

PC.DEL/1211/14  
21 October 2014

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1019th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

16 October 2014

**In response to the reports by the  
Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova and the Head of the  
European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine**

Mr. Chairperson,

We join in welcoming Ambassador Michael Scanlan and Mr. Francesco Bastagli.

We have carefully read the report to the Permanent Council by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova. We note his commitment to developing the Mission's constructive co-operation with the parties, helping them to reach agreements on practical issues in the interests of the inhabitants of both banks of the Dniester. We firmly believe that the constructive working relationships that he has established with the political representatives of Chişinău and Tiraspol and with the other participants in the "5+2" format will help him fulfil his mediatory mandate in a balanced manner. We are looking forward to a swift agreement with the Transdniestrian authorities of the question regarding the updating of the 1993 letter of understanding on the Mission's work in Transdniestria.

We value the Mission's assistance in organizing meetings between political representatives of Moldova and Transdniestria in the "1+1" format, along with the progress in the joint Moldovan-Transdniestrian expert groups. We note the Head of Mission's commitment to promoting confidence-building measures between the two riverbanks. The importance of these measures cannot be emphasized enough. The completion of the first stage in the dismantling of the cable car across the Dnieper, carried out with the assistance of specialists from the Russian Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Disaster Relief, is proof of this.

We regret that we have not heard any assessments by the Mission of the situation in Moldova regarding Russian-language schools, which are facing more and more problems. We agree with the Head of Mission that an exchange of television broadcasts between the left and right bank would help to build confidence between the communities.

At the same time, we are seriously concerned at the sanctions introduced in Moldova against local television stations rebroadcasting programmes from television channels in Russia. It is difficult to call these decisions aimed at preventing an alternative point of view in the media anything other than political censorship, flagrantly violating the right to freedom of speech and European and Euro-Atlantic values, to which Chişinău claims to be committed. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Ms. Dunja Mijatović, has already voiced her criticism of these actions by the Chişinău authorities. We hope that the Mission will take the necessary steps to re-establish freedom of expression in Moldova.

Like Ambassador Scanlan, we continue to believe that Chişinău and Tiraspol have great potential for achieving mutually acceptable agreements on practical issues. The positive developments regarding the subject of schools teaching in Latin script are evidence of this. The quicker these problems are resolved, the sooner there will be a climate for restoring confidence between Chişinău and Tiraspol and, consequently, a common framework for progress in the negotiations in the “5+2” format, which are encountering difficulties with which we are all familiar. The break in this process should not be allowed to drag on. We hope that the time-frame for the next meeting in the “5+2” format will be agreed in the foreseeable future. We believe it would be useful to organize the traditional visit to the region of the “5+2” mediators and observers this autumn.

To that end, it is necessary for the parties to refrain from unilateral steps, which are in no way conducive to creating a positive framework for the negotiation process.

We note the latest flare-up in Chişinău of arguments about the transformation of the joint peacekeeping operation on the Dniester and calls for the withdrawal of the Russian troops.

We recall that the Russian peacekeepers ensure security in their area of responsibility on a basis agreed upon under international law and within the framework of the corresponding mandate. They are carrying out their mission conscientiously and selflessly, supported by the confidence they enjoy among the population. Any unhelpful efforts to destabilize the situation in the region and attempts to drive out of Transdniestria the Russian contingent participating in the Joint Peacekeeping Forces will be regarded as unfriendly actions towards Russia undermining the foundations of the peacekeeping operation on the Dniester and contravening the spirit and the letter of the bilateral Agreement on Friendship and Co-operation.

The responsibility for achieving mutually acceptable agreements lies, first and foremost, with the parties to the Transdniestrian conflict themselves. We are ready to continue to facilitate this in co-ordination with the other participants in the “5+2” process and the Swiss Chairmanship with a view to moving the negotiations to find a sustainable, just and comprehensive settlement to the Transdniestrian problem forward by ensuring a special and reliably guaranteed status for Transdniestria in a unified, sovereign and neutral Moldova.

We should also like to mention the report by the Head of the European Union (EU) Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine. The figures cited in the report once again testify to the continuing attempts by Moldova and Ukraine to impose economic and transport restrictions on Transdniestria in an attempt to force it to make concessions and abandon its foreign policy interests. Reports of an intensified presence of EU Mission staff on the Transdniestrian segment of the border between Moldova and Ukraine are evidence of the

groundlessness of the rumours disseminated in the media and social networks about recent arms deliveries of some sort from Transdniestria to the armed conflict zone in south-eastern Ukraine. We would be interested to hear Mr. Bastagli's view as to whether the anti-tank ditch and other fortifications erected by the Ukrainian authorities along the Transdniestrian segment of the border conform to the EU Mission's standards for transborder co-operation.

In conclusion, we should like to wish Ambassador Scanlan and Mr. Bastagli and their staff continued success in their work.

Thank you for your attention.