

Russia opposes inspection russian military units in the Transnistrian region of Moldova by a multinational OSCE

A multinational team of inspectors visited Thursday, March 21, military units and objectives located on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, in the Transnistrian Security Zone. However, the Russian and the Transnistrian region delegations to the JCC (Joint Control Commission of the Security Zone) expressed disagreement that the Russian military units and groups deployed in the Transnistrian region of Moldova be inspected multinational group of experts.

According to the Moldovan Ministry of Defence, "inspections are performed in accordance with the provisions of the 2011 Vienna Document, which is one of the main existing tools of the political-military dimension of international cooperation. "Representatives of the Russian Federation in the JCC know the commitments to which their country agreed by adopting the 2011 Vienna Document, and acknowledge the obligations of the Russian side when multinational inspecting group requires to inspect all OSCE member countries' military forces, deployed in a specified area."

The Vienna Document provides the appropriate framework for taking adequate measures in the fields of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation by conducting periodic inspections to verify member states' compliance with their OSCE commitments. Military units, formations and objectives of both the Host State and any other OSCE member state deployed in the Host State are inspected. In this case, this refers to

Russian military units and formations deployed in the Transnistrian region of Moldova.

Ion Manole: The Current Peacekeeping Format led to the Strengthening of the Separatist Regime in Tiraspol

Question: The chairman of the Molovan delegation to the Joint Control Commission (JCC), Ion Solonenco, announced that the Russian side of JCC opposes the inspection of its military units in Transnistria by a multinational group of OSCE inspectors. How would you assess this?

Ion Manole: As a “peacemaker” in the process, the Russian delegation should not have any objections to visits various international or even civic monitoring missions of the area to inspect its peacekeeping objects, units and troops. The role of a peacemaker requires objectivity, competence, responsibility, neutrality, fairness and impartiality.

Question: How can the stance of the Russian military be explained?

Ion Manole: This dissonance is further proof that Russia’s role is not to maintain peace and stability in Moldova, but rather to maintain control over the Transnistrian region. By such actions the Russian Federation demonstrates that it, in fact, stands against the settlement of the conflict.

Question: How effective is the peacekeeping format in the security zone, installed back in 1992, immediately after the end of armed conflict?

Ion Manole: Promo-LEX lawyers have communicated many cases and serious events that lead to the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the so-called security zone on the Nistru river. After numerous studies and research, Promo-LEX experts found and demonstrated that the current so-called peacekeeping format does not meet international standards. And that is because it is composed exclusively of the belligerent

parties (Russia, Moldova and illegal paramilitary structures of Transnistria). There are no disinterested institutions, states or organizations in the peacekeeping format.

Moreover, the so-called peacekeepers do not provide any guarantees to the local residents, because the mission has no effective legal tools to stop the abuses and violations of basic human rights.

The current peacekeeping format is not transparent as it does not ensure an effective communication of Joint Control Commission representatives with the media or with the people on both banks of the river.

Furthermore, the peacekeeping mission is not neutral, because the Russian Federation, which controls the peacekeeping format, maintains a military presence on Moldovan territory unlawfully and contrary to international commitments. At the same time, Russia continues to provide economic, social, political, financial support [to the Transnistrian regime] unilaterally, in breach of international law and bilateral agreements with Moldova.

One of the most serious deficiencies of this situation is that there is no clear timeline for the finalization of the alleged peacekeeping mission. It was established in the ceasefire Agreement signed by Moldova and the Russia in 1992, which did not provide a specific term for the termination of the peacekeeping operation.

Question: What are, in your view, the solutions to overcome this impasse?

Ion Manole: The current [peacekeeping] format is extremely politicized and inefficient, and it clearly cannot contribute to resolving the Transnistrian problem. This mechanism only contributed to strengthening a separatist regime on Moldovan territory by delaying, maintaining the status quo or blocking any settlement solutions. For over two decades, the situation

has become more difficult to resolve, in constant violation and disregard to the international law and Moldovan-Russian agreements and documents. After about 22 years of functioning of an alleged peacekeeping mission on the Nistru river, we find that the region saw a consolidation of the illegal regime in Tiraspol, without setting the basis for effective mechanisms to guarantee, protect and promote fundamental human rights.

The only viable solution that could end the deadlock and improve the situation is the demilitarization of the Transnistrian peacekeeping operation, and the replacement of the current format with a truly international one, which will employ a civilian contingent of peacekeepers from OSCE and EU member states.