



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA
TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT

by Ambassador Valeriu Chiveri, Head of the Permanent Delegation
Special Permanent Council, 23 December 2010

Mr. Chairperson,

As it is known on 16th December, journalist Ernest Vardanyan was sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment in a high security prison by an illegal court from the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova.

In its statement issued on 17th December, the Government of the Republic of Moldova has strongly condemned these actions of the Tiraspol authorities. The Government noted that the case of Vardanyan and also of Kazak were fabricated while the recent decision of the Transnistrian court violates the basic human rights, primarily, the right of access to a qualified legal assistance and to an independent and legitimate tribunal.

The unfounded conviction of journalist Vardanyan undermines the spirit and the goals of the confidence building policy promoted by the Moldovan Government over the last year. Consequently it affects the population living on the left bank of the Nistru River. It also seriously challenges the efforts promoted by partners in the “5+2” format, including recent high-level initiatives aimed at advancing the Transnistrian conflict settlement process.

The Government has also expressed its concerns with regard to the situation of Mr. Ilie Kazak who was arrested by the Transnistrian authorities on similar unfounded accusations.

Carefully assessing the situation created by this illegal conviction, the Government will continue to take all necessary measures to ensure Mr. Vardanyan’s release. The Moldovan Government considers that with joint efforts both cases could be solved and calls on all parties involved to undertake persuasive steps in this regard. We welcome reaction on behalf of the Council of Europe and hope that other partners, including OSCE, will express its attitude on that matter.

In this context, let me inform colleagues that the Deputy Prime-Minister Victor Osipov addressed letters to all international partners involved in the Transnistrian conflict settlement process asking for support and to intensify their efforts towards releasing both Ernest Vardanyan and Ilie Kazak. Deputy Prime Minister Osipov has also raised this issue in his recent meeting with Transnistrian political representative V. Iastrebeac,

calling on Tiraspol to pay due attention to the opinion of the partners involved in the settlement process.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, let me reiterate that, in our view, a combined effort on behalf of all relevant players involved could produce positive result and prevent actions aimed at hindering the confidence building efforts promoted by the Moldovan Government over this year.

Thank you.