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STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1284th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

8 October 2020

In response to the current issue raised by the Republic of Moldova

The European Union reaffirms its support for a peaceful and comprehensive settlement of the Transdnestrian conflict on the basis of respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders, and with a special status for Transdnestria.

We note with concern the continued deterioration of the human rights situation in Transdnestria. We emphasize the importance of compliance with OSCE commitments and international law as regards human rights and fundamental freedoms and call for respect, in particular, of freedom of expression, freedom of the media, freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association.

We note with concern that certain measures are still in place, including the unilateral, ad hoc and unauthorized installation of new Transdnestrian checkpoints established since March 2020 in the Security Zone, which restrict the right of individuals to exercise their freedom of movement and affect the economy and functioning of the health services in the region. We urge the self-proclaimed authorities of Transdnestria to take all the necessary steps to re-establish full freedom of movement between the two banks of the Dniester, especially for medical personnel. We recall in this regard the undertakings in the “Berlin plus package” regarding free movement in the region.

In the face of the current pandemic, full co-operation between the authorities in Chişinău and Tiraspol is more necessary than ever to protect the health of the populations on both banks of the Dniester, who are equally affected by the coronavirus. Total transparency of the health situation is required to combat COVID-19. In that regard, we support the recommendations issued by the World Health Organization following its mission to Transdnestria on 6 May this year. We continue to encourage the parties to convene a meeting of the working group on health care as soon as possible.

We also support the efforts by the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office to hold a new meeting in the “5+2” format. This would help in particular to make positive progress in the implementation of the confidence-building measures agreed on in Berlin in 2016 and in Vienna in 2017, with full respect for the sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders.

We encourage the parties to make tangible progress in the three “baskets” on the agenda agreed for the negotiation process, in particular on the political, institutional and security issues of the third basket.

Finally, we reaffirm our support for the OSCE Mission to Moldova and stress the importance of continuing to receive regular information on the situation in the Security Zone, with particular attention to the state of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹, Serbia¹ and Albania¹, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as Ukraine, Georgia, Andorra, San Marino and Canada align themselves with this statement.

1 The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.