



STATEMENT IN RESPONSE
TO THE HEAD OF THE OSCE MISSION TO MOLDOVA

Delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 28 April 2022

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

I join others in welcoming Ambassador Neukirch to the Permanent Council and thank him for his report. I wholeheartedly commend Ambassador Neukirch and his staff for their tremendous effort in assisting in the temporary evacuation of staff of the SMM to the Republic of Moldova. I would, on behalf of all Norwegian SMM observers, like to convey sincere thanks to Moldovan authorities for their crucial support.

Mr. Chair,

As Ambassador Neukirch states in his report, the Moldovan Authorities, people and volunteers have done a formidable job in welcoming and giving shelter to refugees coming from Ukraine. This must be commended. No doubt, the influx of refugees, rising energy prices and increased pressure on national institutions are placing a heavy burden on the Moldovan authorities.

Like many other donors, Norway participated in the international donor conference in Berlin (in early April) to establish the Moldova Support Platform to strengthen Moldova's resilience and stability. The NOK 100 million pledged by Norway will help ensure that refugees have a place to live and adequate access to education, food, cash support, health care services and information.

Furthermore, half of the amount allocated will be used to provide support to the Moldovan authorities. The country needs capital in order to bolster its public and private sectors, safeguard energy and food supplies, and continue to advance democratic processes.

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Norway, together with other state donors and international organisations, will continue to support Moldova in this difficult situation.

Mr. Chair,

The Mission in Moldova's concrete efforts to implement the Women, Peace and Security Agenda are much appreciated.

The work done in the Joint Expert Working Groups to understand how interventions affect men and women in different ways, and to facilitate solutions that take the needs and interests of women into account, is appreciated. We look forward to the launch of the next phase of the project.

We also look forward to the imminent establishment of the Informal Women Advisory Board together with UN Women, which will offer inputs, advice and recommendations to the Settlement Process.

The extra-budgetary project proposed by the Mission, to prevent gender-based violence among refugees from Ukraine is most welcome.

Mr. Chair,

We commend the Mission's efforts to follow up on the call from the Ministerial Council in Stockholm to hold a result-oriented meeting in the 5+2 format as soon as possible. Positive steps were taken in this regard before the 24th of February. We apprehend that further advance on this issue was put on hold due to the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unlawful attack on Ukraine.

The Mission has shown agility in light of Russia's war in Ukraine and prudently adapted activities to the situation. We appreciate that the Mission continues its mediation efforts and help the sides identify and implement solutions to urgent issues and to the benefit for all.

Furthermore, we appreciate the intensification and expansion of the monitoring activities in the security Zone, along the border and other points of interest.

Like others, Norway is concerned that the explosions in Transdniestria on 25 April are attempts to destabilize the situation in the Security Zone and Transdniestria. It is important that the Mission now continues its monitoring activities and keeps regular contact with relevant counterparts.

The incidents must be carefully evaluated. In the meanwhile, we call on all sides to remain calm and refrain from any action, which could undermine trust and stability on both Sides of the Dniester River and escalate the situation.

Finally, Ambassador Neukirch is quite right that the OSCE has a diverse toolbox to provide necessary support to Moldova in the current situation. We trust that Ambassador Neukirch and his able team will manage the toolbox and its assets to assist Moldova in the best possible way.

Norway remains a staunch supporter of a peaceful, comprehensive, and lasting settlement to the Transnistrian conflict.

A settlement on the basis of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova, within its internationally recognized borders, and with a special status for Transnistria.

Thank you.