources in the

Security Zone and other. The Mission should be better prepared for the special rhythm of work once official negotiations in the 5+2 format are resumed. In this context, apparently, there is a need to think on the enhancement and development of the potential of the Mission to Moldova. We also consider that other OSCE institutions should pay more attention to the increasing pressure on the civil society, media, as well as to the cases of violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Transnistrian region. Striking examples in this sense are the cases of arrest of the journalist Ernest Vardanean and Mr. Ilie Cazac, that were described in spot-reports provided by the Mission.

Mr. Chairman,

As you can see, we are fully determined to use positive prerequisites and existent mechanisms to achieve our goals. Currently we are elaborating a complex strategy for the settlement of the conflict and the reintegration of the country. As important factors in the promotion of this strategy I would mention the following: completion of democratic and structural reforms, the modernization of society, improving the quality of life for people and promoting European integration, which are able to significantly increase the attractiveness of the Republic of Moldova for its citizens. A real effect in this regard will be produced by the earliest completion of negotiations with the EU on agreements on association, liberalization of the visa regime and on establishing a free trade area.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to further touch upon several actual issues that concern the OSCE agenda. First of all, we are glad to acknowledge that the dialogue on European security – the Corfu process – has already entered the stage of tabling of concrete proposals. In this context, my country, with the support of delegations of Sweden, United Kingdom and Romania, proposed organize thematic sessions dedicated to concrete conflicts within the Corfu process. In a nutshell, we are profoundly interested that the dialogue on European security issues acquires a practical character and be focused on looking for answers to the real challenges and threats in this sphere.

We deem it is necessary to define more clearly the directions in strengthening the Secretariat, as well as the Institutions and OSCE field missions, both in what regards their analytical potential and their operational reaction capabilities to crisis situations. Such a need became absolutely obvious in the context of tragic events in Kyrgyzstan. These directions could serve as a basis for an OSCE program of actions for the near future. We hope that an agreement could be reached with regards to the need of carrying out concrete negotiations on the proposals forwarded within the Corfu process.

In this context, my country places great hope on the informal ministerial meeting due to be held in July and the possible OSCE Summit in the end of this year. We expect, first of all, substantial discussions on issues of concern to us, such as the settlement of conflicts and crisis situations, arms control, strengthening the European security system, which will allow the drawing of clear-cut perspectives for the future. We also hope that during the expected OSCE summit we will be able to give an objective assessment with regards to the existing situation in

the Transnistrian settlement process, as well as to outline the ways to resolve this conflict and other pertaining issues.

Mr. Chairman,

We are deeply interested in the overcoming the crisis around the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. We do hope that consultations currently being carried out on this most important issue will lead to concrete agreements already by the end of this year. We count on the fact that achieving progress in the sphere of arms control will ensure positive dynamics in the efforts to settle conflicts.

In conclusion, I would like to once again underline how important is to us the achieving of concrete results in resolving the problems our Organization faces. The OSCE basic documents, first of all the Helsinki Final Act, the Paris Charter for a New Europe, the Charter for European Security and the existing set of OSCE commitments, principles and standards constitutes a solid basis in this sense. Noting once again the importance of the principle of indivisibility of security, we express our readiness to actively participate in the upcoming work to elaborate concrete substance to the concept of a “security community” in the OSCE area, which can become our common unifying idea and goal.

I thank you for Your attention!