

DIPLOMATIC MEMORANDA OF KAHARAGIA

Diplomatic Memorandum on the Status of Transnistria

DM-2026-004



Diplomatic Memorandum on the Status of Transnistria

*A distinct civic community, Moldovan sovereignty and the requirement of freedom
from Russian control*

SECRETARIAT OF STATE, SECTION II — FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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Issued by the Secretariat of State, Section II — Foreign Affairs. A Diplomatic Memorandum states the position of the State of Kaharagia on a question of recognition or contested sovereignty, the grounds on which that position rests, and the reservations to which it is subject. Recognition, accreditation, immunity and privilege are conferred by the appropriate Sovereign instrument; this publication records the position those instruments give effect to.

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The Determination

POSITION OF THE STATE

Kaharagia does not at present recognise the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic as a sovereign state; Kaharagia recognises the inhabitants of Transnistria as a distinct political community entitled to meaningful self-government and to a free status process

SELF-DETERMINATION	Recognised. The inhabitants form a distinct political community entitled to internal self-government and to advocate peacefully for alternative final statuses.
FAMILY OF CLAIM	Separation from a settled state. The restoration argument built on the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic is examined and not accepted.
EXTERNAL CONTROL	Effective control, found by the European Court of Human Rights in 2004, 2011, 2012, 2016, 2024 and 2026, on facts occurring before 16 September 2022. One marker the doctrine associates with absorption appeared on 15 May 2026.
STATE RECOGNITION	Withheld. Kaharagia does not at present recognise the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic as a sovereign state.
DISPOSITION	Deferral. The claim is not rejected. The conditions in which a free choice could be read are absent, and this publication records what must change.
GOVERNMENT	No recognition of the Pridnestrovian authorities as a sovereign government.
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS	Not established.
FUTURE OPTIONS	Special status within Moldova, federation, free association or independence are all legitimate outcomes if freely chosen. Kaharagia prefers none of them in advance.

COMMON DOCTRINAL BASIS

A people's right to self-determination is not extinguished by an inherited border. Nor is it fulfilled by foreign occupation, coerced integration, ethnic cleansing, demographic engineering, or a nominal independence maintained under another state's effective control. Recognition of a state is separate from endorsement of its government and from the establishment of diplomatic relations.

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1. Executive Position

Kaharagia does not at present recognise the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic, commonly called Transnistria, as a sovereign state. The Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights held in *Mozer v. the Republic of Moldova and Russia*, on 23 February 2016, that the entity is only able to continue to exist, and to resist Moldovan and international efforts to resolve the conflict and bring democracy and the rule of law to the region, because of Russia's military, economic and political support. Political competition inside the region is too narrow to establish that the present authorities freely represent the population's final wishes. A Committee of the Fifth Section of the same court held on 19 February 2026, in *Zubco and Others v. the Republic of Moldova and Russia*, that the Russian Federation had violated Articles 10 and 11 of the Convention in respect of applicants barred from entering the region because of their human-rights work and applicants fined and arrested for taking part in a political meeting the local authorities had not authorised.

This conclusion is not contempt for Transnistrians. The inhabitants of the region are not instruments of Moscow. A distinct Transnistrian civic identity exists, and some advocates of independence seek a state independent of both Chişinău and Russian control. Kaharagia protects the legitimacy of that position and refuses to mistake the present dependent regime for its necessary or final expression.

DM-2026-001 requires two questions to be answered before any recognition. Whether a people is entitled to choose its political future. Whether the institutions claiming to embody that choice are themselves free, representative and genuinely sovereign. Here the first answer is yes. The second is no. The second answer is a finding about the conditions in which a choice would be made, not a verdict on the people who would make it.

1.1 Self-Determination Recognised, Statehood Deferred

DM-2026-001 keeps four decisions apart that ordinary speech collapses into one word. Each takes a different answer here.

- **Right of self-determination.** Recognised. The inhabitants of Transnistria form a distinct political community entitled to internal self-government and to argue peacefully for a different final status.
- **Statehood.** Withheld. The entity presenting itself for recognition cannot at present demonstrate the free and genuinely sovereign character the doctrine requires.
- **Government.** Not recognised. The Pridnestrovian authorities are not accepted as a sovereign government, and contact with them for humanitarian or technical purposes does not become such acceptance by repetition.
- **Diplomatic relations.** Not established, and none proposed.

Only the second and third answers are negative. A reader who runs the four answers together will take this publication for a judgment on Transnistrians. It is not one.

1.2 The Disposition, the Family and the Degree

DM-2026-001 requires each publication in this series to name its family of claim, the degree of external control found, its disposition among the five, and the conditions on which it falls to be reviewed. Kaharagia names them here rather than leaving them to be inferred from the reasoning.

- **Family of claim.** Separation from a settled state, which carries the heaviest burden in the doctrine. The competing classification, restoration of a status held before a union, is argued in the next section and not accepted.
- **Degree of external control.** Effective control, in the doctrine's middle term. Effective control does not defeat the claim. It shifts the burden onto the entity to show that the will it expresses is its own, and that burden is not discharged on the present record.
- **Disposition.** Deferral. The claim is not rejected, and Kaharagia records what would have to change. Deferral is not denial, and this publication says so in terms so that its subject is not described as having lost.

The choice of deferral rather than non-recognition on the merits is deliberate and carries a consequence. Kaharagia has not weighed the Transnistrian claim and found it wanting. It has found that the claim cannot presently be read, which is a different finding and a reversible one.

1.3 The Remedial Question Is Left Undecided

A claim can fail in the doctrine by two different routes, and the difference matters to anyone reading this paper as a precedent. One route runs through entitlement. DM-2026-001 treats independence as a remedy that may become legitimate where a people has been systematically excluded, violently repressed, denied meaningful internal self-determination, or left without a credible constitutional remedy inside the existing state. The Secretariat does not reach that question here. Nothing in this publication should be cited as an answer to it, in either direction.

The case is decided on the other route. Even a community whose remedial claim was fully made out could not obtain recognition for institutions unable to show that the choice they announce is the population's own. That is the failure identified here. It is a failure of present conditions, not of entitlement. That is why recognition is withheld and not refused.

If the conditions described below were met and the population then chose a status, Kaharagia would not need to reopen the question whether Transnistrians had suffered enough to deserve a choice. The choice itself would be the evidence.

2. A Civic Claim in a Closed Political Environment

Transnistria is not an ethnically homogeneous national homeland. The Grand Chamber recorded in *Catan and Others v. Moldova and Russia* that the Soviet census of 1989 assessed the population of the region at 679,000, composed ethnically and linguistically of 40 per cent Moldovan, 28 per cent Ukrainian, 24 per cent Russian and 8 per

cent others. A census carried out in 2004 by the authorities in the area under their control found a population of 555,347, of whom approximately 32 per cent came from the Moldovan community, 30 per cent were Russian and 29 per cent were Ukrainian, with small percentages of other national and ethnic groups. Its separatist institutions emerged from late-Soviet conflict over language and authority, not from a timeless national boundary.

The sequence is on the judicial record. In August and September 1989 the Moldavian Supreme Soviet enacted two laws introducing the Latin alphabet for written Romanian and making that language the country's first official language in place of Russian. The Moldavian Republic of Transdniestria was proclaimed on 2 September 1990. Its Supreme Council adopted a declaration of independence on 25 August 1991, two days before the Moldovan parliament adopted the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Moldova.

A distinct Transnistrian civic identity has nevertheless developed over more than three decades. Separate institutions, social networks, symbols and political habits are real, and a settlement must not require every resident to adopt a single national narrative in order to be safe.

The character of the claim affects how it can be proved. An ethno-national claim can point to a language, a homeland attachment and a political demand that existed before the present dispute and before any patron arrived. A civic claim of this kind rests on the political attachment of the people who live in the territory now. That is precisely the thing a closed political environment makes impossible to read. The claim advanced for Transnistria is therefore more dependent on open conditions than a national claim would be, and it is worse served by their absence.

Some residents favour union with Russia. Some favour a negotiated place within Moldova. Others favour genuinely independent Transnistrian statehood and reject domination by both Chişinău and Moscow. Kaharagia recognises the right of residents to advocate special autonomy, federation, confederation, free association, independence or reintegration, and a preference for close relations with Russia may be democratically expressed like any other. Kaharagia preserves space for that third position.

2.1 Why the Restoration Argument Does Not Hold

The strongest legal argument for placing this case in the second family deserves to be stated at its full strength. On that argument the left bank of the Dniester was never Bessarabian, was joined to Moldova only by a Soviet act of 1940, and resumed in 1990 a separate constitution it had held before. If it succeeded, the claim would draw no new frontier and would escape the heavy burden the third family imposes.

The Court recorded the underlying history in *Catan and Others*. The eastern region had since 1924, together with a number of territories which are now part of Ukraine, been part of the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. That is the whole of what the record supports, and it is not enough. An autonomous republic inside a union is not a separate sovereignty, and its boundary is an internal administrative line rather than an international one.

The comparison inside this series settles it. DM-2026-007 recognises Somaliland partly because the claim asks for the external limits the territory actually held at independence, and those limits can be identified. No such line exists here. The 1924 unit took in land now lying inside Ukraine, so restoring it would redraw an international frontier rather than resume one. Classification is a question of history which neither party may choose, and this case falls in the third family.

2.2 A Preference and a Measured Preference

No preference is genuinely measured while a foreign military presence and an externally sustained security apparatus shape the available political space. It concerns measurement, not sincerity. A resident who supports the present order may hold that view honestly, on reflection and for their own reasons. Nothing here doubts it, and no Kaharagian decision treats that person as deceived.

What cannot be established is whether the same view would prevail if the alternatives could compete. The official results relied on by the authorities were produced in conditions no external body was permitted to examine. The OSCE recorded in its annual report for 2006 that the independence referendum of 17 September and the presidential elections of 10 December that year were neither recognised nor monitored by the organisation. Freedom House assessed in its Freedom in the World 2026 edition that truly independent candidacies were not permitted in the Supreme Council elections of November 2025 and that every winning candidate was affiliated with the ruling Renewal party.

Where rival positions cannot organise, publish, campaign and lose without cost, an official result records the conditions at least as much as the preference. This is why Kaharagia declines to treat referendums and elections held under the present order as conclusive, and why it also declines to call them fraudulent. Neither description is available on what can be observed.

MEASUREMENT

A resident's preference may be entirely genuine and still be impossible to measure. Recognition turns on whether the alternatives could have competed, not on whether the announced result is popular.

2.3 Institutions That Cannot Be Examined

The existence of long-running institutions does not establish that political consent is free. The Strasbourg Court reached the point directly in *Mozer* when it asked whether the local courts formed part of a judicial system operating on a constitutional and legal basis reflecting a judicial tradition compatible with the Convention. It held that the burden of showing this lies on the state exercising effective control, that Russia had submitted no information on the organisation of those courts, and that the scarcity of official sources of information concerning the legal and court system made it difficult to obtain a clear picture of the applicable laws. The Court was accordingly not in a position to verify whether those courts met the requirement.

The Russian Federation later attempted the showing and did not succeed. In *Lypovchenko and Halabudenco v. the Republic of Moldova and Russia*, decided by a

Chamber on 20 February 2024, the Russian Government put before the Court an overview of laws and amendments enacted in the region between 1993 and 2021, together with excerpts from three judgments offered as examples of local judges applying the Convention. The Court recorded that it had not been supplied with the content of those laws or with any assessment of them. It held that the material did not enable it to determine whether the provisions applied to the applicant were compatible with Articles 5 and 6, and was still less a basis for assuming that the legal system as a whole reflected a judicial tradition compatible with the Convention. It found that the de facto courts did not constitute a tribunal established by law.

That is a finding about a court system rather than about an electorate, and Kaha-ragia does not stretch it. Its bearing here is narrower and still decisive. Where the institutions of a territory cannot be examined by the bodies entitled to examine them, an announced result from those institutions cannot carry the evidential weight recognition requires.

Freedom House assessed the territory as Not Free in 2026, with an aggregate score of 16 out of 100, awarding zero of four points both for the presence of free and independent media and for the existence of a realistic opportunity for the opposition to gain power, and recording that political competition is tightly restricted and that the ruling political group is aligned with powerful local business interests. That assessment is the work of a non-governmental organisation and not of a court or a government, and Kaharagia relies on it as such.

The closure is documented outside the courts as well. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Forst, reported to the Human Rights Council after visiting Moldova from 25 to 29 June 2018 that civil society organisations in the region work under severe restrictions on freedom of expression, association and assembly, that authorisations for public protests are rarely granted and carry restrictions when they are, and that all non-governmental activity must be coordinated with the local authorities on pain of reprisal. He recorded that a section added to the law on non-governmental organisations in 2017 places organisations receiving funds from abroad on a register of foreign agents and bars them from activity perceived as political, and that the Promo-LEX Association, the only human-rights organisation working consistently in the region, was prohibited from working there in 2016. That is a special-procedures report to a United Nations body, not a judgment.

Economic control over employment, broadcasting, retail and public revenue can distort political choice even without overt military coercion. A voter who expects to lose work, custom or a licence for supporting the wrong position is not voting under the conditions the doctrine requires, and no observer mission can correct that by counting the ballots accurately.

The record is not uniformly closed, and a publication that reported only the adverse findings would be describing a different place. The United Nations Human Rights Senior Expert, Thomas Hammarberg, presented a follow-up report on 5 February 2019, after a visit to the region in 2018, which noted a growing human rights awareness and more and stronger voices of civil society improving public dialogue, while recording that ambiguous legal provisions on the political activities of non-governmental organisations need review so as not to intimidate, and that high rates of arrest and

imprisonment and conditions of detention remain an area of concern. Local agency exists. It has not yet been given room to decide anything about status.

2.4 Dependency, Effective Control and the Four Indicators

DM-2026-001 refuses the easy version of the argument against recognition. Dependency alone does not make a state unreal. Many widely recognised states rely heavily on allies for security and money, and Kaharagia does not propose to withdraw recognition from them. The doctrine also directs that the label of puppet state be avoided, because it erases the identity and agency of an entire population.

The degree found in this case is effective control. In *Ilaşcu and Others v. Moldova and Russia* the Grand Chamber held on 8 July 2004 that the entity, set up in 1991 and 1992 with the support of the Russian Federation and vested with organs of power and its own administration, remains under the effective authority, or at the very least under the decisive influence, of the Russian Federation, and in any event survives by virtue of the military, economic, financial and political support given to it by that state. A Chamber applied the same reasoning in *Ivanțoc and Others* on 15 November 2011, and the Grand Chamber maintained it in *Catan and Others* in 2012 and again in *Mozier* in 2016. A Chamber reached the same conclusion in *Lypovchenko and Halabudenco* in 2024, and a Committee in *Zubco and Others* in 2026, in each case for facts arising before 16 September 2022. Effective control does not by itself defeat a claim. It shifts the burden, and the doctrine supplies four indicators by which the entity's discharge of that burden is tested.

- **Whether the claim predates the patron.** It does not, or not separably. The Court found the entity to have been set up in 1991 and 1992 with Russian support, and the Soviet 14th Army was on the ground throughout, with one of the largest ammunition stores in Europe at Kolbasna. The grievance over the language laws of 1989 predates the patron. The institutions advanced for recognition do not. This indicator tells against the entity, and it is the point on which the case parts company with DM-2026-002.
- **Whether the institutions have refused the patron something the patron wanted.** No instance is before the Secretariat in which the authorities refused Russia on a question Russia is shown by material the Secretariat has examined to have pressed. The gap tells against the entity, because the burden has shifted to it. It remains a gap in the record rather than a finding that no such refusal has occurred, and Kaharagia does not convert the one into the other.
- **Whether the trajectory runs toward independence or toward incorporation.** It runs toward the patron. In *Catan and Others* the Court found that the language policy applied to the Latin-script schools was intended to enforce the Russification of the language and culture of the Moldovan community living in the region, in accordance with the entity's overall political objectives of uniting with Russia and separating from Moldova. That is a judicial characterisation of the entity's own objectives, made in 2012. A news report reproduced in *Mozier* records the entity's leader stating in November 2006 that each of its ministries was working on harmonising local legislation with that of Russia. The decree of 15 May 2026 runs the same way.

- **Whether the argument against the patron can be made and survived.** No evidence before the Secretariat shows that it can. Freedom House recorded that no truly independent candidacy was permitted at the most recent Supreme Council elections and that free and independent media are absent. A court has now made a finding about assembly. In *Zubco and Others* the applicants were fined and arrested for taking part in a political meeting the authorities had not authorised, and others were barred from entering the region on account of their human-rights activities; the Court held that the Russian Federation had violated Articles 10 and 11 and that Moldova had not. A politics in which the relationship with the patron cannot be contested cannot produce a measurable answer about that relationship.

Three indicators run against the entity and the fourth is a gap it was open to the entity or its patron to fill. The burden is not discharged. *Kaharagia* states the ground narrowly. The objection is not that the institutions are ineffective, and not that Transnistrians lack political agency. It is that no route exists by which the population could presently show that the announced choice is its own.

The economic picture is genuinely mixed. In *Catan and Others* the Russian Government accepted that it spends millions of United States dollars every year in the form of humanitarian aid to the population, including the payment of old age pensions and financial assistance to schools, hospitals and prisons, and the Court noted an undisputed figure that only approximately 20 per cent of the population was economically active. The applicants in the same case claimed that some 120,000 individuals living in the region had been granted Russian citizenship, a submission by a party rather than a finding of the Court. This supports neither the fiction that the region is simply ordinary Moldovan territory nor the claim that it is already an autonomous sovereign state.

The gas arrangement shows how the dependency worked and how fast it can be withdrawn. In *Catan and Others* the Court recorded that the Russian Government did not deny that the public corporation Gazprom supplied gas to the region and that the entity paid for only a tiny fraction of what was consumed, by households and by the large industrial complexes alike. The Moldovan Government told the Court in *Mozer* that gas worth 505 million United States dollars was consumed in 2010, that about 20 million was paid to Gazprom, and that the local population paid the authorities some 163 million for it, a sum which remained largely at those authorities' disposal. Those are one party's figures recorded by the Court, not findings of it. Then the supply stopped. The European Commission stated on 27 January 2025 that Gazprom had not honoured its contractual obligation to channel gas to the region since 1 January, and proposed 30 million euros of emergency assistance to finance the purchase and transport of gas so that electricity and heating could be restored for the region's more than 350,000 inhabitants until 10 February 2025. An economy a patron can switch off in a day, and that a third party then pays to restart, is not the material base of a sovereign state.

TRANSNISTRIAN PRINCIPLE

Transnistrian identity and local political agency are real. They do not make Russian troops, passportisation, economic dependency or a closed political system into evidence of free sovereignty.

2.5 Passportisation and the Definition of a Constituency

Citizenship choice is an individual right. A resident who takes a Russian passport is making a personal decision, often about work, pension, travel or family, and nothing in this publication treats that person as disloyal or as an instrument of another state.

Mass distribution of passports by the controlling foreign power is a different object of analysis. It moves nobody. It changes the legal attachment of people already in place, and it supplies material for later claims that the region's population is owed protection by the state that issued the documents. On 15 May 2026 the President of Russia signed a decree opening a simplified route to Russian citizenship for foreign citizens and stateless persons who permanently reside in the region, exempting applicants from the requirements set out in the first three points of article 15(1) of Federal Law No. 138-FZ of 28 April 2023 on citizenship of the Russian Federation.

The legal character of that instrument must be stated exactly, because it will be quoted for more than it holds. A decree is an act of Russian domestic law. It governs who may hold Russian nationality and alters nothing about borders, title or lawful authority to govern. Its significance here is evidential. DM-2026-001 lists the mass conferral of the patron's citizenship among the marks of absorption, and this is the first such marker in this case. It has not been accompanied by the transfer or merger of state functions by treaty, which is why the degree found remains effective control and not absorption. That is a finding about today, and it is the finding most likely to change.

DM-2026-001 prohibits the manufacture of an electorate by displacement, settlement or the exclusion of the displaced. The same reasoning reaches a constituency assembled by naturalisation as well as one assembled by movement, because in both cases the controlling power is choosing who counts. Two consequences follow for any future process. The electorate must be defined by negotiation, and the documents residents happen to hold on the day do not define it. Participation must not be conditioned on holding, or on refusing, any particular citizenship, since the doctrine protects the rights of residents irrespective of citizenship.

3. What the Authorities Establish, and What They Do Not

European human-rights jurisprudence has treated Russia as exercising effective control or decisive influence in the region across six judgments between 2004 and 2026, and has treated the separatist administration as surviving through Russian military, economic and political support for purposes of state responsibility. Those findings decide which state answers for violations of the Convention there. That is their subject. Effective control is a test of responsibility, and responsibility is not title. The findings do not make Russia the sovereign of the region and do not transfer the region to it.

That line of authority is also closed at a date, and a publication resting on it says so. The

Russian Federation ceased to be a party to the Convention on 16 September 2022. In the Transnistrian cases decided since, the Court has held that it has jurisdiction over the Russian Federation only so far as the facts complained of took place before that day, and it has said so in the operative provisions of both the 2024 and the 2026 judgments. Those judgments therefore describe conduct up to 2022 and no later. Kaharagia does not read the absence of judgments about the years since as evidence that the control has ended, and does not read the existing judgments as covering years they expressly do not reach.

The converse is equally strict. Moldova's recognised title is not evidence of Moldovan administration. A state may hold title to territory it does not govern, and DM-2026-001 accepts that a state survives the loss of ordinary authority over part of its territory. Neither proposition settles what the people living there may choose.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 72/282 on 22 June 2018, at its 98th plenary meeting, by 64 votes to 15 with 83 abstentions. The resolution urges the Russian Federation to complete, unconditionally and without further delay, the orderly withdrawal of the Operational Group of Russian Forces and its armaments from the territory of the Republic of Moldova. A resolution of the Assembly states a considered institutional position. It is not a judgment and it is not a decision of the Security Council, and this one addresses the presence of foreign forces rather than the status of the region. Kaharagia relies on it for what it decides and not for more, and notes that eighty-three states declined to take a position on it.

The same resolution draws a distinction that any precise statement of this case requires. It records that the Operational Group of Russian Forces is not part of the military component of the Joint Control Commission established under the 1992 ceasefire agreement, which also includes a rotating Russian contingent, and that the Operational Group has not been entrusted with any peacekeeping or other legal mandate. Two Russian military presences therefore exist in the region on different footings, and Kaharagia does not treat them as one.

The mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova frames a settlement consolidating the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognised borders, with a special status for Transdniestria that fully guarantees the human, political, economic and social rights of its population, and includes ensuring the transparency of the removal and destruction of Russian ammunition and armaments. A mandate states what a mission is authorised to do and the framework within which participating States have agreed to work. It is not a final-status award, and it should not be quoted as one by any party.

The commitment to withdraw is a political undertaking rather than a treaty obligation, and it is old. At the Istanbul summit on 19 November 1999 the participating States welcomed the commitment by the Russian Federation to complete withdrawal of the Russian forces from the territory of Moldova by the end of 2002, and recalled that an international assessment mission stood ready to be dispatched without delay to explore removal and destruction of Russian ammunition and armaments. The deadline passed. The ammunition remained.

The scale of what remains has never been independently verified, and Kaharagia de-

clines to supply a figure of its own. The Court recorded in Ilaşcu that the official Russian figure put to the Council of Europe in 1999 was 42,000 tonnes, which the Moldovan authorities said could not be checked because an international assessment mission was refused. The OSCE reported that more than 21,000 tons remained in 2006 and that no withdrawals took place in that year, and that a group of thirty heads of delegation gained access to the Colbasna depot on 13 November 2006 for the first time since March 2004. The Moldovan Government told the Court that almost twenty thousand tonnes were still stored in the territory. The figures differ. The pattern of refused access does not.

Three further items require accurate labels. The statement objecting to the passport decree was delivered by the Delegation of Ukraine at the 1565th meeting of the Permanent Council on 21 May 2026 and circulated four days later by the OSCE Secretariat, which bears no responsibility for its content. It is the position of one participating State and not a legal determination, and the concern this publication records about passportisation rests on its own reasoning. The Deputy Prime Minister for Reintegration of Moldova, Valeriu Chiveri, addressed the same Permanent Council on 21 May 2026 and set out demilitarisation and democratisation of the region as a key prerequisite for a comprehensive settlement with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. That is the stated position of one party to the dispute. Kaharagia adopts demilitarisation and democratisation as requirements because DM-2026-001 produces them, not because a party has proposed them.

3.1 Moldovan Sovereignty and a Legitimate Settlement

The present international framework seeks a peaceful settlement within Moldova's internationally recognised borders, with a special status guaranteeing the rights of the Transnistrian population. Kaharagia supports this framework as the immediate lawful basis for negotiation, while declining to declare that no other outcome could ever be legitimate.

This determination does not rest on Moldova's title. Were it otherwise, this paper would breach the doctrine it applies, because DM-2026-001 denies a parent state an unlimited veto over the political status of a people within its borders. Moldova's borders explain where negotiation begins. They do not decide where it ends.

The Moldovan constitutional order already contains the opening. Article 110(2) of the Constitution provides that places on the left bank of the Dniester river may be assigned special forms and conditions of autonomy, according to the special statutory provisions adopted by organic law. The same Constitution proclaims permanent neutrality in Article 11 and provides that the Republic of Moldova does not admit the stationing of any foreign military troops on its territory. Chişinău therefore has both a constitutional route to autonomy and a constitutional objection to the foreign presence, and neither is a concession it must be persuaded to make.

The route is not hypothetical, because the same Constitution already runs one. Article 111 establishes Găgăuzia as an autonomous territorial unit with a special statute, describes it as a form of self-determination of the Găgăuz people and an integrant and inalienable part of the Republic, guarantees the rights and freedoms of the Constitution on its territory, provides it with representative and executive bodies and a budget

of its own, and requires three fifths of the elected members of Parliament to amend the organic law governing its statute. Article 13 acknowledges and protects the right to preserve, develop and use Russian and the other languages spoken in the country. Whether the Găgăuz arrangement works well is a separate argument. Its existence answers the claim that Moldovan constitutional law has no vocabulary for a region that will not be governed like the rest.

Territorial integrity is strongest where the state offers equal citizenship, meaningful regional self-government, language and cultural guarantees, local economic protection and participation in national institutions. These are the substance of a settlement offer and not decoration on it. An offer that treats reintegration as legally inevitable, and therefore as requiring no guarantees, does not answer the security fears this publication records. Moldova is encouraged to make reintegration attractive and safe rather than merely unavoidable.

Chişinău's own practice is examined by bodies its counterpart does not admit, and the examination is not uniformly favourable. Residents of the left bank who hold Moldovan citizenship vote in Moldovan elections at polling stations opened for them on the right bank. In its final report of 18 February 2026 on the parliamentary elections of 28 September 2025, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights recorded that the Central Electoral Commission established twelve such stations, against thirty at the presidential election of 2024, and approved 23,500 ballots for them, against 90,000 in 2024; that two of the twelve ran out of ballots on the day and their voters were redirected elsewhere; that five were moved on the recommendation of the security services to urban areas at least thirty kilometres from the security zone, with the addresses announced two days before the vote; and that 12,274 voters resident in the region took part. The mission recommended that the arrangements be reviewed so that security concerns are addressed while those voters can effectively exercise their suffrage. Kaharagia records that recommendation and expects it to be acted on. A franchise that exists on paper and contracts in administration is a weak answer to a population being offered passports by somebody else.

The obligation on the other side is stated with equal force. Transnistrian leaders are not to use Russian protection to avoid democratic accountability or human-rights obligations. Protection from consequences is not a status claim, and an administration that requires it is arguing against its own recognition.

4. Why Transnistria Is Not Abkhazia, and Why the Test Is Not Alignment

DM-2026-001 requires each case to be assessed on its facts rather than by analogy. A reader is still entitled to ask why the series answers similar-looking questions differently.

- **Abkhazia (DM-2026-002).** Recognition was extended there, with express reservations, in a case where a court has likewise found Russian effective control. The Abkhaz claim was found to rest on a people whose language, identity and attachment to the territory long predate the patron's involvement, and whose refusal

of rule from Tbilisi was plainly demonstrated. The claim here has a different author. The Strasbourg Court found the Transnistrian entity to have been set up in 1991 and 1992 with Russian support. The position that would justify recognition on the Abkhaz reasoning, a Transnistrian state independent of both Chişinău and Moscow, is held by some residents. It is not embodied in the entity now presented for recognition.

- **South Ossetia (DM-2026-003).** Recognition was deferred there, and the disposition is the same as the one adopted here. The records differ. That case turns on a ratified instrument of institutional deepening, on displacement from identifiable villages, and on criminal proceedings arising from a war. No comparable instrument of merger is before the Secretariat in this case, and the mechanism of incorporation identified here operates through the distribution of passports rather than the transfer of state functions by treaty.
- **Kosovo (DM-2026-005).** Recognition was extended in full. That case rests on the dismantling of a prior autonomy, armed conflict, a prolonged international administration established by the Security Council, failed final-status negotiations, and an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. None of that record is present here. The international framework applied to this region points the other way, toward a negotiated special status within Moldova. Kosovo's history settled the remedial question there. This publication leaves it undecided here.
- **Somaliland (DM-2026-007).** Recognition was extended on the strength of a prior separate colonial boundary, a union voluntarily entered, and institutions that are the population's own. Both points separate the cases. The boundary claimed there is an external limit the territory actually held, while the 1924 unit invoked here took in land now inside Ukraine. And the objection here is not that Transnistria's institutions are ineffective. It is that, on the present record, they cannot be shown to be the population's to alter.
- **Northern Cyprus (DM-2026-008).** Recognition is refused there as well, partly for the shared reason of foreign effective control found by the same court. That case closes on non-recognition required, because the Security Council called upon all States not to recognise any Cypriot State other than the Republic of Cyprus. No competent organ has issued a comparable call in this case, which is why the disposition here is deferral and remains within Kaharagian discretion. That case also adds a founding constitutional settlement between two constituent communities, and it records a community that voted for a United Nations settlement plan in 2004. Neither element appears here. Transnistrians are not a constituent community of a bicommunal founding constitution, and the claim advanced on their behalf is territorial and civic.

4.1 Answering the Case for Recognition

Three objections deserve an answer in their own terms.

The conditions cannot be met by the people they are addressed to. Transnistrians do not command the Russian forces in the region and did not write the rules that limit their politics. A test that withholds a conclusion until those facts change appears to place Transnistrian self-determination in the gift of the Russian Federation, which is the

outcome DM-2026-001 exists to prevent.

The conditions govern a conclusion, not a right. Nothing in this publication waits on Moscow. The right of the inhabitants to internal self-government is recognised now. Their right to argue for independence is recognised now, together with an undertaking that the argument will not be treated as evidence of foreign loyalty. What is withheld is a Kaharagian statement that a sovereign choice has already been made, and it is withheld because that statement would not be true, not because it is being held back as a bargaining counter. The conditions are also addressed to those able to meet them. Demilitarisation is asked of the state whose forces and ammunition are present. Political opening is asked of the authorities who restrict it. A settlement worth accepting is asked of Moldova. None of the three is asked of an ordinary resident.

Three decades of separate government must count for something. If institutions that have administered a territory and its public revenue for that long establish nothing, effectiveness never matters and recognition becomes a matter of preference among governments.

Effectiveness does count. DM-2026-001 treats institutions capable of public government as one of the indicia of statehood, while warning that the indicia are not applied mechanically. It also states that no single factor is conclusive, and that foreign effective control may prevent present authorities from demonstrating that a claim is freely expressed. Duration proves that an order has persisted. It does not show that it was chosen. The second question decides this case, and duration is not evidence on it.

The test would not be applied this way to a friend. A doctrine that produces non-recognition wherever Russia is present is an alignment wearing the clothes of a principle.

The series answers this from its own record. The same test extended recognition to Abkhazia, in a case where Russian effective control is also found, because the claim there could be traced to an author independent of the patron. The same test refused to let a patron's recognition supply the ground for recognising Somaliland, where the patron was not Russia. DM-2026-001 forbids recognition bought, traded or granted to reward a patron, and the prohibition runs in both directions. Recognition may not be purchased, and it may not be withheld to punish the wrong sponsor.

5. What Must Change Before a Status Question Can Be Put

The following conditions are not demands on Transnistrians. Each is addressed to whoever is able to meet it, and each exists to make an answer readable, not to produce a particular answer.

- Withdrawal, neutralisation or internationally agreed transformation of the Operational Group of Russian Forces, which the General Assembly has recorded as holding no peacekeeping or other legal mandate, together with transparent removal or securing of the ammunition at Colbasna. Ensuring the transparency of that removal already falls within the mandate of the OSCE Mission, and it serves the people living nearest the store before it serves any status. Arrangements for the separate peacekeeping contingent established by the 1992 agreement are a

matter for the parties to that agreement. The Delegation of Ukraine told the Permanent Council in May 2026 that there is no access to the depot at all, which is the assertion of one participating State rather than a verified finding.

- A pluralistic constitutional environment allowing pro-Moldovan, pro-independence, pro-Russian, pro-Ukrainian and other positions to organise and campaign, tested by whether a candidacy the authorities oppose can stand and be counted.
- Independent media, civil society access, freedom of movement, and credible human-rights monitoring, with the access to institutions and legal materials whose absence the Strasbourg Court recorded in 2016 and whose insufficiency it recorded again in 2024. Readmission of the human-rights organisations excluded from the region, and repeal of the foreign-agents provision the United Nations Special Rapporteur described, are the first measurable steps.
- Legal guarantees for Russian, Romanian and Moldovan, and Ukrainian language education, media and public administration throughout the region. The Court found in 2012 that the closure of and harassment against Latin-script schools violated the right to education, and the European Union listed persons responsible for that campaign in 2010. Reversal of that policy is the concrete measure by which the guarantee is judged.
- An amnesty and vetting framework distinguishing ordinary public service from serious human-rights abuses, corruption or violent crime.

The last condition protects people on both sides of any transition. A teacher, a nurse or a clerk who kept a school or a hospital running is not a wrongdoer for having done so, and no settlement should treat ordinary public service as an offence. Equally, no settlement should launder serious abuse by calling it administration. No individual is accused in this publication. A vetting framework is an administrative process about fitness for office rather than a criminal trial, and it must proceed case by case, on evidence, with notice and a remedy. A Kaharagian foreign-policy finding establishes no person's guilt of anything.

5.1 What the Process Itself Must Contain

Conditions make a question askable. The process determines whether the answer is worth anything.

- A negotiated definition of the electorate, with safeguards for all linguistic and national communities and participation rules covering residents and displaced persons.
- A constituent process offering meaningful options: special status within Moldova on the footing Article 110(2) of the Moldovan Constitution already permits, federation, free association, independence, or another mutually lawful arrangement.
- A status vote or constitutional settlement conducted with international supervision, independent media, civil-society access and judicial remedies.
- Accepted procedures for property, security, currency, borders and citizenship, agreed before the vote rather than improvised after it.

The options must be real options. A process that presents one outcome as inevitable and the others as gestures reproduces the defect it was designed to cure, and it does

so whichever party designs it. Any option involving incorporation into another state would have to be reached by lawful agreement, since DM-2026-001 denies that invasion, annexation, occupation or the implantation of dependent authorities can create sovereign title.

Persons displaced from the region retain the claims the doctrine protects: return, property, restitution, compensation, family unity and political participation. Their number is not stated in this publication and should not be assumed by anyone applying it. The rules for their participation belong in the negotiation, not in a unilateral register.

6. What This Deferral Does and Does Not Do

The determination is to be read for exactly what it changes on the day it takes effect.

- Kaharagia does not recognise the entity as a state and does not accept its authorities as a sovereign government. No accreditation, immunity or privilege follows from any contact with them.
- Diplomatic relations are not established, and none are proposed.
- No sanction, trade restriction or designation of any person or organisation is imposed. Other actors have taken such measures, the European Union having adopted travel restrictions against named persons in 2010 and having extended them on 27 October 2025 until 31 October 2026, but those are separate decisions and in Kaharagia they are reserved to the Sovereign.
- Humanitarian, technical, cultural, municipal and civil-society contact may continue, expressly without prejudice to recognition.
- Advocacy of a genuinely independent Transnistria is not to be equated with loyalty to Moscow, in Kaharagian public language or in any Kaharagian decision.

Deferral is a conclusion about an entity and authorises nothing against a person. It is not a ground for treating residents of the region as unlawfully present anywhere, for withholding humanitarian assistance, for refusing anyone a hearing on the merits, or for treating the holder of a passport as an agent of the state that issued it.

It authorises nothing against Moldova's obligations either. This publication opposes forced assimilation and coercion as plainly as it opposes external control, and a settlement offer resting on either would not become acceptable merely because the entity opposing it is unrecognised.

Every linguistic and national community in the region holds the same rights on the day this publication takes effect as on the day before it. Moldovan and Romanian speakers, Russian speakers, Ukrainians, Bulgarians and Gagauz are covered by the same guarantees. A settlement that secured one community by exposing another would fail the doctrine it claimed to serve, and Kaharagia will say so at the time.

6.1 Conditions of Review

Review follows DM-2026-001. It carries particular weight here, because the conclusion rests on conditions. Any of the following prompts it.

- The conditions above, wholly or substantially met, or a material change in the security apparatus sustained from outside.
- The opening or conclusion of a status process meeting the requirements set out above.
- A material change in the four indicators, and in particular any evidence that a position opposing the relationship with the patron can be advanced in the region and survive.
- Any further step of the kind the doctrine associates with absorption, including the transfer or merger of state functions, which would move this case out of effective control and engage a stronger prohibition.
- Any step toward incorporation of the region into another state, which would be assessed against the prohibition on acquiring territory by force and would not be cured by consent obtained under the conditions described here.
- A material change in Moldova's settlement offer, in either direction.

Review may confirm this conclusion, qualify it or reverse it. It is neither a promise of recognition nor a threat of permanent refusal.

6.2 Engagement Without Recognition

Kaharagia may engage Transnistrian civil society, cultural institutions, municipal actors and de facto officials where necessary for humanitarian or technical purposes. Such contact is expressly without prejudice to recognition. It seeks to strengthen local agency independent of both Russian control and Moldovan coercion.

Engagement of this kind is the operative part of this determination for most of the people it concerns, and Kaharagia treats it as an obligation it has taken on rather than a courtesy to be withdrawn when relations with another state make it inconvenient. The technical channels remain open in practice. The OSCE Mission reported that the Moldovan and Transnistrian chief negotiators, Valeriu Chiveri and Vitaly Ignatiev, met in person on 26 February 2026 for the first time since November 2024, and that the working group on economic questions met in person on 5 May 2026 for the first time since 2022. The Delegation of Ukraine told the Permanent Council that the wider five plus two format remains non-functional. That format seats Moldova and Transdnistria as the sides, the OSCE, the Russian Federation and Ukraine as mediators, and the European Union and the United States as observers. Kaharagia supports the working level and does not mistake it for a settlement.

The position remains deferral. A future independent Transnistria could still be legitimate. What is absent under current conditions is a sufficiently free and institutionally independent act of self-determination.

7. Operative Declaration

The State of Kaharagia withholds recognition from the present Transnistrian entity as a sovereign state. It recognises the inhabitants of Transnistria as a distinct political community entitled to meaningful self-government and to advocate peacefully for independence or another final status. Kaharagia supports the withdrawal of foreign

military forces, democratisation, human-rights guarantees, and a negotiated process in which the people may choose without Russian coercion or forced Moldovan assimilation. Advocacy of a genuinely independent Transnistria shall not be equated automatically with loyalty to Moscow.

8. Publication and Legal Effect

This memorandum is a public statement of the foreign policy of the State of Kaharagia, published by authority of the Sovereign. Under Kaharagian constitutional practice, the recognition or non-recognition of a state, the recognition of a government, the establishment of a diplomatic mission, the imposition of sanctions and the entry into formal diplomatic relations remain decisions reserved to the Sovereign and implemented through the appropriate instrument. A Diplomatic Memorandum states the grounds, scope, reservations and consequences of a policy; it does not by itself confer accreditation, immunity or privilege.

This memorandum is published in the Diplomatic Memorandum Series by the Office of the Sovereign's Printer. Its serial reference shall be preserved in every separate or electronic edition. Organs of State shall conform their terminology, publications, procurement, entry decisions and official contact to the determinations recorded here. Material changes in facts, control, legal proceedings or the formally expressed position of the people concerned shall trigger review.

Selected Authorities and Official Materials

Every authority listed was retrieved and read by the Secretariat of State in the week of publication. Titles are followed by the issuing body, the date and a source link. Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights are identified by the formation that gave them, and resolutions of the General Assembly, reports of United Nations special procedures, observation reports of OSCE institutions, national statements, acts of the Council of the European Union, decrees of foreign law and assessments by non-governmental organisations are each identified according to their actual legal character. Where a source could not be retrieved at the address previously held, the entry gives the address at which the same document was obtained.

1. *Complete and unconditional withdrawal of foreign military forces from the territory of the Republic of Moldova.* United Nations General Assembly resolution 72/282, seventy-second session, agenda item 35, adopted on 22 June 2018 at the 98th plenary meeting. Operative paragraph 2 urges the Russian Federation to complete, unconditionally and without further delay, the orderly withdrawal of the Operational Group of Russian Forces and its armaments; the preamble stresses that the Operational Group is not a part of the military component of the Joint Control Commission established under the 1992 ceasefire agreement, which also includes a rotating Russian contingent, and has not been entrusted with any peacekeeping or other legal mandate. A recommendation of the General Assembly, not a decision of the Security Council.
<https://documents.un.org/api/symbol/access?s=A/RES/72/282&l=E&t=pdf>
2. *Official records of the General Assembly, seventy-second session, 98th plenary meeting (A/72/PV.98).* United Nations, 22 June 2018; the record of the meeting states that the draft resolution was adopted by 64 votes to 15, with 83 abstentions.
<https://documents.un.org/api/symbol/access?s=A/72/PV.98&l=E&t=pdf>
3. *Visit to the Republic of Moldova: report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders (A/HRC/40/60/Add.3).* United Nations Human Rights Council, fortieth session, dated 15 January 2019, reporting the visit of Michel Forst from 25 to 29 June 2018. Paragraphs 70 to 73 record severe restrictions on freedom of expression, association and

assembly in the Transnistrian region, that authorisations for public protests are rarely granted and carry restrictions when granted, that all non-governmental activity must be coordinated with the de facto authorities on pain of reprisal, that a section added to the law on non-governmental organisations in 2017 places organisations receiving funds from abroad on a register of foreign agents and bars them from activity perceived as political, and that the Promo-LEX Association was prohibited from working in the region in 2016. A special-procedures report, not a judgment.

<https://documents.un.org/api/symbol/access?s=A/HRC/40/60/Add.3&l=E&t=pdf>

4. *Follow-up report on human rights in the Transnistrian region*. Thomas Hammarberg, United Nations Human Rights Senior Expert, presented 5 February 2019 following a visit to the region in 2018; notes growing human rights awareness and stronger voices of civil society improving the quality of public dialogue, while recording that ambiguous legal provisions on the political activities of non-governmental organisations need review so as not to intimidate, and that high rates of arrest and imprisonment and conditions of detention remain an area of concern. An expert report, not a judgment.
<https://moldova.un.org/en/14666-un-human-rights-senior-expert-thomas-hammarberg-presents-his-follow-report-human-rights>
5. *Mandate of the OSCE Mission to Moldova*. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe; Mission established in 1993 by the Committee of Senior Officials. Mandate to facilitate a comprehensive and lasting political settlement consolidating the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognised borders, with a special status for Transdniestria that fully guarantees the human, political, economic and social rights of its population, expanded in 1999 to ensure the transparency of the removal and destruction of Russian ammunition and armaments and the co-ordination of financial and technical assistance. Renewed every year by all 57 participating States. A mandate, not a final-status award.
<https://moldova.osce.org/mission-to-moldova/mandate>
6. *OSCE Mission to Moldova: current activity*. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2026; records that the Mission facilitated the first in-person meeting of the Moldovan and Transdniestrian chief negotiators, Valeriu Chiveri and Vitaly Ignatiev, on 26 February 2026, the previous such meeting having been held in November 2024, and that the Economy Working Group met in person at the Mission's Chişinău office on 5 May 2026, the first in-person working group meeting since 2022.
<https://moldova.osce.org/>
7. *Conflict prevention and resolution*. OSCE Mission to Moldova; states that the five plus two format comprises the Republic of Moldova and Transdniestria as the Sides, the OSCE, the Russian Federation and Ukraine as the Mediators, and the European Union and the United States as the Observers, and records the Mission's participation in the Joint Control Commission since 1994 and its reporting on the situation in the Security Zone to all delegations to the Commission and to the 57 participating States.
<https://moldova.osce.org/mission-to-moldova/104529>
8. *Istanbul Summit Declaration, Istanbul Document 1999*. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, summit held from 17 to 19 November 1999; paragraph 18 on the settlement of the Trans-Dniestrian problem, and paragraph 19 welcoming the commitment by the Russian Federation to complete withdrawal of the Russian forces from the territory of Moldova by the end of 2002 and recalling that an international assessment mission is ready to be dispatched without delay to explore removal and destruction of Russian ammunition and armaments. A political commitment of participating States, not a treaty obligation. Retrieved from the OSCE content server; the address previously held at www.osce.org returns a cross-host redirect.
<https://cdn.osce.org/sites/default/files/f/documents/6/5/39569.pdf>
9. *Republic of Moldova, Parliamentary Elections, 28 September 2025: ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report*. OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Warsaw, 18 February 2026; records that the Central Electoral Commission established 12 polling stations for voters residing on the left bank of the Nistru, against 30 at the 2024 presidential election, approved 23,500 ballots for them against 90,000 in 2024, that two of those stations ran out of ballots on election day and their voters were redirected, that 5 of the 12 were relocated on the recommendation of the security services to urban areas at least 30 kilometres from the security zone with the addresses announced two days before the vote, and that 12,274 voters residing in Transnistria participated. Recommendation 7 invites review of those arrangements so that security considerations are addressed while enabling those voters to exercise their suffrage effectively. An observation report of an OSCE institution, not a judicial finding.

https://odhr.osce.org/sites/default/files/documents/official_documents/2026/02/MLD%20Parliamentary%202025%20Final%20Report_18.02.2025_ENG.pdf

10. *Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine, 1565th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council (PC.DEL/498/26)*. Delivered by Ambassador Yuri Vitrenko on 21 May 2026, circulated 25 May 2026; objects to the decree of 15 May 2026 creating a fast-track procedure for granting Russian citizenship to residents of the Transdniestrian region, states that the five plus two format remains non-functional, and asserts a lack of any access to the Cobasna ammunition depot. A national statement circulated by the OSCE Secretariat, which bears no responsibility for its content; the position of one participating State and not a legal determination.
https://www.osce.org/sites/default/files/documents/official_documents/2026/05/pcdel0498%20ukraine%201565pc.pdf
11. *Ilașcu and Others v. Moldova and Russia*. European Court of Human Rights, Grand Chamber, application no. 48787/99, judgment of 8 July 2004; paragraph 392 holds that the entity, set up in 1991 and 1992 with the support of the Russian Federation and vested with organs of power and its own administration, remains under the effective authority or at the very least under the decisive influence of the Russian Federation and in any event survives by virtue of its military, economic, financial and political support. Paragraphs 28 to 34 record the 1989 ethnic composition, the language laws of August and September 1989, the proclamation of 2 September 1990, the declaration of 25 August 1991, the Moldovan Declaration of Independence of 27 August 1991, the 14th Army and one of the largest ammunition stores in Europe at Kolbasna; paragraph 87 and paragraph 292 record and reproduce the ceasefire agreement of 21 July 1992, including the security zone and the control commission composed of representatives of the three parties; paragraph 125 records the official Russian figure of 42,000 tonnes put to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in 1999, which the Moldovan Government said could not be verified because both the Russian authorities and the Transdniestrian separatists refused an international assessment mission.
<https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-61886>
12. *Ivanțoc and Others v. Moldova and Russia*. European Court of Human Rights, Former Fourth Section, application no. 23687/05, judgment of 15 November 2011, final on 4 June 2012. A Chamber judgment, not a Grand Chamber judgment, applying the Ilașcu findings on Russian control to the continuing detention of the applicants; violations of Articles 3, 5, 8 and 13 by the Russian Federation and no breach by the Republic of Moldova.
<https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-107480>
13. *Catan and Others v. Moldova and Russia*. European Court of Human Rights, Grand Chamber, applications nos. 43370/04, 8252/05 and 18454/06, judgment of 19 October 2012; violation of Article 2 of Protocol No. 1 by the Russian Federation and no violation by the Republic of Moldova. Paragraph 8 records the 1989 census figure of 679,000 with 40 per cent Moldovan, 28 per cent Ukrainian, 24 per cent Russian and 8 per cent others, and the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic from 1924 together with a number of territories which are now part of Ukraine; paragraph 42 the 2004 census figure of 555,347 and the applicants' claim of some 120,000 grants of Russian citizenship; paragraphs 43 to 45 the requirement of Cyrillic script, the prohibition of the Latin script in schools of 18 August 1994 and the steps taken from 14 July 2004 to close the remaining Latin-script schools; paragraph 120 the Russian Government's acceptance that it spends millions of United States dollars every year in humanitarian aid including old age pensions and assistance to schools, hospitals and prisons, the undisputed figure that only approximately 20 per cent of the population is economically active, and that the Russian Government did not deny that Gazprom supplied gas for which the entity paid only a tiny fraction; paragraph 144 the finding that the language policy was intended to enforce Russification in accordance with the entity's overall political objectives of uniting with Russia and separating from Moldova.
<https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-114082>
14. *Mozer v. the Republic of Moldova and Russia*. European Court of Human Rights, Grand Chamber, application no. 11138/10, judgment of 23 February 2016, final; paragraph 110 maintains the findings in Ilașcu, Ivanțoc and Catan that the entity is only able to continue to exist, and to resist Moldovan and international efforts to resolve the conflict and bring democracy and the rule of law to the region, because of Russia's military, economic and political support, and that Russia continues to exercise effective control and a decisive influence. Paragraphs 145 to 150 hold that the burden of showing that the local courts form part of a judicial system operating on a constitutional and legal basis reflecting a judicial tradition compatible with the Convention lies on the State exercising

effective control, that Russia submitted no information on the organisation of those courts, and that the scarcity of official sources made it difficult to obtain a clear picture of the applicable laws, so that the Court was not in a position to verify the matter. Paragraph 56 reproduces a news agency report of 23 November 2006 that each of the entity's ministries was harmonising its legislation with that of Russia; paragraph 57 records the Moldovan Government's statement that almost twenty thousand tonnes of ammunition and military equipment are still stored in the territory; paragraph 60 records the Moldovan Government's figures that gas worth 505 million United States dollars was consumed in 2010, that about 20 million was paid to Gazprom and that the local population paid the authorities approximately 163 million which remained largely at their disposal. The OSCE annual reports reproduced in the judgment record that the independence referendum of 17 September 2006 and the presidential elections of 10 December 2006 were neither recognised nor monitored by the organisation, that more than 21,000 tons of ammunition remained and no withdrawals took place in 2006, and that a group of 30 heads of delegation gained access to the Colbasna depot on 13 November 2006 for the first time since March 2004. Violations by the Russian Federation of Articles 3, 5 § 1, 8, 9 and 13; no violation by the Republic of Moldova.

<https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-161055>

15. *Lypovchenko and Halabudenco v. the Republic of Moldova and Russia*. European Court of Human Rights, Second Section, applications nos. 40926/16 and 73942/17, judgment of 20 February 2024. A Chamber judgment. Paragraphs 86 and 87 take note of the ongoing military presence of the Russian Federation contrary to the will of the Moldovan Government and of its economic and political support for the regime, and find no ground to depart from *Ilaşcu, Catan and Mozer* on jurisdiction; paragraphs 126 to 129 examine the Russian Government's account of laws and amendments enacted in the region between 1993 and 2021 and three specimen judgments, record that the content of those laws and any assessment of them were not supplied, and hold that the material does not enable the Court to determine compatibility with Articles 5 and 6 and is still less a basis for assuming that the legal system as a whole reflects a judicial tradition compatible with the Convention, the de facto courts accordingly not constituting a tribunal established by law. The operative provisions hold that the facts fall within the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation so far as they took place before 16 September 2022, and find violations of Articles 3, 5 § 1 and 6 and of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 by the Russian Federation and none by the Republic of Moldova.
<https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-231078>
16. *Zubco and Others v. the Republic of Moldova and Russia*. European Court of Human Rights, Fifth Section sitting as a Committee, applications nos. 49508/15 and 2 others, judgment of 19 February 2026, final. The case concerns a ban on entering the region on account of human-rights activities and the imposition of fines and the carrying out of arrests for participating in an unauthorised political meeting, with events occurring between 2013 and 2018. The Court finds no legal basis for the interference and holds that there has been a violation of Articles 10 and 11 of the Convention by the Russian Federation and no violation by the Republic of Moldova, together with violations of Articles 3 and 5 by the Russian Federation; the operative provisions confine the jurisdiction of the Court over the Russian Federation to facts that took place before 16 September 2022, the date on which the Russian Federation ceased to be a Party to the Convention. A Committee judgment, the Court's smallest formation, not a Chamber or Grand Chamber judgment.
<https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-248594>
17. *Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, adopted on 27 July 1994*. Official English text published by the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Moldova; Article 11 proclaims permanent neutrality and provides that the Republic of Moldova does not admit the stationing of any foreign military troops on its territory; Article 13(2) provides that the State shall acknowledge and protect the right to the preservation, development and use of the Russian language and other languages spoken within the territory of the State; Article 110(2) provides that places on the left bank of the Dniester River may be assigned special forms and conditions of autonomy according to the special statutory provisions adopted by organic law; Article 111 establishes Găgăuzia as an autonomous territorial unit having a special statute and representing a form of self-determination of the Găgăuzian people, guarantees the rights and freedoms of the Constitution on its territory, provides for its own representative and executive bodies and its own budget, and requires three fifths of the elected members of Parliament to amend the organic law governing its statute.
https://constcourt.md/public/files/file/Actele%20Curtii/acte_en/MDA_Constitution_EN.pdf
18. *Participation of the Deputy Prime Minister for Reintegration in the OSCE Permanent Council*.

- Government of the Republic of Moldova, 22 May 2026, reporting the address of Valeriu Chiveri to the Permanent Council on 21 May 2026; the need for the demilitarisation and democratisation of the region is underlined as a key prerequisite for a comprehensive settlement, with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognised borders. A statement of position by one party to the dispute.
<https://gov.md/en/communicate-de-presa-bpr/participation-deputy-prime-minister-reintegration-osce-permanent-council>
19. *Residents of Transnistria may obtain Russian citizenship under a simplified procedure.* RIA Novosti, 15 May 2026; reporting a decree signed by the President of Russia on 15 May 2026 which exempts applicants aged eighteen or over, fully capable and permanently resident in the region from the requirements in points 1 to 3 of part 1 of article 15 of Federal Law No. 138-FZ of 28 April 2023 on citizenship of the Russian Federation, relying on part 9 of article 16 of the same law. Reporting by a Russian state news agency, identified as such; the existence and effect of the decree are separately recorded in the Ukrainian statement at authority 10.
<https://ria.ru/20260515/pridnestrove-2092798813.html>
 20. *Freedom in the World 2026: Transnistria.* Freedom House, 2026; status Not Free, aggregate score 16 of 100, political rights 4 of 40 and civil liberties 12 of 60, zero of four both for free and independent media and for a realistic opportunity for the opposition to gain power, and the finding that truly independent candidacies were not permitted in the November 2025 Supreme Council elections and that all winning candidates were affiliated with the ruling Renewal party. An assessment by a non-governmental organisation, not a court or a government.
<https://freedomhouse.org/country/transnistria/freedom-world/2026>
 21. *Council Decision 2010/573/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the leadership of the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova.* Council of the European Union, 27 September 2010; travel restrictions on persons listed in Annex I as responsible for preventing progress towards a political settlement, and on persons listed in Annex II as responsible for the design and implementation of the campaign of intimidation and closure against Latin-script Moldovan schools in the region. A political and administrative measure by a group of states, not a judicial finding.
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32010D0573>
 22. *Council Decision (CFSP) 2025/2211 amending Decision 2010/573/CFSP.* Council of the European Union, 27 October 2025; replaces the date in Article 4(2) of the 2010 Decision so that the restrictive measures apply until 31 October 2026. Recorded to show that the 2010 measures remain in force and are not a historical listing.
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32025D2211>
 23. *The EU offers emergency support to tackle the energy crisis in Moldova.* European Commission, Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood, 27 January 2025; proposes a 30 million euro emergency assistance package and states that since 1 January 2025 Gazprom has not honoured its contractual obligation to channel gas to the region, the package standing ready to finance the purchase and transport of natural gas to the Transnistrian region to help restore electricity and heating for the region's more than 350,000 inhabitants until 10 February 2025. A statement and funding proposal of an executive body of a group of states.
https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/eu-offers-emergency-support-tackle-energy-crisis-moldova-2025-01-27_en



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