



REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

STATEMENT

By

H.E. Mr. Pavel FILIP

**PRIME MINISTER
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

**AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE
SEVENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE
UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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**Madame President,
Mister Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I would like to begin by congratulating H.E. Ms. Maria Fernanda Espinosa on her election as President of the seventy-third session of the UN General Assembly and to wish her success in fulfilling her important mandate.

Furthermore, I would like to thank H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák for the fruitful activity in his capacity as President of the General Assembly during the previous session and to wish him success in his future endeavors.

I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the former UN Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan, a true leader and promoter of UN values, who will remain in the memory of this organization as one of the most distinguished and dedicated supporters of humanitarianism and global peace.

Madame President,

For more than 70 years, the United Nations is the center of multilateral diplomacy, playing a primary role in global processes, from international peace and security to the promotion human rights and sustainable development.

While the international environment is continually evolving and transforming, now it is a crucial moment requiring the adaptation of the United Nations to face the challenges of the modern world. Hence, we welcome the initiatives of the Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, which he launched since the first day of his taking office.

In particular, we welcome the reform to enhance the performance of the UN Secretariat in the field of international peace and security by highlighting conflict prevention as a top priority.

Furthermore, we support the efforts for the management reform, through the optimization of functions and increasing the accountability of all the branches of the Secretariat in the fulfillment of their mandate.

Finally, of particular importance is the recent decision on the repositioning of the UN development system, by enabling it to effectively contribute to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals agreed three years ago.

Undoubtedly, these initiatives are very complex and will carry systemic changes across the entire organization. To ensure that these reforms yield the expected results in a medium and long term perspective, the transparent and constructive dialogue between UN management and Member States will have to be sustained.

Madame President,

The implementation of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development is definitely a milestone in the work of the organization for the years to come. The reform of the UN development system comes at a time when the implementation of this agenda is to be accelerated at all levels, in a joint effort of the UN system and the Member States.

We welcome the new reform vision by which the private sector will be more actively involved in achieving sustainable development at global, regional and national levels. This partnership has the potential to provide a new impetus for progress and innovation, including for financial mobilization, to make up for the gaps in finances that the organization is currently facing.

In view of the Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Government of the Republic of Moldova has elaborated, through an inclusive and participatory process, a vision of a new development strategy called „Moldova 2030”, fully aligned with its international commitments, including the Moldova-EU Association Agreement.

This new development strategy highlights the wellbeing and human rights, environment protection as well as cultivating an inclusive society as its top priorities.

There are several ongoing projects aimed at materializing these objectives.

We are currently implementing an ambitious national program to rehabilitate the road infrastructure across the country, to improve the connectivity and mobility of people, goods and services.

We are introducing more profoundly innovation and technology in the sphere of public services for more accessibility, better quality, and transparency as well as for the elimination of corruption.

We have managed to take an important step forward towards the integration of the Republic of Moldova into the European energy market by signing an agreement with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development for the financing of the biggest energy project of the Republic of Moldova since its independence. The country's energy independence is crucial for its sustainable development and social stability.

We work actively with our international partners including UN agencies and programmes in the area of the environment, to continually develop renewable energy and reduce gas emissions in accordance with our international commitments.

Given the complexity of Agenda 2030, there are certainly several other initiatives which we pursue as part of our comprehensive sustainable development vision which we implement in line with this new integrative approach, in partnership with the United Nations and our partners.

Madame President,

While in the field of development the United Nations has managed to establish a reform vision endorsed by the General Assembly resolution last May, in the sphere of security, where the political factor is more predominant, deficiencies still persist.

The efficiency and relevance of the United Nations in this area can not be fully achieved only through internal restructuring of its Secretariat.

Delaying the reform of the Security Council in the last 25 years does not contribute to the respect for the UN Charter, the International Law and the maintenance of international peace and security, which are the core prerogatives of this organization.

We follow with great concern the violent conflicts in various parts of the world, with severe consequences for civilian population. The inability of the Security Council to take effective measures in these situations raises a legitimate question about its relevance as a decisional body for international security. From this perspective, the reform is key to restore the relevance and authority of the Security Council and, by extension, of the entire United Nations, in matters of international peace and security.

The Republic of Moldova supports the vision of an efficient, representative, democratic and inclusive Security Council, able to swiftly respond to complex security challenges. Furthermore, as we declared several times in the past, we stand for the allocation of an additional non-permanent seat for the Eastern European group of countries. And we hope that the membership of this Assembly could come to an agreement on outstanding reform issues sooner rather than later.

Distinguished delegates,

The UN Charter requires our organization to play a proactive role in maintaining the international peace and security and in ensuring the respect for Member States' sovereignty and territorial integrity.

By bringing before the UN General Assembly matters arising from challenges to their sovereignty, territorial integrity and national security, the Member States do not seek confrontation or politicization in the work General Assembly.

It is only natural for such States to turn to UN for assistance in promoting and encouraging solutions based on the strict observance of the International Law and UN Charter.

During the High Level Segment of the last session I reiterated, from this high-rostrum, the calls to the United Nations to focus meaningfully on a grave breach of the International Law and UN Charter, namely the continued presence of the Russian military forces and armaments on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, without its consent and against its express wish.

I also appealed to the Member States to support the inclusion in the agenda of General Assembly of an item focused on this pressing security, political, legal and security issue faced by the Republic of Moldova.

I am pleased to note that the General Assembly adopted a resolution which declared straightforwardly that the Russian Federation's continued refusal to withdraw its military forces and armaments from the Moldovan soil, unless some political preconditions of domestic nature are met by the Republic of Moldova, is incompatible with the rules of International Law and the UN Charter.

By adopting on 22 June 2018 the resolution A/72/282, the UN General Assembly has also unequivocally stressed that the Russian Federation's non-compliance with the International Law and UN Charter has led to clear violation of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova and, subsequently, it must withdraw its military forces unconditionally, completely and with no further delay.

The resolution is the first important milestone for consolidating the support of the United Nations for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. In this context, I would like to express deep gratitude to all Member States which co-sponsored the resolution or supported its adoption.

Last week, the General Committee and, subsequently, the General Assembly decided, by consensus, to include in the agenda of seventy-third session a new item, entitled "The withdrawal of foreign military forces from the territory of the Republic of Moldova."

The Government of the Republic of Moldova welcomes this important decision which comes at a time when the internal and sub-regional security has worsened due to repeated, unlawful and destabilising activities of the foreign military forces and the unconstitutional power structures in the eastern part of the country.

The joint military exercises of the Operational Group of Russian Forces, stationed illegally on Moldovan soil, with the paramilitaries of the unconstitutional power structures, which have increased in scope and frequency, represent a continued violation of the 1992 Moldovan-Russian Ceasefire Agreement that contains an explicit legal binding commitment of the Russian Federation to ensure the "neutrality of Russian military Forces" during the process of their withdrawal from the territory of the Republic of Moldova.

Aiming at upgrading the military offensive capacity of unconstitutional power structures, the illegal joint military exercises undermine international efforts aimed at the peaceful resolution of the protracted Transnistrian problem.

The Republic of Moldova, echoed by other OSCE Member States, repeatedly expressed its deep concern with regard to these unlawful and continual destabilising exercises that run contrary to the obligations of the Russian Federation in the framework of the "5+2" international settlement format.

From this high rostrum today, we appeal once again to the Russian Federation to discontinue these illegal and provocative activities and to resume unconditionally and without further delay the process of the withdrawal of its troops and armaments, in accordance with its legal commitments under 1999 Istanbul Summit Outcome Document and in observance of its obligations under the International Law and the UN Charter.

Distinguished delegates,

The complete and unconditional withdrawal of the foreign military forces from the territory of the Republic of Moldova will, undoubtedly, facilitate the settlement process of the transnistrian conflict and the reintegration of the country.

Despite the many difficulties encountered along the settlement process, the Moldovan authorities are determined to find, within the „5+2” negotiating format, a political solution to this protracted conflict, externally generated, in the eastern part of the Republic of Moldova.

For us, it is extremely important that this solution is based on full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova, providing a special status for the transnistrian region, as stipulated in the relevant OSCE documents.

Madame President,

I would like to refer briefly to the goal of European integration of my country, which guides the reform agenda of the Republic of Moldova, particularly through the application of the Association Agreement with the European Union. By aligning the Republic of Moldova to EU principles and standards and by harmonizing the national legislation with the European one, we aim to bring our country closer to EU and to ensure the sustainability of the modernization process.

The extent of our cooperation with the EU is ample. It includes several dimensions, starting with the political, constructive and intensive dialogue, to the creation of the free and comprehensive trade zone, inter-sectoral cooperation and taking stock of collaboration opportunities within the Eastern Partnership.

In economic terms, the Association Agreement is a big step forward for the economy of the Republic of Moldova, while the European Union has become the country's main trading partner. Several positive results have been achieved in key sectors contributing to trade facilitation, growing the competitiveness of goods and services and opening new opportunities for local producers.

I am convinced that the implementation of the Association Agreement is the best and viable option to deliver prosperity and sustainable development for the Republic of Moldova and will warrant the irreversibility of the EU integration path.

Distinguished delegates,

I would like to conclude by reaffirming the commitment of my country to continually promote the respect for UN Charter and to contribute to the achievement of internationally agreed UN goals.

I would also like to express the hope that the initiatives recently launched towards the consolidation of the organization's capacities will contribute to achieving better performance in the area of development as in the area of international peace and security.

We shall remain truthful to UN ideals and to its capacity to ensure the respect for International Law.

I thank you.