At the working meeting of the political representatives, Chisinau brought back on the agenda the topics of free movement and respect for human rights, including individual cases



Today, February 17, 2023, at the headquarters in Tiraspol of the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Moldova, the first working meeting in this year of the political representatives in the negotiation process for the Transnistrian settlement from Chisinau, Oleg Serebrian and from Tiraspol, Vitaliy Ignatiev, took place, being attended by delegates of the participants in the format of "5+2" negotiations.

In response to Tiraspol's multiple accusations regarding an alleged economic blockade applied to the Transnistrian region, the representative of Chisinau emphasized the fact that, despite the complicated regional context, businesses in the Transnistrian region operated normally, and their commercial relations were not affected. At the same time, he denied that the negotiation process would be at an impasse, mentioning several agreements in the economic segment reached in 2022.

Deputy Prime Minister Serebrian brought back to the agenda the issue of respecting human rights in the Transnistrian region, citing the fact that, as a result of implementation of the so-called "combating extremism" strategy by Tiraspol, persecutions, intimidation, detentions and the illegal deprivation of liberty of several citizens, referring to the cases of Glijin A., Pleșcanov V., Pogorlețchii V., Zimin A. and others. The necessity to intervene with prompt reactions was mentioned, including the involvement of the OSCE Mission, in order to ensure fundamental human rights and freedoms in the region. The opportunity to continue the dialogue on this topic during the next meeting of the working groups for human rights was reiterated.

The topic of existing barriers to free movement in the localities of the Transnistrian region was also addressed for representatives of the media and the associative sector on the right bank of the Dniester, especially for those in the field of human rights protection. It was requested to remove these obstacles and ensure the unimpeded access of the press and civil society for the reflection and monitoring of events and phenomena of public interest in the region.

The issue of illegal afforestation undertaken on lands that fall within the administrative boundaries of Doroțcaia village in Dubăsari district and are located along the Camenca-Tiraspol route was also discussed, and the cessation of these illegal actions was requested.

The political representative from Tiraspol was critical of the recent amendments to the Penal Code of the Republic of Moldova, regarding the criminalization of the phenomenon of separatism, which he qualified as "a very dangerous precedent, aimed at imposing new pressure measures and blocking the existing channels of dialogue and the commitments previously assumed in the negotiation process".

As a reaction from Chisinau, it was stated that the respective provisions will not represent an impediment for the continuation of the interaction in the current negotiation formats regarding the Transnistrian settlement. They detailed the applicability of the provisions of article 32 paragraph (3) of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova and regulated the ways of responding to potential risks and vulnerabilities to the national security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. It was emphasized that similar articles are stipulated in the legislation of other countries, including in Europe.

At the proposal of the main negotiator from Tiraspol to consider the possibility of launching possible "informal consultations" in the ”5+2” format of negotiations, the Deputy Prime Minister for reintegration stated that the current complicated context of regional security, the continuous military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and the lack of clear perspectives to advance towards the basket of security issues and regarding the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, make such consultations impossible. Instead, it was suggested to maintain the interaction in the Chisinau-Tiraspol dialogue platforms, with the presence of the OSCE and the invitation of other relevant international experts.

