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**STATEMENT IN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF REPLY BY
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1564th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

14 May 2026

In response to a statement by the representative of the Republic of Moldova

Mr. Chairperson,

During the Permanent Council meeting of 30 April, the representative of Moldova said something highly questionable about the situation in that country with regard to safeguarding the rights of its Russian-speaking population. We should like to exercise our previously reserved right of reply and inform those present about the real state of affairs there.

Without going into an assessment of the quality of the data cited by the Moldovan Permanent Representative, I should like to draw your attention to the fact that even these statistics confirm, by and large, the high demand for education in the Russian language among Moldovan schoolchildren. It would appear that this is precisely what is prompting the authorities in Chişinău to take deliberate steps to restrict access to such education.

Particularly telling in this regard is the authorities' decision to gradually reduce the number of hours of teaching delivered in the Russian language at Russian-speaking schools by 2030, as part of the so-called "multilingual education" initiative. At the same time, with streamlining invoked as a pretext, such schools are actually facing the axe. Thus, in late April this year, it emerged that the authorities in Chişinău had decided to shut down two Russian-language secondary schools in the village of Plopi and the city of Cantemir. All this is taking place while the Russian Centre for Science and Culture and various institutions of further education are in the process of being closed – a matter that we have repeatedly brought up at previous Permanent Council meetings.

Of equally great concern is the ideological bias of the integrated school curriculum for "Russian Language and Literature" that has been approved by the Ministry of Education of Moldova. The public consultations on the draft conceptual framework for that subject were a closed-door and essentially pro forma exercise. Those who drew it up deliberately chose not to take into account the many years of expertise of Moldovan specialists in this field, opting instead to draw on the Baltic States' experience. At the end of the day, topmost priority has been given to recasting the minds of schoolchildren in an anti-Russian mould. They are being asked to study chiefly works that have been selected on the basis of Russophobic criteria and that are dubious in terms of the interpretation of historical events, rather than universally recognized classics

of world literature. It is crucial to understand that we are talking here not about some formal teaching protocols, but about the possibilities for Russian-speaking schoolchildren to get to know their native culture and thereby retain their national identity.

Turning to media matters, under the spurious pretext of ridding the media landscape of “Moscow’s influence”, the authorities in Chişinău are systematically restricting access for Moldova’s Russian-speaking citizens to sources of information that offer alternative points of view to the official line. Eighteen such television channels have been suspended from broadcasting since 2022. An official ban is in place in Moldova prohibiting the retransmission of Russian news and analytical programmes. Only Russian-produced entertainment content is currently available in that country. Is there any other word for this than censorship?

Mr. Chairperson,

A further glaring example of the deliberate policy pursued by the authorities in Chişinău to reduce the use of the Russian language in the public sphere is the approval by Moldovan legislators, at first reading, of a draft law amending the Code on the Organization and Functioning of Parliament, which provides for a ban on the use of Russian during parliamentary proceedings. Significantly, only 52 out of 101 Members of Parliament voted in favour of the bill. Such a ratio is generally characteristic of contemporary political life in Moldova. One important aspect is that not a single legislator from the opposition supported this initiative of the Party of Action and Solidarity.

What is more, the current Moldovan leadership makes no secret of its plans to go even further. Thus, on 7 May this year, Igor Talmazan, a member of the ruling party, stated bluntly that the authorities were “legally obliged” to eliminate mandatory translation into Russian as a requirement in legislative and administrative proceedings.

This once again confirms the utter reluctance of Maia Sandu’s regime to seek compromise solutions with other political forces, and thereby also take into account the views held by the significant proportion of Moldova’s population who supported these with regard to the most pressing issues on the domestic political agenda.

By the way, it would be quite interesting to finally hear our Organization’s executive structures provide, in full compliance with their mandate, an assessment of the facts we have presented. We request that this statement be treated as an official request to the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the High Commissioner on National Minorities. Incidentally, High Commissioner Kamp once compared the task facing his Office to the work of a technician who monitors equipment performance in a boiler room – a fitting metaphor, given that, by our reckoning, the pressure in the “cauldron” of Moldovan society has long since exceeded normal operating levels.

Thank you for your attention.