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OSCE Parliamentary Impetus in Search for Solution to Transdnistriean Conflict



OSCE PA President Bruce George (right) at the opening session with OSCE PA Vice-President Kimmo Kiljunen (center), and Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Moldova, Ambassador Adriaan Jacobovits de Szeged (left).

From 12-13 May 2003, the OSCE PA's Parliamentary Team on Moldova, in close co-operation with the OSCE Mission to Moldova, organized a two-day seminar devoted to the theme of federalism. Significantly, the first day of the Seminar took place in Chisinau and continued on the second day in Tiraspol. The Seminar was designed to contribute to the current efforts underway to create a federal State in an attempt to resolve the decade-old dispute regarding the status of the Transdnistriean region of Moldova. Among the more than 60 participants in the Seminar were parliamentarians from Moldova and representatives of the Transdnistriean Supreme Soviet as well as the chief negotiators from both sides.

The Seminar provided an opportunity for representatives of the two sides to hear about European experiences of federalism from representatives of the parliaments of Austria, Belgium, Germany, the Russian Federation and Switzerland. The Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, as well as the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Moldova, experts and officials from the European Union and the Venice Commission addressed the Seminar, which was chaired by Mr. Kimmo Kiljunen (MP, Finland), Vice President of the OSCE PA and Chair of the Parliamentary Team on Moldova.

In opening the two-day event, OSCE PA President Bruce George

referred to the difficult task of drafting a new constitution for Moldova on a federal basis: "It is vital that in this critical moment for your country the elected political leaders recognize their responsibilities," he said. "This may include taking difficult decisions and making compromises in order to secure a better future for the country and its people."

Mr. George also addressed the two sides' representatives in the recently formed Joint Constitutional Committee (JCC), created to draft a new federal constitution for the country, who also took part in the Seminar. "The international community has provided the impetus in this process, but ultimately the new constitution for Moldova must come from within the country and reflect the interests of all its citizens," he told them.

In his closing remarks, Mr. Kiljunen highlighted the overall success of the event, noting in particular the significance of the participation of legislators from both the Parliament of Moldova and the Transdnistriean Supreme Soviet, the inclusion of opposition representatives in the Moldovan delegation, the participation of international organisations and the presence of the media. This event was seen to have been well-timed to coincide with the beginning of the work of the JCC and the Parliamentary Team on Moldova intends to follow up on progress with a visit in the early autumn.



Vadim Misin, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Moldova, speaks at the opening session.



E.V. Shevchuk, Deputy Speaker of the Supreme Soviet of Transdnistria, and Ambassador William H. Hill, Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, at the opening session.

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