

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

PC.DEL/1404/24  
22 November 2024

ENGLISH  
Original: FRENCH

**STATEMENT BY  
THE EUROPEAN UNION AT THE 1497th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 November 2024

**In response to the report by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova,  
Ambassador Kelly Keiderling**

The European Union welcomes the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Ambassador Kelly Keiderling, and thanks her for her report.

We commend the Mission on the quality of its monitoring reports, on its multifaceted contribution to the maintenance of dialogue between the two banks of the Dniester/Nistru River, and on the activities in the politico-military sphere and projects it is implementing while taking care to ensure gender equality in all of its work.

Madam Ambassador, your report reaches us a few weeks after the historic choice made by the citizens of the Republic of Moldova turning out in high numbers to anchor their future to the European Union and to give President Maia Sandu a second term in office. This election reflects voters' desire for a peaceful, independent, stable, democratic and prosperous country. The European Union supports this striving and the country's security and resilience, in particular through the European Peace Facility, the EU Partnership Mission and the Growth Plan for the Republic of Moldova proposed by the European Commission. The European Union will support the authorities and the President in carrying out the reforms to be implemented as part of the country's EU accession path.

As indicated in the preliminary report by the International Election Observation Mission comprising the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, this dual election took place in line with democratic norms and boasted a high turnout, despite massive interference and a hybrid destabilization campaign and disinformation efforts undertaken by Russia and its auxiliaries. We condemn this unprecedented malicious interference, which is contrary to the Helsinki commitments.

The European Union reaffirms its determination to support the Republic of Moldova in defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity in accordance with the country's constitution. In addition, the European Union reiterates its support for a comprehensive and lasting peaceful settlement of the Transdnestrrian conflict based on respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders, with a special status for Transdnestrria. It is crucial that all parties in the "5+2" format continue to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova.

We strongly condemn Russia's numerous violations of the Republic of Moldova's airspace in connection with the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.

In this context and in view of the grave repercussions for the Republic of Moldova arising from Russia's unjustifiable aggression against Ukraine since 2014, the activities of the Mission headed by you, Madam Ambassador, are of fundamental importance. These activities should be based on an annual mandate in accordance with Brussels Ministerial Council Decision No. 18/06, on an adequate Unified Budget and on the free movement of Mission members. We urge those who are preventing these conditions from being met to return to compliance with the relevant practices and rules.

While it remains impossible to hold meetings in the "5+2" format as long as Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is ongoing, the European Union welcomes the continued OSCE-facilitated discussions among the Chief Negotiators and within the Working Groups in the "1+1" format. We encourage the authorities in Chişinău and Tiraspol to continue their dialogue and to maintain tranquillity while identifying specific solutions to the challenges faced by people on both banks of the Dniester/Nistru River, which have been exacerbated by the Russian war of aggression.

We regret the lack of progress on the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Russian military forces and equipment from the territory of the Republic of Moldova, which applies to the Operative Group of Russian Forces, and likewise the lack of transparency regarding Russian troop movements. We recall that the commitments made at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999 provide for the withdrawal of Russian military forces and equipment stationed on the territory of the Republic of Moldova without the host country's consent.

Similarly, we recall the international commitments undertaken by Russia to destroy the ammunition at the depot in Cobasna and urge it to proceed with this operation without further delay. The OSCE has a mandate and the means to contribute to the removal or destruction of Russian ammunition and armaments from the Transdnestrian region, and to ensure the safety, transparency and international verification of such operations.

We are committed to respect for human rights and to the full implementation of the package of confidence-building measures, including the measures regarding schools teaching in Latin script in the Transdnestrian region. The human rights situation in the Transdnestrian region remains alarming. We urge the authorities in Tiraspol to release all political prisoners, and to stop persecuting promoters of human rights, political activists and journalists and restricting their freedom of movement and expression.

We are concerned at how the authorities in Tiraspol have prohibited the use of the term "Transnistria", which they equate with the term "Nazism" and the use of which now carries fines and/or imprisonment penalties. That regulation and likewise the one on extremism are paving the way for further violations of people's human rights and fundamental freedoms. We condemn them and call for their immediate abrogation.

To conclude, the European Union will continue to support the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Moldova, just as it supports the reforms undertaken by the Government in Chişinău, which are beneficial to all of the country's citizens. We wish Ambassador Keiderling and her capable team much success in their future activities.

The candidate countries North Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Montenegro<sup>1</sup>, Albania<sup>1</sup>, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>1</sup>, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Liechtenstein, as well as Andorra, align themselves with this statement.

---

1 North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.