Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Concerning the Situation Around Transnistria

321-04-03-2006

Moscow has received with concern reports coming in from the Transnistrian section of the Moldovan-Ukrainian border of the imposition on March 3, 2006, without prior notification, of measures toughening the regime for movement of commodity flows of Transnistria.

The Moldovan side had been threatening to take such moves from the start of this year. Ukraine's joining them now is fraught with a sharp escalation of tensions. Reports of a chaos resulting in the very first hours at the railway and road border crossing points are corroborating this.

What Chisinau and Kyiv are trying to present as restoring order on the border is in fact yet another attempt to put economic pressure on Tiraspol with the aim of forcing it to capitulate politically in questions of Transnistrian settlement. A solution to these questions must be reached only at the negotiating table and on a just basis.

One would think that the not easy situation in the region demands regard for the realities and soberness from Moldova as a party in conflict and from Ukraine as one of the mediators in political settlement. Actually the opposite is happening. The question arises of the political responsibility of those who take such decisions. For in essence the rights of Transnistria in foreign economic activity, which are recorded in an international document in force - the Memorandum on the Basic Principles for Normalization of Relations between Moldova and Transnistria of 1997 - are being ignored. The Russian Federation as the guarantor country of settlement whose interests are directly affected calls for reviewing the customs regime imposed for Transnistria and for starting immediate consultations among all the concerned parties in order to work out mutually acceptable ways to solve problems.

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