



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

Statement in response to the Report by the Head of the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Moldova Ambassador Kelly Keiderling

As for delivery by the Delegation of Ukraine
to the 1470th meeting of the Permanent Council,
25 April 2024

Madam Chairperson,

Ukraine aligns itself with the statement delivered under this agenda item by the Delegation of the European Union. At the same time, I would also like to add some remarks in the national capacity.

The Delegation of Ukraine welcomes Ambassador Kelly Keiderling back to the Permanent Council and thanks her for the report. We fully support the Mission's mandated activities and share the commitment to the common goal, reflected in your report, Ambassador, which is comprehensive, peaceful, and sustainable settlement of the Transdniestrian conflict, based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders.

Meanwhile we reiterate, that **the 5+2 negotiation format remains fully dysfunctional** because of the destructive role of the aggressor-state – the Russian Federation. We believe that any practical participation of Russia, led by the war criminal regime, in any peacebuilding initiatives is impossible.

We condemn all **Russian steps aimed at destabilisation of the situation in the Republic of Moldova**. We call on the Mission, OSCE Chairpersonship and all participating States to pay due attention to the destructive activities of Russia in the region, which pose additional challenges to the fragile security situation. Any use of OSCE platform for Russian manipulations and spreading disinformation must be made impossible.

Just recently, on 11 April, Russia was trying to manipulate in this hall on the, I quote: "drones attacks on the Transdniestrian military objects". Meanwhile, the Russian delegate was shy to mention, that the issue of the **illegal use by Russia of UAVs** (which are officially not in service of the Russian military contingent) during the military exercises of the operative deployment groups, conducted in violation of the regime of the Security Zone and relevant documents of the Joint Control Commission, has been already brought to the attention of this Commission earlier.

Unaccounted Russian drones in the Security zone must be very useful for Moscow for the destabilizing activities in the region.

For all of us it's clear: the military contingent of the so-called "Russian peacekeeping force" **illegally brings new weapons to the Security Zone**, bypassing

military observers. At the same time, russian high-rank military officers together with their counterparts from the Transdnistrian region block relevant activities of the military observers aimed at documenting of mentioned above incidents.

Another question is about the logistical means, used by russia, for illegally bringing UAVs and potentially other weapons to the Security Zone.

Monitoring activities by the Mission in the Security Zone suffer from restrictions of the freedom of movement as well. Civilian vehicles, including diplomatic ones duly, accredited in the Republic of Moldova, are groundlessly stopped, and inspected by the russian military personnel at the checkpoints of the Joint Peacekeeping Force.

Taking into account these and other examples of **russian violations in the Security Zone**, the Mission's assessment of the security situation in and around it as "stable", looks at least like irrelevant and raises additional questions.

The report clearly shows that the Republic of Moldova continues to experience the **negative spillover effect of the russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine**. In addition to the previously reported information on incidents with the russian missiles, breaking the Moldovan airspace and parts of them, falling at the Moldovan sovereign territory, the current reporting period was marked by the incident with the Iranian "Shaheed" drones, used by russia in its aggressive war against Ukraine.

Against this backdrop we are grateful to the Government of the Republic of Moldova for its initiatives, making any potential export of dual-use and internationally sanctioned goods to russia impossible.

Madam Chairperson, Dear Colleagues,

Ukraine will continue playing an active role in the Transdnistrian settlement process. The final goal of this process is **full re-integration of the Transdnistrian region into the Republic of Moldova**. And this core aspect should be kept in mind every time we have a relevant discussion, including here, at the Permanent Council.

We encourage the OSCE Mission to provide all necessary support to Chisinau in implementing its policy on the gradual re-integration of the Transdnistria region into the Moldovan legal framework, namely in terms of economic and social issues. This task is even more important as the Republic of Moldova is doing its homework on adjusting this framework to the relevant international agreements and commitments.

We reiterate, that it is the **compliance by Tiraspol with the relevant Moldovan legislation**, that is crucial for both solving the practical issues and re-integration of the region. Not vice versa.

Problems in this process are rooted in russia-fuelled unwillingness of Tiraspol to really reintegrate the Region into Moldova.

For example, the issue of **issuance of neutral-design licence plates**. All necessary conditions for complying with relevant requirements were created for the private owners of vehicles from the Transdnistrian region of Moldova quite long ago. The timeframes used to be extended on several occasions. But full capacity of the

Vehicle Registration Offices in Tiraspol and Ribnitsa has never been utilized. In other words, the relevant options were simply ignored. As Chisinau is now working on a new legislation to govern the VRO operation, we encourage the Mission to conduct more active work with the Transdniestrian region on the issue. Another opportunity to solve it should not be missed again.

The situation around functioning of the **Latin-script schools** becomes more and more difficult. In addition to previously mentioned serious problems, the de-facto authorities of the Region increased the utility bill prices, challenging the normal operation of these schools. This is discrimination by the definition.

We keep receiving news on numerous facts related to restrictions of the freedom of movement, activities of journalists and representatives of civil society, illegal persecutions, and other **human rights violations in the Transdniestrian region of the Republic of Moldova**, mainly, stemming from the so called "Transdniestrian strategy on countering extremism for the years 2022-2026".

This regulation has become an unprecedented tool of suppressing human rights and freedoms in the Transdniestrian Region. All those, who criticize the de-facto authorities, be it open expression or a simple post in the social network, face inevitable and inadequate punishment. How similar this situation is to the one in Russia, isn't it?

Madam Chairperson,

Ukraine once again underlines the urgency of the issue of withdrawal of military units and munitions of the Moscow war criminal regime from the sovereign territory of the Republic of Moldova as Russia recommitted to do at the 1999 Istanbul Summit and as it was requested by Chisinau itself on numerous occasions.

In current realities of the regional security, aggravated by the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, stability in the Republic of Moldova, including in the Transdniestrian region of this country is the issue of primary importance.

The participating States should exert additional pressure on Russia to provide the OSCE Mission to Moldova with the possibility to monitor and report on the situation at the munition depot in Cobasna as it is envisaged by its mandate, the scope of which was expanded by the PC Decision №329/99.

Considering destructive position of Russia within OSCE, which, inter alia, resulted in cutting of the term of the OSCE Mission's to Moldova mandate from 12 months to 6, we have to secure this OSCE field operation from any pressure exerted by the Russian Federation, including by the members of the Russian delegation in Vienna.

In terms of finding a peaceful and comprehensive solution to the Transdniestrian conflict, Ukraine has always been and will continue to be standing firmly on its position, based on full respect to sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders with a special status for the Transdniestrian region.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.