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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1002nd MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

29 May 2014

**In response to the report by Ambassador Jennifer Brush,
Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova**

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome Ambassador Jennifer Brush, Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, to today's meeting.

As it happens, her report on the work of the Mission during the last six months has preceded the next meeting in the "5+2" format on a Transdnistrian settlement here in Vienna next week. At the same time, it is being presented to the Permanent Council "hot on the heels" of the address delivered in this forum by Ms. Natalia Gherman, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova. I shall not repeat here the comments we made on that occasion and shall limit myself to a few points.

The Mission's main task is to assist in the search for practical ways towards a sustainable, viable and just political solution to the Transdnistrian problem. As a mediator in the settlement process, the Mission should take an unbiased and balanced approach to assessing and reporting on the processes occurring in the region and have a respectful attitude to the positions of all the parties to the conflict. We regret that recently the Mission has not really managed to build a constructive dialogue with all the parties in the field, which has undeniably affected the results of its interaction with them.

At the same time, we note the Mission's work on advancing confidence-building measures between the parties and its assistance to the joint Moldovan-Transdnistrian expert working groups and to the meetings of the political representatives of Chişinău and Tiraspol. The OSCE Review Conferences on Confidence-Building Measures in the Transdnistrian Settlement, which are held in Bavaria with the organizational support of the Mission and the assistance of our German colleagues and have now become a tradition, are a useful forum for the exchange of views on practical matters of co-operation between the parties. We hope that the next conference scheduled to take place on 10 and 11 June this year in Freising in Bavaria will be a successful one.

We share the concern over the evident stagnation recently observed in the negotiation process, the stalled progress of the confidence-building measures and the ongoing tension in the Security Zone. There is a significant build-up of mistrust between the parties. This makes the “small steps” all the more important – the implementation of small but specific agreements on practical issues that make everyday life easier for the people on both sides of the Dniester River, thus creating the conditions for rebuilding trust between Chişinău and Tiraspol and thereby establishing the preconditions for a transition to the discussion of matters of political status.

For our part, we wish to inform the Permanent Council that, within the framework of the agreements reached in the “5+2” format, the Russian Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Disaster Relief and the Civil Defence and Emergency Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Moldova have signed a protocol making provision for work to commence on dismantling a cableway between the cities of Rîbniţa and Rezina in the first half of June, that is, in the next few days. This is a very specific, necessary and useful thing. In this context, we are relying on the official confirmation by the Ukrainian authorities of the guarantees of a safe non-stop flight over the territory of Ukraine by a Mi-26 helicopter of the Russian Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Disaster Relief which is part of this operation. It is estimated that the helicopter will proceed to Chişinău between 9 and 12 June.

We agree that it is necessary to intensify the negotiations in the “5+2” format. The main responsibility for the achievement of mutually acceptable agreements lies first and foremost with the parties to the Transdnistrian conflict themselves, who should avoid extreme positions. As was correctly pointed out in the report, they are not furthering dialogue, but merely making things worse. We are ready to contribute together with the other participants in the “5+2” process to the search during the negotiations for a sustainable, just and comprehensive settlement of the Transdnistrian problem by ensuring that Transdnistria has a special, reliably guaranteed status as part of a united, sovereign and neutral Republic of Moldova.

We trust that the meeting in the “5+2” format that is to take place here in Vienna in exactly a week’s time will be productive and will confirm the commitment of all its participants to reject unilateral steps that destabilize the situation in the region and undermine the negotiation process.

In conclusion, we should like to wish Ambassador Jennifer Brush, who is evidently speaking at the Permanent Council for the last time in her current capacity as Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, success in her future work.

Thank you for your attention.