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STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF MOLDOVA

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to join previous speakers in expressing regret that the Council was not able to adopt the Ministerial Declaration and a statement on Moldova at its annual meeting. The Moldovan delegation has worked in a constructive and result-oriented manner to reach consensus on these important documents. However, despite these efforts, we do not have a political final document for the fourth year in a row. I express my sincere hope that this does not become a tradition in our Organization.

While my delegation has aligned itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union, I would like to concentrate on the main issues that Moldova perceives as very important for the Council to take into consideration.

Moldova is determined to find a political settlement exclusively by peaceful means, based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of my country. The final goal of negotiations should be the definition of the special status of the Transnistrian region within the Republic of Moldova. The Republic of Moldova stands ready to resume the negotiations in the 5+2 format as soon as possible. Reaching agreement among all the participants in the negotiations process concerning the basic principles for the settlement is one of the main elements for achieving a speedy, final and lasting political solution to this problem.

We express our appreciation for the role of the European Union and the United States of America in determining positive developments, both in the conflict settlement and in the broader regional context. In particular, we would like to commend the activity of the EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine and look forward to its extension.

We call for the earliest transformation of the current peacekeeping force in the Security Zone by its replacement with a new multinational force under an appropriate international mandate. We reiterate our position concerning the full, early and unconditional withdrawal of the military forces of the Russian Federation from the territory of the Republic of Moldova in accordance with its 1999 Istanbul commitments. This will provide the necessary grounds for the ratification by the Republic of Moldova of the Adapted CFE Treaty.

The destabilizing unilateral actions of the Tiraspol authoritarian regime against the local population in the Security Zone constitute gross violations of basic human rights and should be condemned by all of us. In this sense, we invite all interested actors to provide assistance for the democratization of the Transnistrian region of Moldova. We call on the Transnistrian authorities to remove all obstacles in the way of free movement of persons and goods between both banks of the Nistru River, and to start the demilitarization process in the context of confidence- and security-building measures.

Mr. Chairperson, I ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you.