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## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Response to the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
April 21, 2016

The United States again welcomes Ambassador Scanlan to the Permanent Council, and we thank him for another comprehensive report on the work of the OSCE Mission to Moldova.

Ambassador Scanlan, the United States strongly supports the OSCE Mission to Moldova, which performs a crucial role in efforts to broker a comprehensive settlement to the Transnistria conflict by facilitating direct dialogue between the sides and by supporting confidence-building measures that address concerns in all three OSCE dimensions.

The OSCE Mission has played a central role in reinvigorating the Negotiation Process on the Transnistrian Settlement. As you outlined, Mr. Ambassador, the April 5-6 visits to Chisinau and Tiraspol by the mediators and observers yielded a political commitment by the sides to maintain dialogue. At the same time, the mediators and observers underscored the need for both Chisinau and Tiraspol to work towards the vision outlined in the 2015 Ministerial Statement in which Foreign Ministers of the OSCE participating States called for a settlement of the Transnistrian conflict based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova with a special status for Transnistria.

To that end, it is time for both sides to translate public commitments to the settlement process into concrete actions that generate tangible results. The United States urges the sides to continue holding 1+1 meetings of the chief negotiators on an active basis, accompanied by frequent and substantive discussions within the Working Groups format, moving toward substantive political discussions in the 5+2 format in Berlin within the next two months. We strongly encourage both sides to demonstrate constructive leadership, and we support resolving irritants in order to enhance trust and build confidence.

The United States remains concerned by the Transnistrian authorities' refusal to consistently grant OSCE monitors unfettered access to Transnistria. The OSCE Mission must have unrestricted access to all of Moldova, including the Transnistrian region, to perform its activities and fulfill its mandate. The OSCE has an important role to play in reporting on the political and security situation in the country, including in the Transnistrian region. All participating States should vocally support full access for the Mission, in keeping with its mandate.

We welcome the Mission's efforts to draw attention to the issues of national minorities in Moldova. The United States agrees with Ambassador Scanlan that adopting a balanced policy that promotes minority integration and the human rights of persons belonging to minorities is an essential step for Moldova toward fulfilling its OSCE commitments. We call on Moldova to adopt the strategy on integration of national minorities that has been reviewed by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

Ambassador Scanlon, thank you also for your update on how you collaborate with the OSCE's independent institutions to drive positive change on the ground.

Mr. Ambassador, we thank you for your report and collaboration, and we appreciate your continued hard work, and please also pass our thanks on to your team.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.