

STATEMENT

ENGLISH only

BY H.E. MR. IURIE LEANCĂ, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER,  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, AT THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE OSCE  
MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

Vilnius, 6 December 2011

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.  
Dear colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to address you here in Vilnius. Please allow me to join previous speakers in expressing our sincere appreciation to the Lithuanian Chairmanship for its able guidance of the OSCE during the 2011 and for the outstanding organization of this Ministerial Council.

I hope that the work done both in Vienna and Vilnius will help us to adopt a solid package of decisions which will direct our future work in all three OSCE dimensions while maintaining a balanced approach in this respect. At the same time, we regret that despite all efforts the Ministerial Council is failing again to adopt the political declaration this year.

A few words about our priorities. In the Political-military dimension of security, the Republic of Moldova welcomes the achievement in issuing Vienna Document 2011 on CSBMs. We consider that the work on substantial updating of this important instrument should continue during 2012 as it was envisaged in the Astana Commemorative Declaration. At the same time, it is our principled position that the Vienna Document can not substitute the legally binding conventional arms forces regime in Europe.

It is important to consolidate the OSCE activity within the Economic and Environmental dimension and, to this end, we support the adoption of the Ministerial decisions on energy security, transport dialogue and equal opportunities for women in the economic sphere.

In the Human dimension, we believe it is really important to put focus on enhancing the safety of journalists and on fostering freedom of expression and pluralism in digital media. This would reconfirm our commitments related to the freedom of expression, which is under growing pressure in many parts of the world.

We all recognized in Astana and at previous high level meetings that the unresolved conflicts pose a major threat to European Security. Conflict settlement lies at the heart of the OSCE mandate and Moldova is committed to strengthen OSCE's role and capability in all phases of the conflict cycle. In this regard, Moldova strongly supports a Ministerial decision on the enhancement of OSCE capacities with the regard to the conflict cycle. This would allow us to build on the ideas forwarded during the Corfu process, further developed in the V to V dialogues over this year.

Mr. Chairperson,

I would like now to elaborate in more details on the Transnistrian conflict settlement. I am pleased to acknowledge that this process is entering a new phase. The first official round of negotiations took place a few days ago, here in Vilnius, after a break that lasted almost 6 years. This achievement is a result of joint efforts undertaken by the Government of my country and our international partners. Let me take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the entire OSCE team, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, the European Union, United States. The German Government has also played a significant role in making this progress possible.

The resumption of official negotiations has never been a goal in itself and the first official round was just the first step on the difficult way ahead. Looking into the future we hope that starting with 2012 the negotiations in the 5+2 format will become the main channel of dialogue. We should come up with a comprehensive agenda that will focus the talks on substantial issues such as the status of the Transnistrian region, confidence building measures, human rights, security and other topics. On this occasion let me reiterate that a final and viable solution to the conflict can only be based on the respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. The Moldovan authorities are ready to discuss a special legal status for the Transnistrian region that will provide it with a large autonomy while reflecting the interests and protecting the rights of the population on both banks of the Nistru River. We thank the mediators and observers for their general support of such a vision and stress the need to build upon it a common firm approach promoted during the 5+2 negotiations.

The Moldovan authorities will continue to promote a constructive engagement through the implementation of the confidence-building measures in social, economic, humanitarian fields. The specialized Working Groups should intensify their activity. In parallel we continue contacts at different levels to ensure political impetus for CBMs. We appreciate the special attention paid by our international partners to the confidence-building process. I would like to particularly mention the increasing support offered by the European Union to this regard. We highly value the activity of EUBAM which is essential in providing more security on the Moldovan-Ukrainian border.

At the same time we need to discourage provocations that could lead to further tensions. The Security Zone remains the “weakest link” in this regard. While we try to resolve the current incidents in the Security Zone through existing mechanisms, it becomes obvious that the current peacekeeping operation and its decision-making bodies are unable to provide a solution. In this regard we reiterate our call to start reflecting on the transformation of the current peace keeping operation into a multinational civilian arrangement under a relevant international mandate, able to provide adequate responses to the situation on the ground.

Mr. Chairman,

In a few days, the so-called “presidential elections” will take place in the Transnistrian region. The Moldovan authorities do not recognize them and call on all partners to follow suit by refraining from any actions that might be perceived as a support separatist trends. We hope that afterwards the situation in the region will calm down and will allow us to move forward with the political settlement of the conflict.

In a similar context, I believe that other states should refrain from organizing their elections in this region without the cooperation and consent of the constitutional authorities. Let me reiterate our firm position that the presence of kin-State’s citizens on the territory of another State must not be used as a justification for infringement of the principle of territorial sovereignty of that State.

Mr. Chairman,

I would also like to reiterate our position on the need to finalize the withdrawal of the Russian forces from the territory of the Republic of Moldova, in particular the remaining ammunition stockpiles from Cobasna village. Let me remind that these munitions and the troops guarding them are stationed in Moldova contrary to Constitutional provisions and international commitments, as well as without the consent of the host-country. We believe that the progress on this issue would help us advance in the dialogue on the future of the conventional arms control regime in Europe. We are confident that the completion of this process will have a positive effect on the resolution of the Transnistrian conflict.

Finalizing my remarks on the Transnistrian conflict, I have to express my disappointment that we failed again to agree on a ministerial statement on the resumption of the official 5+2 negotiations.

My delegation displayed an adequate spirit of compromise and worked hard to produce a document that could have been helpful in bringing the negotiations on a constructive path. While I am concerned with our inability to find compromise on difficult issues, I am even more worried about our failure to mark the progress achieved.

Mr. Chairperson, Dear colleagues,

The goals that I've described here today derive from the strong determination of my Government to pursue their achievement in a manner which is fully consistent with the European integration strategic priority of the Republic of Moldova. In conclusion, allow me to express sincere gratitude to Lithuania for all the efforts undertaken in 2011 and express confidence that the achieved results offer a solid ground for the Irish Chairmanship to which we wish every success.

Thank you.