



**Delegation of Ukraine
to the OSCE**

Statement on the issue of Odessa consultations on Transdnistria settlement

As for delivery by Ambassador Volodymyr Yel'chenko
to the Permanent Council, 25 October 2006

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to say a few words about the consultations on the Transdnistria settlement, which took place in Odessa.

The official results of the consultations were reflected in the Protocol signed by the OSCE, the Russian Federation and Ukraine and supported by the observers from the United States and the European Union. The OSCE Secretariat circulated this document to all delegations and you have already become acquainted with its content.

Unfortunately, the prospects for a quick re-start of the negotiations process in the 5+2 format have not been yet realized – it is indeed disappointing, and we largely share the assessments by the previous speakers of the results of the consultations. We should recognize that much still has to be done to restore an atmosphere of trust between the two sides. But the fact that after eight months of a stalemate the sides decided to renew consultations we consider as a breakthrough on the way to restarting full-scale negotiations.

During the meeting of the mediators from the OSCE, the Russian Federation and Ukraine and the observers from the United States and the European Union, there was an exchange of opinions concerning the present situation in the settlement process and possible ways to bridge over the differences between the sides. Ukraine took the view that the main task for the negotiations in the 5+2 format is to forge an agreement on the status of Transdnistria within Moldova. At the same time, the question of economic contacts and trade should primarily be dealt with by the relevant groups of experts, first and foremost of Chisinau and Tiraspol, which, by consequence, would help maintain a dialogue between the sides. In this context, the Ukrainian delegation spoke in support of recommending the two sides to set up an expert group, which would analyze the functioning of the current mechanism of external economic activities of Transdnistria, in order to identify possible problems that need to be resolved.

On the 18th of October, during the consultations in the 5+1 format (by turns with the Moldovan and Transdnistrian side), the main emphasis was placed on the necessity of returning of Chisinau and Tiraspol to the negotiations table as the only possible way towards the settlement of this conflict.

The mediators and the observers expressed their eagerness to provide every possible assistance in this matter and we should be thankful for their efforts.

The attention of the sides was drawn to the decisive role of Chisinau and Tiraspol in the conflict settlement, in particular in elaborating concrete parameters of the form of government and division of powers between the central authorities and the region.

It was stressed that the solving of all outstanding issues has to be carried out through dialogue and negotiations, with full respect to previous agreements and on the basis of the Ukrainian Settlement Plan.

Both sides in general supported an idea of creating a bilateral working group at the expert level on the whole spectrum of economic relations between Chisinau and Tiraspol.

Though there were no specific dates for the next round of consultations, the parties agreed to continue consultations with a view to an earliest possible resumption of the negotiations in the 5+2 format.

Let us hope this would be realized in the very near future. My country will continue to exert every effort to this end.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.