

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. ANDREY KELIN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1052nd MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

14 May 2015

In response to the report by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank Ambassador Michael Scanlan for the interesting analysis of the activities of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, which he heads. We are impressed by his optimism.

On the whole, we share the report's assessments of the current state of affairs and the prospects for a settlement of the conflict in Transdniestria. We view the resumption of a regular direct dialogue between Chişinău and Tiraspol at the political level and in the expert groups as a positive factor. The constructive atmosphere that has formed in the "1+1" negotiations is the personal achievement of the political representatives of Chişinău and Tiraspol, who have demonstrated a commitment to discuss all problems at the negotiating table.

We welcome the special consultations held in Vienna on 21 April in the framework of the negotiation process for a Transdniestrian settlement in the "5+2" format. We trust that the informal meeting which took place will lead to the intensification of the official negotiations in that format, the resumption of work in which, after a six-year break, was achieved largely thanks to the mediatory efforts of Russia as a guarantor State of the negotiation process. We hope that the forthcoming high-level conference on confidence-building measures, to be held in Germany in June, will give a further impetus to the negotiation process, first and foremost with regard to the fundamental problems of daily life that the population on both sides of the Dniester has faced recently.

We trust that the OSCE Mission's continued constructive co-operation with the parties will take place in a balanced manner and on the basis of strict implementation of its mediatory mandate. We hope that, in the near future, an agreement can be reached with the Transdniestrian authorities on the question regarding the updating of the 1993 letter of understanding on the Mission's work in Transdniestria.

We note the Head of Mission's commitment to promoting confidence-building measures between the two riverbanks, specifically those that have a direct effect on the living

conditions of the people there. One such significant event must be the completion of the dismantling of the cable car across the Dniester, with the assistance of specialists from the Russian Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Disaster Relief.

We are greatly concerned at the Moldovan authorities' policy of instituting criminal proceedings against leaders and experts of sectors of Transdniestria's business community. 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.

It was surprising that the report by the Head of the OSCE Mission made no mention of the problem of the economic and transport blockade of Transdniestria, as a result of which socially vulnerable groups, in particular, are suffering. The artificial obstacles to the cross-border operations of Transdniestrian enterprises and the delivery of essential supplies can substantially complicate the search for ways to settle the Transdniestrian conflict.

We regret that we have not heard any assessments by the Mission of the discriminatory policy of restricting the rights of Russian citizens residing in the territory of Transdniestria to cross the border with Ukraine, and of Chişinău's repressive measures against Russian media representatives, who have recently been denied entry in large numbers and on spurious pretexts. We expect the Mission, and, above all, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Ms. Dunja Mijatović, to take a principled stance against such violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms, first and foremost, freedom of expression.

For our part, as a mediator and a guarantor State, we affirm the constancy of our approaches to settling the conflict in Transdniestria. We are convinced that the responsibility for achieving mutually acceptable agreements lies, first and foremost, with the parties to the conflict themselves. We are ready to continue to facilitate this in close co-ordination with the Chairmanship and the other participants in the "5+2" process 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.

In conclusion, we should like to wish Ambassador Scanlan and the staff of the OSCE Mission to Moldova continued success in their demanding work.

Thank you for your attention.