



United States Mission to the OSCE

On the Transnistrian Settlement Process

As delivered by Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Michele Siders
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 15, 2018

The United States reiterates our firm commitment to the core goal of achieving a comprehensive, peaceful, and sustainable settlement of the conflict, based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova, with a special status for Transnistria within Moldova's internationally recognized borders.

This goal is achievable, but requires sustained commitment and political courage from the sides. As an observer in the 5+2 settlement process, the United States fully supports the commitments made by the sides last November in the Vienna Protocol regarding the Package of Eight. As we noted last week in this Council, recent progress constituted a major step forward in the settlement process, and benefited populations on both side of the Nistru River.

However, the good will garnered by this progress is at risk of being lost. We regret that the deadline committed to by the sides for reaching an agreement on the mechanism of participation of vehicles from Transnistria in international road traffic has been missed. We call on the sides to fully adhere to commitments in the Vienna Protocol and finalize the mechanism before the visit of Special Representative Frattini later this month. Such a mechanism would reaffirm full respect for Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity, while acknowledging Transnistria's special status within the Republic of Moldova. We also call on the sides to implement the agreements on Dubasari farmland and telecommunications that were signed in November.

Mr. Chair, we recall the concern raised by Moldova regarding construction across the Nistru River in the security zone. It is our understanding that there will be no construction of new facilities, other than temporary parking areas. Anything beyond that construction must be carried out in close consultation between the sides, and should facilitate – not impede – the flow of traffic across the bridge. One of the commitments in the Package of Eight was freedom of movement, and this commitment must be honored as well. At present, the situation should in no way be considered an impediment to achieving agreement on the Vienna Protocol and related Package of Eight measures.

Mr. Chair, the United States takes this opportunity to reaffirm its strong support for the Chairmanship's Special Representative and the OSCE Mission to Moldova.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.