



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

**Statement in response to the Report
by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova,
Ambassador Michael Scanlan**

As delivered by Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1164th meeting of the Permanent Council,
16 November 2017

Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of Ukraine warmly welcomes the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova Ambassador Michael Scanlan back to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his comprehensive report.

At the outset we wish to note that Ukraine highly values its good-neighborly relations with the Republic of Moldova and broad-ranging cooperation, in particular in the framework of pursuit by the two countries of the strategic course of European integration. We see as very important the OSCE Mission's continued work of supporting Moldova's multi-faceted reform agenda aimed at realizing the nation's European aspirations.

We commend the Mission's efforts in seeking avenues for increasing effectiveness of implementation of its mandate and of its contribution to a peaceful settlement of the Transdniestrian conflict with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova with a special status for Transdniestria within Moldova. We welcome the decision reached by the sides on the opening of the Gura Bicului-Bychok bridge in Moldova that has both symbolic and practical significance for the local population on both sides of the river. This step will help improve civilian transportation, foster trade and will contribute to confidence-building between the sides. At the same time, we encourage political will to proceed towards comprehensive implementation of other seven initiatives from a priority package agreed at the beginning of the year, which include the internationally endorsed parameters, formulated in the Berlin Protocol.

We hope that the next round of "5+2" negotiations scheduled for 27 November in Vienna will be marked by meaningful progress across all three baskets of the agreed agenda. The efforts should be focused on dialogue not only on social and economic issues, but also on political settlement issues in the so-called "third basket".

The recently appointed Special representative of Ukraine on the Transdniestrian settlement Ambassador Viktor Kryzhanivskyi will make every effort to contribute to achieving tangible results of the negotiations.

Comprehensive reporting on the political and security situation on the ground should continue to be an area of specific focus in the Mission's work. We express concern regarding the military exercises conducted by the Operational Group of Russian Forces in the Security Zone without a consensus decision in the JCC, which undermines the Moldovan-Russian agreement of 1992, in particular, the commitment of the Russian Federation's Armed Forces in Moldova to strictly observe neutrality. In this regard we reiterate the importance of implementation of earlier reached agreements and commitments, including from the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit on the withdrawal of Russian troops from Moldova. We also encourage the Mission to play a facilitating role on the removal from and destruction of Russian ammunition and armaments which are now stored on the Moldovan territory. To sustain positive dynamics in the settlement process Ukraine supports the gradual change of the existing peacekeeping format in the Transdniestrian region to a civilian police mission under the auspices of the OSCE.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate that Ukraine, as a state-guarantor and mediator in the negotiation process, will continue to promote implementation of practical and tangible steps with the view to achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Transdniestrian conflict that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova, including by taking efforts to intensify result-oriented negotiations in the "5+2" format.

The delegation of Ukraine again thanks Ambassador Scanlan for his report and wishes him and his able team every success in their future activities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.