

STATEMENT

by H.E. Mr. Nicu Popescu, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister
of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova,
at the 29th OSCE Ministerial Council
Łódź, 1 December 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Mr. Chair, Dear Zbigniew,

Allow me to join previous speakers in expressing appreciation to the Polish Chairmanship-in-Office and to Zbigniew Rau, for his personal work and commitment in this difficult year for the OSCE. Today's Ministerial is strikingly different from all previous meetings, as Russia's ruthless war against Ukraine threatens peace, security, and prosperity in Europe. Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a blatant violation of international law, the Helsinki Final Act and the UN Charter.

Our country stands in full solidarity with Ukraine as it fights for freedom. We remain steadfast in supporting Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity and we will continue ensuring the safety and well-being of over 80 thousand refugees from Ukraine residing in Moldova, continue to provide humanitarian assistance, enabling Solidarity Lanes and doing our best to be a contributor to regional stability to the extent that we can speak of such stability.

Dear Colleagues,

Moldova is severely affected by Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The security, humanitarian, economic or energy effects of this war are hurting every single person living in Moldova. Russia's brutal bombing of Ukraine's energy infrastructure caused massive blackouts in Moldova. Several Russian missiles violated our air space. Missile debris also fell on our territory in recent weeks. Despite these challenges we stay firm on our path to the European Union. Moldova is and will remain part of the free world. This year we became an EU candidate country. We are reforming our justice system, combatting corruption, investing in renewables, modernising our economy. And we are very grateful to our partners for the support that they are offering Moldova bilaterally or through the Moldova Support Platform.

Dear colleagues,

The Transnistrian conflict remains a source of instability.

Because of the war, the "5+2" negotiations are "on hold", but our dialogue with Tiraspol continues. We are determined to maintain peace on the entire territory of our country, diffuse political tensions, and seek solutions to pressing issues.

We remain concerned about the human rights violations in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova and call on the Tiraspol authorities to abide by international rules and norms.

Let me reaffirm our determination to solving the conflict exclusively through dialogue and peaceful means, based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova, within its internationally recognized borders, while ensuring the functionality and EU accession of the reintegrated state.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that the illegal presence of the Russian military forces continues to infringe on Moldova's sovereignty and neutrality. We firmly reiterate the call for the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Russian forces from the territory of the Republic of Moldova in line with the relevant OSCE commitments adopted in Istanbul in 1999, as well as the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 72/282 and in respect of Moldova's constitutional neutrality.

Also, I would like to draw your attention to the ammunition depot in Cobasna. This depot remains a major risk factor for Moldova and the entire region. It must be destroyed or withdrawn through a proper, internationally transparent procedure.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me conclude by wishing all the success to the North Macedonian Chairmanship and Minister Bujar Osmani in the next year.

Thank you.