

Cristina Lesnic: the Covid-19 pandemic revealed new realities in the Transnistrian conflict settlement



There were 25 meetings of the sectoral Working Groups organized during the 9 months of the current year, more than throughout 2019, when 21 meetings were organized. The positive dynamic was in place despite the emergency situation and the sanitary-epidemiological restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. For the same reason, most of the meetings were organized as video-conferences.

The most active Working Groups were on development of road transportation and infrastructure - 4 sessions, on education and healthcare - 3 sessions each. The Working Groups on human rights, customs, rail transportation and telecommunications had two sessions each.

"The pandemic has changed many aspects of the Transnistrian issue and the Chisinau - Tiraspol relationship and revealed new priorities, one of which is respect for human rights. Chisinau had a proactive approach during this period, making efforts to ensure the rights observance for the 320 thousand documented citizens and for over 18 thousand people who have health insurances and are assigned to medical institutions on the right bank of Nistru, as well as for healthcare system employees and other categories of people", said the Deputy Prime Minister for Reintegration, Cristina Lesnic.

The Chief Negotiator on the Transnistrian issue highlighted that Chisinau has also made efforts to ensure access to education and free movement of students, teachers, administrative staff of the 8 schools teaching in Romanian from the Transnistrian region, and for those who prefer to pursue studies in institutions on the right bank of Nistru. Efforts have been made to maintain permanent communication with schools' principals as to start the 2020-2021 study year according to the models agreed by the educational institutions and on equal basis with the other schools.

Chisinau has extended for 2 years the term for registration of transportation means with neutral plates for owners and possessors from the Transnistrian region as to have access to international road traffic, by amending and supplementing the national legislation.

Furthermore, Chisinau has been active on other issues, including humanitarian aid during the Covid-19 pandemic emergency. A simplified procedure for importing medicines and food into the Transnistrian region has been introduced. Assistance from the World Health Organization has been requested to improve access to medical services for the Nistru's left bank population, to provide methodological assistance and test people for the new coronavirus, to facilitate provision of the external assistance in preventing the spread of the new virus, etc. The employees of the Bureau for Reintegration kept permanent contact with the local public administration from the Security Zone, including through regular field visits.

At the same time, Tiraspol has isolated itself, by introducing illegal checkpoints in the Security Zone and violating human rights. Individual cases of violation of rights to free speech and freedom of opinion have also intensified.

Chisinau will continue to apply a proactive attitude towards the interest of the citizens of the Republic of Moldova from both banks of the Nistru river.

