



**Delegation of Ukraine
to the OSCE**

Statement in Response to the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova
Ambassador Philip Remler

As for delivery by the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the OSCE Mr. Volodymyr Yel'chenko

10 April 2008

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of my delegation I would like to warmly welcome the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Ambassador Philip Remler, and thank him for his interesting and detailed report. I would specifically notice a rather different from the previous ones format of your written report, Ambassador. What we do like is that it is very precise and concrete. I believe both the style and content will help us better understand what is at stake in Transdnistria and how close we are now to the real progress in the settlement of this protracted conflict.

Firstly, I would like to reiterate that Ukraine as a co-mediator and guarantor country in the Transdnistrian settlement process proceeds from its firm position – the conflict should be resolved on the basis of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova with the provision of a special status to the Transdnistria region. We believe that this approach is also shared by all participants of the negotiation process.

We cannot but agree with the Mission's estimation that the situation on the ground since the suspension of the negotiations in March 2006 has changed significantly. During the last two years we witnessed many events which directly or indirectly had influenced the situation in both ways but now I shall not go into details recalling them.

We welcome the recent declarations of the President of Moldova Mr.Voronin and the Transdnistrian leader Mr.Smironov about their willingness to renew the

negotiation process. In our view, these positive developments prove that continuous efforts of all parties involved in the process were not in vain.

In this regard Ukraine welcomes the bilateral efforts of the Russian Federation to persuade Mr. Smirnov to return to talks. The recent telephone call of Mr. Voronin to Mr. Smirnov and their agreement for a meeting gives us hope that the deadlock in settlement process will be overcome.

We share the Mission's opinion that the implementation of the Joint Declaration by Ukraine and Moldova, beginning on March 3, 2006, and the work of the EU Border Assistance Mission have only increased the transparency and order on the Transdnistrian segment of the Moldovan-Ukrainian border. Now it is evident, that there is no "humanitarian blockade" or "economic crisis" in Transdnistria. The Transdnistrian enterprises which availed themselves of Moldova's registration mechanism, had legalized their foreign trade, obtained trade preferences and are looking to extend their links with the world market.

In spite of the negotiations deadlock in 2006 and 2007, Ukraine, along with the Russian Federation, OSCE, the United States and the European Union, did its utmost to mediate in finding solutions to a series of problematic issues between Chişinău and Tiraspol. I think it's worthwhile to mention that Ukraine to a substantial degree facilitated a number of important steps, which to our mind, can help renew the dialogue. Among them are the following:

- the railway passenger and cargo transit through the Transdnistrian region was partially renewed;
- the simplified mechanism of registration for the Transdnistrian enterprises in Chişinău was extended further on;
- the Protocol between the Governments of Ukraine and Moldova on simplified mechanism of border-crossing for citizens residing in the border adjacent areas came into force;
- Ukraine fruitfully participates in the process of elaborating new regulations for license plates in Transdnistria, for the benefit of the whole of Moldova.

Last but not least – our steps on the demarcation of the border, which you already mentioned in your statement.

I would like to point out that all these developments have become possible to a large extent due to the changes which took place in Ukraine in 2004-2005 and resulted in a firm and principled position taken by the Ukrainian government based on the well-known “Yushchenko Plan”.

Mr. Chairman,

Ukraine reaffirms its readiness to render all possible help to bridge the gap and to raise the level of trust between the sides to the conflict. We hope that OSCE Seminar in Odessa on April 14 on confidence-building measures in the economic and environmental fields at the expert level will help them to find a common ground and continue dialogue and clear the way to further “5+2” talks.

Finally, I would like to thank the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Ambassador Philip Remler, for his efforts in fulfilling the OSCE’s broad mandate in Moldova, and to wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.