

# ABOUT THE SITUATION IN THE EAST DISTRICTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA (1992-2000)\*

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## 1. PREAMBLE

On 21 July 1992 in Moscow, presidents of the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation signed the Agreement “On the principles of peaceful settlement of the armed conflict in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova”. By signing this document the leadership of Moldova accepted the Russian Federation as an arbitrator in this conflict. Thus, the Republic of Moldova’s leadership became conscious of the fact that this conflict could be stopped only by the consent with the Russian Federation, since the Russian Federation was directly involved in the armed confrontations in Transnistria, both by engaging the 14<sup>th</sup> Army troops and by supporting separatists, especially informationally and militarily. At the same time, it was counted on the idea that the Russian Federation was on the way of edifying a democratic state, the fact that implied establishment of proper future relations with the Republic of Moldova, namely the withdrawal of the 14<sup>th</sup> Army troops, giving up of political, economic, military, informational support of the separatist regime. It is not excluded that Chisinau even expected Moscow to “take in hands” the separatists since the separatist regime was backed up, first of all, by political forces hostile to Boris Eltin.

At the moment of signature on the 21 July 1992 of the Agreement the Tiraspol anti-constitutional regime already had:

- 1) control through repressive means over a territory where previously structures of the constitutional regime and any political opposition were exterminated;
- 2) a bunch of pocket political forces capable by an order to act tough against any opposition;
- 3) mass media means (press, radio, TV), under a severe censorship that decisively contributed to the creation of the image of the Republic of Moldova as of an enemy;
- 4) military troops well-trained and equipped with the armament from the 14<sup>th</sup> Army arsenal;
- 5) efficient security service (through its close relations with the reactionary political forces from the Russian Federation), used as an instrument of repression, gathering of information from the state structures of the Republic of Moldova, blackmail of some state officials from the right bank using the KGB files moved to Tiraspol in the autumn of 1989 etc. At the same time, the “security ministry” from the day of its creation on 16 May 1992 was a repressive institution not subordinated to anybody or controlled by anybody;
- 6) industrial enterprises of a comparatively advanced technological level, with close relations with the Russian Federation;
- 7) customs and border-guard offices, both at the frontier with the Republic of Moldova and the Ukraine, and along the Nistru river (about 820 km in total);
- 8) population, especially that living in the industrial centers, with a totalitarian mentality, dominated and consolidated by the slogan: “My republic will defend me!” (“Моя Республика меня защитит!”);
- 9) political, economic, military, informational support from the Russian Federation that regarded and still regards Transnistria as a region of strategic interests;
- 10) possibility to establish an economic blockade of the right bank (cutting down gas, railway blockade etc.);
- 11) sufficient number of supporters, inclusively among the influent persons from the right bank of the Nistru.

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\* this study refers to the period after June 1992

## 2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITUATION (1992- 2000)

At present, in the middle of 2000, we can ascertain that **the Tiraspol regime has not given up any of the above-mentioned positions.**

During eight years this regime **has consequently consolidated its positions**, based on the following factors:

- 1) The population of the region controlled by the separatists, inclusively its part that initially has not supported separatism, reconciled to the idea that they live in a **real state**. Although this state is confronted with a number of problems it is not recognized on the international arena, for its population this state is more real than the Republic of Moldova. Partisans of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova that live on the left bank are more and more demoralized due to the absence of any progress in the process of the conflict settlement. Chisinau constitutional authorities are not able to solve any problem and cannot defend them. Thus, partisans of separatism have got after the armed conflict a *sentiment of winners*.
- 2) In the eastern districts of the Republic of Moldova there was created an efficient system of the executive power where a dominant role is played by Igor Smirnov and the repressive structures. During these eight years, anti-constitutional power structures have turned out to be much more efficient than those from Chisinau in the fight for the future of this region. For the separatists, unlike for Chisinau, the fight for the consolidation of their position was a fight for survival and was an absolute and permanent priority starting from 1990.
- 3) The zone controlled by the separatists has transformed into an efficient mechanism of getting wealthier through contraband, through exploiting the absence of a firm and consequent position of the Moldovan leadership regarding the status of this zone (the absence of an economic frontier controlled by Chisinau).
- 4) Corruption of some public civil servants, politicians etc. of the Republic of Moldova and their financial personal interest in the existence of the current anti-constitutional regime and, subsequently, in a deliberate delay of the conflict settlement.
- 5) Fusing of the Tiraspol administration structures with criminal structures, which control business in the region; the Tiraspol “security ministry” is involved in the fight for new spheres of influence in the underground economy, inclusively through physical elimination of persons or groups that put up resistance (for instance, elimination in September-October 1998 of 16 persons, from “Serif” company, members of criminal structures that, according to some data, were making competition). Similar cases can be attested also in Chisinau.
- 6) During all these years the Tiraspol administration through a stable team promoted a consequent policy and managed to get from the leadership of the Republic of Moldova a number of **fundamental and unilateral concessions** as the following:
  - Guarantees that in future they will have a status of “a republic”, a constitution, a legislative body, “will participate in the conduct of the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova on matters touching their interests” etc.
  - The right to “foreign economic activity”, as they understand it (without transferring a coin to the state budget of the Republic of Moldova).
  - The Republic of Moldova without controlling a considerable portion of the frontier with the Ukraine granted to the Transnistrian regime the right to have its own customs stamp (see: the Protocol Agreement on settlement of problems in the field of activity of customs authorities of the Republic of Moldova and Transnistria” of 7.02.96). *Tiraspol ignored in the most brutal way all provisions of this document, with the exception of those that were in the interest of the anti-constitutional regime.* Thus, the Republic of Moldova by signing this document

- gave up to the Tiraspol regime one of the fundamental attributes of a real state – customs control, and decisively contributed to the consolidation of the economic foundation of the anti-constitutional regime, inclusively through massive contraband.
- The Republic of Moldova offered to the Tiraspol anti-constitutional regime the right to certify goods (see: “Протокольное решение по согласованной работе в вопросах стандартизации, метрологии и сертификации Департаментом стандартов, метрологии и технического надзора РМ и Комитетом по стандартизации, метрологии и сертификации Приднестровья” from 11.03.96).
  - A considerable portion of goods manufactured by enterprises of the region not controlled by Chisinau are exempted from paying taxes at the customs offices with the Russian Federation and the Ukraine according to “Соглашение между правительством Республики Молдова и правительством Российской Федерации о производственной и научно-технической кооперации предприятия оборонных отраслей промышленности” of 18 February 1994, and “Соглашение между министерством промышленной политики Украины и министерством промышленности Республики Молдова о сохранении специализации предприятий и взаимных кооперированных поставках” of 13 February 1998.
  - Many business operators from the region that is not controlled by Chisinau, although having no connections with the State budget, are registered by the **Chamber of State Registration** of the Republic of Moldova, a fact that allows them to present themselves outside the Republic of Moldova, inclusively to potential investors, as absolutely legal juridical persons.
  - Some economic agents have licenses issued by state institutions of the Republic of Moldova (in 1998 at least three economic agents from this region, without holding a Certificate of registration issued by the Chamber of State Registration of the Republic of Moldova and without having any relations with the budget of the Republic of Moldova, had Licenses for production, stocking and wholesale trade of alcoholic beverages (State farm-factory “Buchetul Moldovei”, License No. 121 of 11.05.98; “Vasiloiu and Co” Ltd., License No. 60 of 12.03.98; Bender biochemical factory, License No. 142 of 26.05.98). Business operators of Transnistria easily obtain certificates of “A” type necessary for export of textiles to the European Union countries (Association “Tirotext” in 1998 got 358 of such certificates from the Department of foreign economic relations, headed by Dumitru Braghis).
  - There are many cases when Transnistrian business operators enjoy different advantageous conditions (TIR cards, licenses and certificates for export to the European Union countries etc.) granted by state authorities of the Republic of Moldova. At the same time they have bar codes issued by the National Agency for the Automatic Identification.
- 7) During these years, leaders of the Tiraspol anti-constitutional regime, though ignoring any agreement and behaving in the most provoking way, were members of the Republic of Moldova official delegations, inclusively at the highest level. Thus, the Republic of Moldova accepted them, inclusively on the international level as legal representatives of the region that was not controlled by Chisinau authorities.
- 8) Taking advantage of the Chisinau inconsistency and a tacit support of the Russian Federation and the Ukraine, the Tiraspol regime concluded a number of agreements with different regions of the Ukraine and the Russian Federation. In such a way was legitimized the economic support offered by these countries to the Tiraspol anti-constitutional regime.

- 9) The Tiraspol anti-constitutional regime leaders claim with success from the Moscow officials a considerable portion of ammunitions and armament of the former 14<sup>th</sup> Army. There are documents signed by Chernomirdin and Smirnov (20 May 1998, Odessa) that cede to them a portion of these ammunitions and armament – a source of fabulous income for these “leaders” and a substantial means to consolidate the anti-constitutional armed forces. (according to the data presented by some experts the property of the former 14<sup>th</sup> Army is estimated at 2 billion dollars).
- 10) To the key functions in the force structures of the Tiraspol regime in many cases there are appointed officers from the respective structures of the Russian Federation. According to some sources of information they are fictitiously placed in reserve before being enrolled by Tiraspol. The “Ministry of State Security” closely cooperates with the influential political forces of the Russian Federation. Our information provides that there is a close cooperation with the Federal Security Service (ФСК), which since 1995 has occupied an office (No. 47) in the building of the Tiraspol “Ministry of Security”. At the elections to the State Duma of the Russian Federation in 1999 the Transnistrian “security minister” and his “deputy” were on the lists of the Liberal Party and of the “Stalinist block for the USSR”.
- 11) Enterprises controlled by Tiraspol manufacture armament offered for sale in other conflict zones being also used for the consolidation of the military potential of the anti-constitutional regime.
- 12) Many industrial enterprises from the region managed to anchor on different markets, got certification from the of international systems of quality certification. This conflict zone starts to benefit from foreign investments. In other words, the Moldovan state, through its international treaties, directly protects the economic interests of the anti-constitutional regime.
- 13) The anti-constitutional regime manages to offer to the population a higher standard of living than that in the Republic of Moldova. The population from the left bank localities, subordinated to Chisinau is more and more demoralized by this fact.
- 14) The anti-constitutional regime has military forces stronger in many ways than those of the Republic of Moldova.
- 15) On 24 December 1995 the anti-constitutional regime adopted a Constitution (“Transnistrian Moldovan Republic an independent and sovereign state”) where the fact of the existence of the Republic of Moldova is not even mentioned, which is totally incompatible with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova.
- 16) The anti-constitutional regime maintains close relations with Gagauz Eri, especially with persons of radical political views. Many information sources from the south of the Republic of Moldova prove that Tiraspol supported Mihail Chendighilian and his partisans at the elections to the Popular Assembly. Through them the anti-constitutional regime leaders maintain separatist tendencies in the southern region and try to create another source of tensions in order to form a common front.

### **3. QUALIFICATION OF THE TIRASPOL REGIME**

Elaboration of a right strategy of the Transnistrian conflict settlement is impossible without charactering to the regime, with a view to take into account in the process of the conflict settlement. The restoration of the Republic of Moldova’s sovereignty in accordance with the country’s Constitution can be fulfilled only in case if the strategy of the conflict settlement:

- will take into account the essence of the anti-constitutional regime;
- will create impossible conditions for the promotion of interests through this regime;

- will mitigate fear (of the union with Romania, a “forced Romanization”, an eventual revenge from the right bank etc.) among the population of the conflict zone as a factor of consolidation of the anti-constitutional regime;
- will “open” Transnistria for a free conduct of actions of popular diplomacy;
- will create conditions for the evacuation from Transnistria of persons, who under no circumstances, will accept to live in a reunited Republic of Moldova.

The development of the situation in the eastern regions of the Republic of Moldova during ten years, the situation with the human rights and freedoms, the freedom of the press, the nature of foreign relations, the behavior of the representative persons with regard to the problem of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova allow us to draw some **firm conclusions** concerning the nature of the political regime established in the eastern regions of the Republic of Moldova.

**On the right bank of the Nistru and the Bender city there has been established a totalitarian repressive political regime. Its task is to ensure the promotion of the Russian Federation’s interests in this region and of the material interests fulfilled through criminal economic activities.**

**This regime is supported by:**

- influent political groups from the Russian Federation;
- those public servants, militiamen, military men etc. whose sources of existence are based on their posts in “the state structures”;
- criminal structures that via this zone put into practice different “schemes” of fiscal evasion, contraband and other economic crimes;
- influent persons from the right bank (statesmen, businessmen, journalists, etc.) who support this regime for ideological reasons or as being involved in the fulfillment of those “schemes”;
- influent persons from the state institutions of the Republic of Moldova who are blackmailed by the Tiraspol “ministry of security” by using their KGB files or other sources, inclusively the information provided by the FSS (Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation);
- population from the conflict region that supports this regime for ideological reasons;
- population that fears eventual reprisals or revenge of Chisinau or “forced Romanization” in case if the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova is reestablished.

*Lack of possibilities to conduct public opinion polls in the localities on the right bank of the Nistru does not allow us to evaluate the share of different groups in the society and how those and the society as a whole could react in different situations.*

Factors that contribute to the stability and viability of the separatist regime:

1. Political and economic **interests** of the political forces and influent people from the Russian Federation;
2. Economic **interests** of some Tiraspol “leaders” and of different people from both banks of the Nistru that are revealed through committing economic crimes against the Republic of Moldova;
3. **Fear** of the population from the region of the consequences of an eventual reunification of the Republic of Moldova (a revenge from the right bank, a “forced Romanization”, etc.);
4. **Fear** of the population loyal to Chisinau of the repressive structures of the anti-constitutional regime;
5. **Support** from public servants of the Republic of Moldova’s, journalists, businessmen loyal to the separatist regime given for ideological reasons or from those who are blackmailed by the security structures of the left bank;

6. **Incapacity** of the Republic of Moldova political elite to consolidate on the basis of the necessity of reestablishment of the territorial integrity of the Moldovan state, its incompetence, corruption and amorality.

The anti-constitutional regime, being a totalitarian one, is a closed and stable system. It is a fundamental mistake to expect that this regime in the nearest future will democratize itself, from the interior. In Tiraspol the so-called opposition is under control of the repressive apparatus; the “security ministry” is a perfect instrument for staging “elections” and “referenda”. In the conflict region there has been created an informational environment that shapes the public opinion in accordance with the aggressive separatism ideology. In the course of a decade the Republic of Moldova has been presented only as a potential aggressor, everything that happens on the right bank of the Nistru is distorted and transformed into a fright for the population. The anti-constitutional regime persecutes any non-governmental organizations’ initiatives to contribute to the amelioration of the situation, the restoration of mutual trust among the population on both banks of the Nistru by means of popular diplomacy.

**This closed system can be dismantled only by actions from the exterior that would lead to the removal of the factors ensuring its viability and stability.**

#### **4. POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA (1992-2000) AND ITS CONSEQUENCES**

The policy pursued by the Republic of Moldova has been reduced to negotiations with the Transnistrian administration and the signature of a number of documents with the participation of the Russian Federation, the Ukraine and the OSCE. The documents signed bear the following specific features:

1. Unilateral concessions in favor of the anti-constitutional regime. Some of these concessions have no precedents in the international practice for any level of autonomy in the framework of a unitary or federative state and are in contradiction with the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova.
2. The signed documents provide only for the “rights”, but no obligations to the Transnistrian part. They do not offer any mechanism that would guarantee a full implementation of the provisions signed by both parties.
3. The signed documents contain some primitive “traps” for the Republic of Moldova, such as “synchronization of the withdrawal of the Russian Federation troops with the complete settlement of the conflict”, “reciprocally agreed decisions” (“взаимно согласованные решения”) in the state issue, a “common state”. By accepting this kind of wording Chisinau offered Tiraspol the possibility of an open-ended blockage, during the negotiations of any steps of principle towards reestablishment of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova.
4. The basic documents have an “interstate” nature. For instance, the “Memorandum” being signed by the presidents of the Republic of Moldova (inclusively the signature of the leader of the “Transnistrian administration”), of the Russian Federation and the Ukraine, with the participation of the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, gets a legal international nature, which, although, does not offer to the Transnistrian region the status of a subject of international law, approaches it greatly to this status.  
Article 2 of the main part (“the parties shall continue the establishment between them of state-legal relations”) consolidates the special status of Transnistria, that of a **political-administrative unit equal in rights with the Republic of Moldova.**
5. By signing such documents as “Протокольное решение по согласованной работе в вопросах стандартизации, метрологии и сертификации Департаментом стандартов, метрологии и технического надзора РМ и Комитетом по стандартизации, метрологии и сертификации Приднестровья”, “Протокольное решение по разрешению возникших проблем в области деятельности таможенных служб РМ и

Приднестровья”, which from the very beginning have followed by the Transnistrian administration only in those parts convenient to them, the anti-constitutional regime has got the right to:

- a) consolidate its legal economic basis;
- b) legalize the flow of contraband to the detriment of the Republic of Moldova’s interests and to ensure the advancement of the interests of those who benefit from the economic crimes committed against the Moldovan state.

**From the moment of signature of these documents enormous damages were caused to the budget of the Republic of Moldova (it is sufficient to compare the foreseen and the real revenues to the budget from the import of excise-duty goods) that greatly exceed the volume of arrears to pensions and salaries in the budget sphere**, let alone the volume of credits expected by the Republic of Moldova from the international financial institutions. According to the official data of the Customs Department of the Republic of Moldova, only in 1998 fiscal evasion as a result of contraband with excise-duty goods through Transnistria was estimated at over 250 million lei.

We can admit that the goal of signing these documents was to economically integrate the anti-constitutional regime into the constitutional structure of the Republic of Moldova. In reality, during these years the initiative in the negotiation process was totally in the separatist leaders’ hands. All their suggestions in the framework of negotiations held at different levels had a very clear objective – consolidation of the position, especially in the economic field, of the anti-constitutional regime to the detriment of the Republic of Moldova’s sovereignty. Chisinau, for the unknown reasons, left itself to be attracted into this trap and in many cases accepted to contribute with its own hand to the consolidation of the anti-constitutional regime position. Out of those over 40 documents signed during the last four years, the Transnistrian regime complied only with those parts that satisfied their interests and totally ignored the other parts.

Occasional signals of alarm and suggestions made by some ministries and departments to the Government of the Republic of Moldova regarding the economic losses related to the current situation in Transnistria were left without any attention. Only in April 1999 the Government of the Republic of Moldova decided to place new mobile fiscal offices along the Nistru. Their duty was to collect customs taxes and VAT for goods imported into the Republic of Moldova from the territory controlled by the separatist regime. These fiscal offices started to bring revenues to the budget, yet they cannot assure a real and rigorous control of the state economic border.

Although, the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova stipulates that the Parliament “approves the main directions, of the state’s internal and external policy” (Article 66, paragraph “d”), the Parliament’s majority has not made yet any effort to approach, comprehend and settle the Transnistrian problem in all its complexity in such a way that it would end up with the elaboration in the Parliament of a multidimensional state policy in this regard. The Transnistrian problem is addressed in the Parliament occasionally, superficially, more from the perspective of the withdrawal of the Russian Federation’s troops and of the Ilascu group.

In 2000 the Moldovan Parliament tried to intensify its activities in the Transnistrian conflict issue. Yet, this effort resulted in setting up a commission that placed itself on a dead end of “surveying the compliance with” the Memorandum of 8 May 1997.

The Republic of Moldova has not worked out and thus does not have a fundamental and firm position in such a basic issue as the problem of ownership over all property in the eastern regions of the Republic of Moldova. As a result of such attitude, “a final settlement” of the conflict can be blocked by other parties involved in the conflict as long as it would be necessary for transferring the entire patrimony, inclusively the land into the ownership of juridical persons and individuals that stay behind the Transnistrian regime.

Although, the armed and political confrontations led to the emergence of the internally displaced persons, the Moldovan state totally ignores the problems of this category of citizens. Moreover, it has not even tried to address this problem during the negotiation process, without mentioning the fact that the registration of this category of refugees is totally missing.

### **Some remarks:**

- The anti-constitutional regime has a strong and efficient “lobby” in the state structures of the Russian Federation. Recently, Tiraspol has been very skillfully exploiting an increasing competition between the interests of the Russian Federation and the Ukraine in Transnistria. The anti-constitutional regime does not set yet as its goal the international recognition. Many times in Tiraspol and Bender disseminated an idea that Transnistria had to follow the example of the Taiwan island. Concessions made by Chisianu allow advancement of the economic interests that are at the core of this regime without enjoying the international recognition.
- The anti-constitutional regime gained sufficient potential due to the fact that it ignored and will ignore in the future all “tough” declarations from the exterior, inclusively from any officials of the Russian Federation (for instance, Chisinau “summit” of 23 October 1997). In the foreseeable future the anti-constitutional regime will enjoy sufficient support from the influential political groups of the Russian Federation in order to survive regardless the development of the political situation in Russia. During those eleven years in the Russian Federation was artificially and purposefully created a stereotype that on this territory the “Russian-speaking” population defended itself from the nationalist extremism of the Moldovans. No politician from the Russian Federation can ignore these feelings and there are no reasons, therefore, for the Russian Federation to toughly intervene in order to reestablish the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova.

### **The policy of the Republic of Moldova is wrong due to the following reasons:**

1. Having been promoted during eight years, it did not lead to the reestablishment of the state integrity, did not put an end to the plan of advancing of the INTERESTS that lay at the core of the anti-constitutional regime.
2. At the elaboration of the documents signed in the framework of negotiations there has not been taken into account the ESSENCE of the Tiraspol anti-constitutional regime, which is a TOTALITARIAN regime.
3. Actions undertaken by the Republic of Moldova in the course of the last eight years CONTRIBUTED to the consolidation, in all aspects, of the anti-constitutional regime. **Continuation of this policy can have as its result the legitimization of a loss of this territory.**
4. Participation of the OSCE as a mediator at the negotiations by no means guarantees the maintenance of Transnistria within the Republic of Moldova in future. The contents of the documents signed with the “blessing” of the OSCE confirms this supposition. In a situation when weapons are silent and Europe is not invaded by refugees from the conflict region, the OSCE will easily accept the situation when the Republic of Moldova will have to peacefully give up this territory. At the same time it is unlikely that this international organization will elaborate the necessary documents, an adequate legal framework and a proper mechanism for the settlement of the conflict.
5. Both “guarantor states” view the eastern regions of the Republic of Moldova as a zone of their own interests, that in reality run counter to the interests of the Republic of Moldova. If these countries had a sincere and strong political will to efficiently contribute to the reestablishment of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova, it is beyond all question that by common efforts they would have been able to do it in a month. In this regard it is important that the majority of the “traps” for the Republic of Moldova were set in the negotiation process by the Russian Federation. The analysis of the events after the November 1999 OSCE Summit in Istanbul shows that the Russian Federation and the Transnistrian anti-

constitutional regime, promote a coordinated policy that has as its goal the legitimization of the Russian Federation's military presence on the territory of the Republic of Moldova.

It is obvious that the agreements concluded by the Transnistrian regime with some Ukrainian regions could have not been signed without an earlier agreement of the Kiev central authorities. The Ukraine shows an increasing interest in the northern districts of Transnistria predominantly populated by Ukrainians. In an "inexplicable" way there have been cases of transportation of the armament produced in Transnistria through the territory of the Ukraine to other conflict zones (for instance "Grad" rocket launchers to Abkhazia). In 1999 the Ukrainian mediators proposed a draft document that was expected to be approved by Chisinau and Tiraspol. The analysis of this document proves that if it were to be signed it would have contributed even more to the weakening of the Moldovan state position in the relations with the separatist regime. Mr. Vadimir Botnar, chairman of the *Association of the Ukrainians of Transnistria* often visits Kiev and we can suppose that he tries to set up in the Ukraine a lobby similar to that in Russia.

Considering the above, we can talk about a competition of these two states in Transnistria. It cannot be ruled out that the Ukraine is waiting for the Republic of Moldova to abandon this territory so that by claiming its "historical rights" to "swallow" this territory. Therefore, both the Russian Federation and the Ukraine are the states that have their own interests in the Transnistrian region and thus in fact cannot play the role of impartial and objective mediators.

6. The Republic of Moldova by cooperating with the aforementioned parties is guided by a wrong premise that somebody is sincerely preoccupied by the Republic of Moldova's problems and should come and solve *our problems* in our interest.

## 5. SOME FINAL REMARCS

Taking into account the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova the Transnistrian problem in principle cannot be settled only in the framework of negotiations with those who usurped the right to represent this territory. The anti-constitutional regime representatives have no reasons for concessions in the issue of reestablishment of the Republic of Moldova's sovereignty over the territory controlled by them. Even if we admit an absurd idea that Igor Smirnov gives up in the essential issues at the negotiations table, that will mean his immediate political death as a representative of Transnistria.

The Transnistrian regime, being a totalitarian one, cannot be "tamed" or "convinced" to change its essence and give up its own interests. At the same time, the solution to the conflict cannot be found in the Chisinau – Tiraspol – Moscow since there is no solution within this structure. Also, there are no chances that the Russian Federation will exercise enough hard pressure on the Transnistrian administration to frame this regime into the constitutional limits, guided only by a puristic attitude of the Russian Federation towards international law norms. At the same time, it is necessary to mention that the settlement of the conflict of the eastern region of the Republic of Moldova makes sense only if this settlement will be reached proceeding from the vital interests of the citizens of the Republic of Moldova of both banks of the Nistru river.

Restoration of territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova can be achieved only by implementing some COMPULSIVE measures applied consistently and firmly to the anti-constitutional regime, by the most active involvement of the international institutions and other states (the European Union, USA), with the participation or at least a tacit acceptance by the Russian Federation. This can happen only if the Republic of Moldova would renounce the previously signed documents with the separatist leaders and the current negotiation pattern. At the same time, it is obvious that such a step will have long lasting consequences in the relations of the Republic of Moldova, primarily, with the Russian Federation and the CIS structures. For the time being the consequences of this step have not been assessed yet. At the same time there is no clear answer to what the new mechanism should be, what structure and composition it should have in order to ensure a controlled dismantling of the Transnistrian regime in conditions of a

geopolitical stability, internal peace, and the avoidance of violence etc. and the reestablishment of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova.