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## **UKRAINE AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA – UNUSED POTENTIAL**

Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova mutually recognized the independence in December 1991. The diplomatic relations were established on March 10, 1992 with following exchange of diplomatic missions.

Today Ukraine is represented in the Republic of Moldova by the Embassy and the Consulate in Bălți city, and the Republic of Moldova – by the Embassy in Kyiv and Consulate in Odesa.

Currently both parties are working on the establishment of a network of honorary consulates.

The contractual and legal framework between Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova comprises more than 150 documents. There is a constant joint work on its replenishment and improvement. The main documents among the others are as follows: Agreement on Neighbourhood, Friendship and Cooperation between Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova (23.10.1992); Agreement between Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova on the State Border (18.08.1999); Consular Convention between Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova (29.08.1995).

Relations with Moldova hold an important place in the system of external political interests of Ukraine, which was preconditioned by the mutual border, presence of a large ethnic community of Ukrainians in Moldova, proximity of foreign policy priorities, significant potential for the development of mutually beneficial economic cooperation. In addition, Ukraine is an active participant with the status of mediator in the negotiation process regarding the Transnistrian reconciliation.

Ukraine strives to develop friendly, neighbourly and mutually profitable relations with the Republic of Moldova that are based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both states.

The leadership of our country supports the meaningful dialogue with Moldavian officials who share the analogic approaches, namely active contacts with the leadership of the government and parliament for the Republic of Moldova take place.

The intensive political dialogue contributed to the increase in bilateral trade, which, according to the results of 2017, amounted to 885 million USD, which is by 100 million USD more than in 2016. We have entrenched in the electricity market of Moldova.



*Spільне фото учасників Інавгураційної сесії МІА Парламенту Грузії, Парламенту Республіки Молдова та Верховної Ради України в Тбілісі. 06.10.2018*

*Group photo of participants of the IPA inauguration Session of the Parliament of Georgia, the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in Tbilisi. 06.10.2018*

Currently rather challenging issues that have been on the agenda of the bilateral relations for many years already are being discussed. Here belong namely the operation of the Dniester Hydro-Power Complex (DHPC), the completion of the demarcation of the Ukrainian-Moldovan border, the signing of the Treaty on the state border regime, cooperation and mutual assistance regarding the border issues.

The unimpaired operation of the DHPC is considered from the view of the energetic security in Ukraine and Moldova, which have similar energy systems. Dniester pumped hydroelectric energy storage station is capable to ensure the quality of electric energy and assist in integration of Ukrainian and Moldovan electric network into the European ENTSO-E system.

In September 2017, after the 6-year break, the activity of Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Moldovan Mixed Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation was resumed. In 2017, joint border and customs control at international checkpoints “Kuchurgan-Pervomaisk”, “Maiaky-Udobne-Palanka” and “Reni-Giurgiulești” began. Today, at the Ukrainian-Moldovan border, there are already six common border-crossing points. Currently the preparation for the introduction of this practice in the remaining points of the passage is ongoing.

A range of joint projects and mutually important events, namely the cooperation in ecological, transport, energy, infrastructure and other areas are on the agenda of the bilateral relations.

In particular, the opening of Bronnitsia-Ungur the boundary bridge crossing for the vehicle and, in the long run, the construction of the Yampil-Soroky bridge that will be a step towards integration of our two countries into the European transport network TEN-T.

The European integration will remain the basis for our close cooperation in strengthening democracy and civil society institutions, implementing systemic domestic reforms, and effective combating of corruption.

Information and explanatory work is one of the priority directions in the work of the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Moldova, in particular providing the Moldovan official circles, as well as expert community and people living in the country with objective information about the situation in Ukraine in the context of Russian aggression. The peculiarity of such work lies in the fact that Moscow retains strong positions in the information space and political life of Moldova.

The active use of “public diplomacy”, in particular the involvement of Ukrainian experts in seminars and conferences in Moldova and publications in the Moldovan media became a significant achievement.

The important result of our diplomatic work is consistent support of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine provided by the Republic of Moldova.

Moldova became a co-author of the UN resolutions “Situation with human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol city (Ukraine)” approved in 2016–2017 that recognize Russia to be an occupant of Ukrainian peninsula and a party responsible for violation of human rights in this territory.

Despite external aggression, Ukraine continues to take active measures in negotiation process regarding the Transnistrian settlement. We support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova, the demands of the Moldovan side for the withdrawal of Russian troops, weapons and ammunition from the territory of Moldova, as well as the transformation of the Russian-led peacekeeping operation in the Transnistrian region into the international civilian mission. The conflict must be resolved peacefully on the basis of respect for the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within the internationally recognized borders.

After the occupation of Crimea and aggression in eastern Ukraine, it is clear that Transnistrian conflict shall be considered as one of “theatres” of Russian hybrid war. The common source of the Transnistrian and Russian-Ukrainian conflicts is preconditioned by the need to combine efforts and formulate common approaches to their settlement, as well as to confront the challenges and threats in the region.

In particular, the tripartite cooperation between Ukraine-Moldova-Georgia with the support of international partners from the EU and the USA gains the practical appearance. On June 9, 2018, in Kyiv, the heads of parliaments of three countries founded the Tripartite Interparliamentary Assembly Ukraine-Moldova-Georgia.



*Учасники проекту “День України в Європі” біля Академії наук Республіки Молдова після презентації виставки архівних документів до 100-річчя української дипломатичної служби, 2018*

*Participants of the project “Ukraine Day in Europe” near the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Moldova after the presentation of the archival documents exhibition on the occasion of 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ukrainian diplomatic service, 2018*

An important aspect in bilateral relations is provision of rights for the national minorities.

Ukrainians are the second largest ethnic group in Moldova comprising nearly 6.5% of the population (without taking into account the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova). About 70 thousand citizens of Ukraine are in the consular register.

In the territory of Moldova, there are schools with Ukrainian language study and Ukrainian community organizations. Twice a month a Ukrainian-language program “Svitanok” is broadcasted on the public television channel “Moldova 1”, and there is the Ukrainian-language radio program “Vidrozhennia” on radio “Moldova” on Thursdays.

At the end of 2018, regular parliamentary elections will take place in Moldova, the results of which will have a significant impact on the Ukrainian-Moldovan relations.

Ukraine is interested in a socially and politically stable, economically developed Moldova, which can continue to adhere to the European integration course.