



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Head of EUBAM General Banfi

As delivered by Political Counselor Samuel C. Laeuchli
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 12, 2008

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States joins others in welcoming General Banfi to the Permanent Council today. The EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine is doing excellent work, and we applaud the commitment of Moldovan and Ukrainian authorities to professionalize and strengthen border administration. Effective border management is a theme of great importance in the OSCE region and the United States hopes that the on-the-ground experience, training and skills-building that EU, Moldovan and Ukrainian personnel acquire will ultimately create a pool of talent and greater resources for border work in other parts of the OSCE as well.

Enhancing the professional capacity of border guards and custom officials, improving risk analysis capacity, and increasing cooperation on both sides of a border are important undertakings. General Banfi and the dedicated EU, Moldovan and Ukrainian nationals who work on this project deserve praise for concrete accomplishments such as reducing smuggling and document forgery, and helping Moldovan and Ukrainian exporters meet EU and international standards.

Particularly worthy of commendation are EUBAM's efforts to help Moldovan businesses, especially in the Transdnistrian region, qualify for preferential trade access to EU markets. We note with satisfaction that over 400 companies in the Transdnistrian region have now registered with the State Register Chamber of Moldova, and Moldovan authorities have granted increased numbers of preferential export certificates to such companies. This initiative is important for development of the economy on both banks of the Nistru River. The United States looks forward to further reports of progress by EUBAM and its Moldovan and Ukrainian partners in this practical and positive initiative to strengthen borders, trade and economic well being.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.