



## United States Mission to the OSCE

# **Response to the Continuing Provocative Actions and Non-Transparent Military Convoys Movements in the Security Zone of the Republic of Moldova**

As delivered by Ambassador James S. Gilmore III  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
November 12, 2020

The United States commends Moldova for raising a number of concerns at the Permanent Council on November 5, including Russia's activity in the Security Zone. I refer to the U.S. statements of October 8, 15, and 22. We remain concerned by abductions in the Security Zone by the *de facto* Transnistrian security authorities during the period of October 6 to 8. We call on the so-called "authorities" in Tiraspol to respect freedom of expression and movement. We reiterate our call for the OSCE Mission to vigorously monitor the situation throughout the Security Zone.

The United States is deeply concerned by the lack of transparency in Russia's military movements to the Cobasna munitions depot. The OSCE Mission in Moldova reported four convoys were spotted on October 29. We welcome further information about these convoy movements and reiterate our request from the November 6 Permanent Council that the OSCE Mission in Moldova prepare a *Spot Report*.

We also call on Russia to clarify the situation, facilitate the OSCE Mission's access to *all* sites of concern, and cooperate with the relevant authorities in Moldova.

Russia committed to withdrawing its forces and munitions from Moldova at the 1999 *Istanbul Summit*. Any movements of Russia's forces or munitions in the sovereign state of Moldova are a matter of security interest to the 57 OSCE participating States.

The issue in Moldova goes beyond clandestine movement of ammunition. The real issue is persistent violation of previous commitments, which contributes to general instability and tension in the entire OSCE region. Now this, Madam Chairperson, is part of a pattern, noticed by everyone, and brings into question whether Russia is a reliable partner for future peace and stability.

The United States supports the 5+2 settlement process to peacefully resolve the Transnistrian conflict in a manner that respects Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. Actions such as those mentioned above, that erode trust and goodwill, risk undermining that process, which is in no one's interest.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

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