



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.DEC/1474
14 December 2023

Original: ENGLISH

1456th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1456, Agenda item 8

**DECISION No. 1474
EXTENSION OF THE MANDATE OF THE
OSCE MISSION TO MOLDOVA**

The Permanent Council,

Decides to extend the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova until 30 June 2024.

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Attachment 1

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**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Moldova:

“In connection with the Permanent Council decision on the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova just adopted, the delegation of the Republic of Moldova would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure:

The Republic of Moldova deeply regrets that it was not possible to extend again the mandate only of the OSCE Mission to Moldova for one year due to the disagreement of one participating State. We recall that a six-month extension represents a heavy administrative burden, and we do not see any reason to render the functioning of the Mission even more challenging. This will only add unnecessary strain on its activity. To produce results a mission should be given a reasonable time frame and space.

Moldova, as a host country, recalls its strong support for the Mission’s work, according to its mandate. Against this background, we will not oppose the consensus to extend the mandate by six months.

We would like to recall Ministerial Council Decision No. 18/06 which reaffirms that the mandate for field operations should be of a one-year duration when the participating State hosting the field operation concurs. And it should not be for any other OSCE participating State to impose an alternative period. In this regard, we call on all participating States to strictly follow their commitments.

We request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision.”

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
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The delegation of Spain, in its capacity as EU Presidency, passed the floor to the representative of the European Union, who delivered the following statement:

“In connection with the Permanent Council decision on the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, the European Union would like to make the following interpretative statement under the relevant provisions of the Rules of Procedure:

The European Union deplores once again the isolated and unsubstantiated position of the Russian Federation to arbitrarily limit the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova to six months instead of one year, which is the rule we collectively subscribed to and reconfirmed in 2006 at the ministerial level. Indeed, the Brussels OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 18/06 reaffirmed unequivocally that the mandate for field operations should be of a one-year duration when the participating State hosting the field operation concurs. We continue to believe that a six-month extension represents a very heavy administrative burden for the Mission and we do not see any reason to render the functioning of the Mission even more challenging in the current very difficult circumstances, when the Republic of Moldova continues to face the consequences of Russia’s ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine.

We commend the Head of Mission and her team for the outstanding work they carry out to implement the mandate of the Mission, which has continued in spite of the present challenging circumstances. We recall our strong support for the Mission’s work in facilitating engagement and regular dialogue between the sides in the context of achieving a lasting comprehensive political settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders with a special status for Transnistria.

It is essential that the Mission continues to monitor the situation in the Security Zone and on the border with Ukraine, reporting promptly on any incidents occurring there. We reiterate our appeal for strict adherence to the rules established by the Joint Control Commission in the Security Zone and emphasize the importance of respecting the Mission’s mandate and ensuring the free movement of its members.

Having in mind the importance of allowing the OSCE Mission to Moldova to continue its invaluable work, and taking into account the position of the host country, the European Union has decided to join the consensus to extend the mandate by six months.

We call on Russia to reconsider its position in order to allow for a resumption of a one-year extension of the Mission's mandate, as per the established rule.

We request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and to the journal of today's meeting.

The candidate countries North Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹, Serbia¹, Albania¹, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina¹, and Georgia, the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Andorra and San Marino align themselves with this statement.”

1 North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

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**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
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By the delegation of the Russian Federation:

“The Russian Federation is deeply concerned about the absence of any headway in the political process for a Transdniestrian settlement and the continued dysfunction of the existing negotiation mechanisms, primarily the key ‘5+2’ format. Furthermore, the deteriorating human rights situation in the Republic of Moldova, in particular with regard to freedom of the media and guaranteeing the rights of national minorities, requires a response.

Having joined the consensus regarding the Permanent Council decision on the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova until 30 June 2024, the Russian Federation assumes that this field operation will make exhaustive efforts to facilitate the Transdniestrian settlement process within the existing formats and will work with the Moldovan host authorities to remove the administrative obstacles that are complicating the negotiation process.

We expect the Mission to closely monitor the Republic of Moldova’s compliance with its OSCE commitments, document its findings through regular reporting and undertake substantive work with the Moldovan authorities to put things right.

The Mission’s effectiveness in dealing with the aforementioned mandated tasks will be of cardinal importance when it comes to any further extension of its mandate.

I request that this statement be attached to the adopted decision and included in the journal of today’s meeting of the Permanent Council.”

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**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
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By the delegation of Canada:

“Mr. Chairperson,

Regarding the decision of the Permanent Council on the extension of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Canada would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure:

Canada regrets that one participating State has blocked consensus on extending the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova for the regular one-year term. We have joined consensus on this irregular six-month extension, but are disappointed the Russian Federation has once again groundlessly and recklessly prioritized its narrow national interest to undermine the efficiency and effectiveness of our Organization, and broader European security.

Canada continues to strongly support the mandate of the OSCE mission in Moldova. We sincerely hope the Russian Federation does not plan to continue this disruptive path with regards to the renewal of the mission’s mandate in the future, and that the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova will be renewed for the regular one-year term in June 2024. This would not only be in line with Ministerial Council Decision No. 18/06 but also with the wishes of the host country.

Separately to this, I would also like to reiterate Canada’s full confidence in the field mission to assist Moldova in implementing our shared commitments in extremely difficult circumstances.

I request that this statement be attached to the decision.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
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By the delegation of the United States of America:

“In connection with the Permanent Council decision just adopted on the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, the United States would like to make the following interpretative statement under Paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure.

The United States once again expresses deep disappointment at the Russian Federation’s unwillingness to join consensus on extending the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova for a full year. The United States recalls Ministerial Council Decision No. 18/06 on further strengthening the effectiveness of OSCE executive structures and reminds Russia of its commitment to that decision and to the principle that ‘when the participating State hosting a field operation concurs, the mandate for field operations should be of a one year duration.’ Russia’s refusal to respect that commitment is yet another example of its attempting to undermine the critical work of this Organization and its field missions.

The real victims of Russia’s failure to agree to a full year mandate extension are the people of Moldova and, most regrettably, the Moldovan Mission’s staff, who are doing their very best under incredibly difficult circumstances. Let me be clear: the United States rejects any notion this six-month extension will set a precedent for future mandate negotiations. In accordance with Ministerial Council Decision No. 18/06, the Mission’s mandate is to be brought in line with the yearly OSCE cycle.

Russia’s blockage of the one-year extension is only the most recent example among a litany of actions showing the Kremlin’s contempt for its own OSCE commitments. Russia’s blatant unlawful use of force against and violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine and Georgia directly contravene the Helsinki Final Act and violate international law, including the United Nations Charter. Russia’s continuing to station forces in Moldova without Moldova’s consent is a further contravention of its commitments.

The United States continues to value the critical work of the OSCE Mission to Moldova to facilitate a lasting and comprehensive settlement process. We support Moldova’s sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and a comprehensive settlement of the Transnistria conflict with a special status for Transnistria. The United States will continue to assist Moldova on its chosen path towards democratic reform and further European integration.

Mr. Chairperson, I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and to the journal of the day.”

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**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
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By the delegation of the United Kingdom:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, and I would like to start by thanking our Chairperson-in-Office for your leadership in finding a way forward on this issue under challenging circumstances.

In connection with the Permanent Council decision just adopted on the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, the United Kingdom would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure.

Russia has once again refused to join consensus on this technical decision to allow the Mission to Moldova’s mandate to be renewed for a full year, causing significant disruption to the Mission’s work which requires stability in order to plan its activities effectively. We deeply regretted Russia’s isolated position in December 2022 and July 2023. Our strong preference was then, and remains now, to extend the mandate for a full 12 months in line with Ministerial Council Decision No. 18/06.

We are therefore deeply disappointed that the Russian Federation would continue not to allow the full 12-month extension that Moldova has called for and that the Mission, its staff and the people of Moldova deserve. We appreciate Moldova’s constructive spirit, and we join them in agreeing to this six-month extension on an exceptional basis. We strongly support the Mission, and want to see its work continue – work which continues despite the very difficult circumstances, including those created by Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine.

We urge the Russian Federation to cease playing games with the Mission’s mandate, return to full 12-month mandate renewals going forwards and show that it is serious about the ‘close co-operation’ with the Mission that it has readily offered.

I ask that this statement be attached to the decision and to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
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By the delegation of Switzerland:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

In connection with the Permanent Council decision on the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Switzerland would like to make the following interpretative statement under the relevant provisions of the Rules of Procedure.

Switzerland regrets that one single participating State does not allow the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova for one year.

We would like to recall our strong support for the Mission’s work and express our gratitude for its valuable efforts on the ground. It is imperative that the team can keep up its work without additional budgetary or administrative difficulties.

Taking into account the position of the host country, Switzerland decided to join consensus to extend the mandate by six months.

However, we call on Russia to reconsider its decision and to abide by OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 18/06, which clearly states that the mandate of field operations should last one year when the host country of the field operation agrees.

We request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and to the journal of today’s meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”

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**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
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By the delegation of Norway:

“Mr. Chairperson,

Norway strongly objects to Russia’s unilateral decision to reduce the OSCE Mission to Moldova’s mandate to six months instead of the standard one year.

At the same time, we praise the Head of Mission and their team for their excellent work under difficult conditions.

We believe this shorter extension increases the administrative burden and complicates the Mission's work, especially given Moldova's challenges due to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine.

Recognizing the OSCE Mission to Moldova’s vital role and the host country’s stance, Norway agrees to extend the mandate by six months. At the same time, we urge Russia to revisit its stance to enable a return to the one-year mandate extension norm.

I thank you.”