



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Response to the Report by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
October 15, 2015

The United States warmly welcomes Ambassador Scanlan back to the Permanent Council, and we thank him for another comprehensive report.

Ambassador Scanlan, thank you for sharing not only the substance of the work that you and your team do, but also your perspectives on the way forward. I think this kind of counsel is particularly useful for those of us sitting around this table.

The United States strongly supports the OSCE Mission to Moldova, which performs a crucial role in efforts to broker a comprehensive settlement to the Transnistria conflict by facilitating direct dialogue between the sides and by supporting confidence-building measures that address concerns in all three OSCE dimensions.

While the United States remains disappointed that the 5+2 talks have been repeatedly delayed, we are encouraged that the 1+1 process has been active for the last two months and that working groups are meeting regularly. We urge the sides to address substantive issues in these working groups, with the goal of restarting the 5+2 talks. Although we are encouraged by the Bavaria Conference, it is not enough just to discuss confidence-building measures: The “third basket” of the political settlement needs to be addressed as well, and leadership on both sides must re-commit to taking action in this regard.

We are concerned by the Transnistrian authorities’ refusal to grant OSCE monitors unfettered access to Transnistria. The OSCE Mission must have unrestricted access to all of Moldova, including the Transnistrian region, to perform its activities and fulfill its mandate. All participating States should vocally support full access for the Mission, in keeping with its mandate.

We welcome the Mission’s efforts to draw attention to the issues of national minorities and trafficking in persons in Moldova. The United States agrees with Ambassador Scanlan that adopting a balanced policy that promotes minority integration and the human rights of members of minorities is an essential step for Moldova toward fulfilling its OSCE commitments. The United States commends the OSCE and the Moldovan government for their work on trafficking in persons, including their shared focus on providing resources for victims. We note that prosecutions and investigations have improved in number and quality, but also that judicial corruption has allowed for lighter than merited sentencing cases in numerous instances.

The OSCE Mission to Moldova has an important role to play in supporting Moldova's efforts to provide the legal framework for a special status for Transnistria, and in providing reporting on the political and security situation in the country, including in the Transnistrian region.

Mr. Ambassador, we thank you for your report, and we appreciate your continued hard work.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.