



United States Mission to the OSCE

Worsening Human Rights Situation in the Transnistrian Region of the Republic of Moldova

As delivered by Deputy Political Counselor Lane Darnell Bahl
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 15, 2020

The United States reiterates our support for the 5+2 settlement process to peacefully resolve the Transnistrian conflict. Actions that erode trust and goodwill undermine that process, which is in no one's interest.

We are concerned that measures restricting freedom of movement in the Security Zone introduced ostensibly to protect public health during the global CoViD-19 pandemic have become a pretext to further erode liberty in the region.

We continue to closely follow the alleged abductions of four individuals by the *de facto* Transnistrian security authorities from their homes in the Security Zone between October 6-8. We welcome the reported release of two of those individuals from custody on October 8 and call upon the *de facto* Transnistrian authorities to release the remaining individuals in custody. We again call on the so-called "authorities" in Tiraspol to respect fundamental freedoms and human rights, including freedom of expression and freedom of movement.

Progress on human rights can lead to dialogue on confidence-building measures and other issues. We urge the OSCE Mission to Moldova to intensify its work to promote freedom of movement and to vigorously monitor the situation throughout the Security Zone.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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