

RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN STATEMENT

The Russian Federation and Ukraine, as mediators in the political settlement of the aftermath of the Pridnestrovian conflict, having expressed their willingness to become guarantors of a special status for Pridnestrovie within the territorial integrity of Moldova, stand for a steady progress of the Pridnestrovian settlement and express strong commitment to further comprehensive cooperation in this process.

Real examples of a constructive approach is a Joint Statement on an Early Political Settlement of the Pridnestrovian Conflict by the Presidents of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine of January 19, 1996, Memorandum on the Bases of Normalization of Relations between the Republic of Moldova and Pridnestrovie of May 8, 1997 and accepted in this regard Statement by the Presidents of Russia and Ukraine with the participation of the OSCE Chairman.

These important political documents confirmed the presence of necessary conditions for a fruitful political dialogue within the framework of the existing negotiating process in order to completely eliminate the impact of the conflict. Goodwill and willingness to search for reasonable compromises allow achieving tangible improvements on the way to a comprehensive settlement, final normalization of relations between Kishinev and Tiraspol.

However, there is a slowdown in the elaboration of the most pressing issues of settlement recently.

In this regard, Russia and Ukraine consider that the priority areas in the negotiations, where some groundwork has already been laid, should be development of concrete measures to restore common economic, social and legal space, delineation and delegation of powers, as a part of the future status, strengthening mutual trust and arranging a system of guarantees.

Russia and Ukraine deem it appropriate to continue development of these issues at the meeting of expert panels of the sides, which could be held in Kiev in the near future.

This approach allowed significant enhancement of the negotiation process as a whole and bringing the settlement of the Pridnestrovian issue in the interests of all people on both sides of the Dniester in order to ensure stability, security and peace.

March 20, 1998

Odessa

**The Chairman of the Government
of the Russian Federation**

/signed/

V. Chernomyrdin

The President of Ukraine

/signed/

L. Kuchma