

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANVAR AZIMOV,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

29 April 2010

**On the report by Ambassador Philip Remler,
Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova**

Mr. Chairperson,

We join in welcoming Ambassador Philip Remler, Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova. We take note of his assessments of the current political situation in Moldova and of the progress in the search for a Transdnistriean settlement. In that connection, we should like to note that the stepped-up monitoring of internal Moldovan processes is hardly in line with the objectives of the mandate of that field mission.

Putting aside for a moment today's report, we would note that in its accounts the Mission frequently departs quite significantly from an unbiased portrayal of the facts and is often guilty of a tendentious description of events taking place in the country. Political assessments of the actions taken by any of the parties to the conflict, support for the Euro-integrationist and unionist aspirations of the current Moldovan authorities and open criticism of the actions of the previous leadership – all this can hardly contribute to the development of a constructive dialogue between Chisinau and Tiraspol or to interaction between the parties involved in the negotiation process.

For these reasons, we are forced once again to remind those present that on the basis of the mandate adopted in 1993 the purpose of the Mission's work is to provide assistance in settling the conflict. On the other hand, the collection of information on the internal policies of one of the parties must not become a goal in itself but is rather an additional task connected exclusively with the settlement problem.

Another point. The report speaks of the Mission's concern at the fate of Mr. Ernest Vardanyan, a journalist arrested in Tiraspol, and at the interrogations of civil society representatives that have begun in connection with his case. We share Ambassador Remler's concerns. In the present situation, however, it seems to us that the Mission's priority task lies not in involving other OSCE institutions but in preventing this negative episode from having a detrimental effect on the prospects that have emerged for a resumption of the negotiation process.

We feel similar concerns, in particular, in the face of the efforts to exploit the situation concerning the journalist's arrest to exert across-the-board pressure on Tiraspol and to call into question its status as a fully fledged participant in the search for a settlement.

We call on the Mission to act in the most balanced way possible through steps that will help to restore confidence between the parties to the conflict and to promote the observance of the generally recognized principle of equality in the dialogue regarding the problems of a settlement between Chisinau and Tiraspol at all levels.

We agree with Ambassador Remler's view that the populist calls being heard for a "shortcut" to the solution of the Transdnistrian problem are both counter-productive and unpromising. It is our view that if constructive efforts to find a lasting and viable option for a political settlement are to continue, all participants must display a responsible approach and respect for what has already been accomplished through negotiations, and must not attempt to begin the search for a solution "from zero".

In that same connection, we take a positive view of the results of the meetings held in March between the mediators and observers in the "5+2" format and also between the Moldovan and Transdnistrian negotiators. We sincerely hope that the next round of consultations in this format, as scheduled at the initiative of the Kazakh Chairmanship for the end of May, will be no less useful.

We regard as timely the Mission's initiative in resuming the training in Russia and Ukraine of military observers from the countries participating in the peacekeeping operation on the Dniestr, and also the decision to organize a seminar on the subject of peacekeeping operations. It is our hope that these measures will help to raise the level of confidence between the parties to the conflict and also to strengthen the institution of military observers, which is an important component of the peacekeeping operation.

Allow me to take this opportunity to wish Ambassador Remler and the staff of the Mission every success in dealing with the difficult problems facing them.

Thank you for your attention.