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**Speech delivered by**

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**International Conference**

***„Moldova and Europe: Bridging the Gap”***

Chişinău, April 26-27, 2005

Honored assistance,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

I have a special pleasure to be present at this Conference which crowns the initiative of our German partners to contribute to promoting the image of the Republic of Moldova in the context of our endeavors to achieve the aspirations of European integration. From the outset, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration welcomed and supported this initiative, as it comes to add value to our bilateral cooperation. At the same time, allow me to welcome the presence at this important event for us of our colleagues from the ministries of foreign affairs, representatives of the academic circles, and last but not least, of the Moldovan civil society, whose interest for this conference reconfirms the extended support of the whole Moldovan society for the European integration objective of the Republic of Moldova.

The subject of the present session reunites two concepts, each of them has multiple valences but that eventually are connected, thus amplifying the complexity of the discussed issue.

Essential for the delimitation of the identity, the border issue is characteristic for the existence of political entities and their delimitation from the similar formations or of another kind. Its complexity imposes most of the times comprehensive approaches, but considering a short amount of time I have, I will not tackle them this time.

In spite of the historical evolutions, the Republic of Moldova confronted always the border phenomenon in the ensemble of its manifestations that left a print on our political, economic, social, cultural and psychological aspects.

The implosion of the socialist system and the disappearance of the Iron Curtain offered Moldova the possibility to re-find its identity, drawing out its borders and identifying its neighbors, as well as capitalize advantages arising from the communication and co-operation with a world which for a long time was hidden from that border type which we hoped not to confront any more.

In spite of all this, our road to consolidate our independence and statehood, modernization and democratization, return to our big European family meant actually to overcome the frontiers, positioned more or less justified on the route chosen by the Republic of Moldova.

It was necessary to make sustainable efforts to be accepted on the regional, and European level as a country belonging to the South-Eastern Europe, to obtain the right to be accepted as a full-fledged member of the Stability Pact and participate

plenary to all the projects initiated in this framework. We consider that we have succeeded in our regional arrangement activity to transgress the entire border on the regional and more significantly on the European level, thus dissipating the stereotypes fuelling them. The successes obtained by the Republic of Moldova on the regional level conferred it an increased visibility on the continental scale, catalyzing the reactions of the European Union to the affirmation of our European aspirations.

The complementary character between the implementation of standards foreseen by the Copenhagen criteria and southeastern regional co-operation constitutes for Moldova one of the key successes for advancing towards European integration. The participation to the Stability Pact for South-East Europe was one of the decisive steps of our country to the integration into the European Union and regional arrangement.

Moreover, by means of capitalizing the obtained experience and opportunities offered by the recent redirection of the Eastern neighborhood processes, the Republic of Moldova supported by its regional and international partners could act more and more as a link between regional co-operation processes from South-East Europe and from the Black Sea region, while the EU enlargement and new security exigencies constituting a proper framework in this sense.

In this context, I would like to mention the special importance we grant to the participation of Romania and Lithuania at the GUUAM Summit organized in Chişinău on April 22. At the same time, I would like to mention that the approach and implementation of the European standards will represent the priorities of the Moldovan Presidency at GUUAM and OCEMN.

The eastern enlargement of the European Union and the initiative on the “Enlarged Europe” brought into the light the border issue and the possibility to create another model of immediate neighborhood. Although, the European Neighborhood Policy and the new open perspectives for consolidating the relations with the European Union in the process of Action Plan negotiation, dissipated the first impressions, we don’t desire their re-emergence. And for these reasons we expressed our reservation concerning an eventual Neighborhood Agreement that could substitute the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement presently in force. We welcomed the intention of the European Union not to admit the emergence of new dividing lines in Europe as a result of its enlargement to the Central and Eastern Europe by projecting on the whole European continent the stability and prosperity. We share the same values and ideals, confront common challenges and threats, consider ourselves partners and friends of the EU, our irreversible option is the European integration.

We desire sharing a border with the EU, after the signing the Accession Treaty by Romania and Bulgaria, in such a way that the rigidity and flexibility of which will be determined to a large extent by the degree of respecting the commitments taken while

signing the Action Plan, a border which will open an European perspective for the Republic of Moldova.

In the context of the European integration policy that will fundament the governing program for the following 4 years, the reinvigoration of the neighborhood relations of the Republic of Moldova with Romania and Ukraine represent an essential and significant element, considering the potential it offers. The re-launching of the good neighborhood relations with Romania as a result of the President Basescu visit to Chişinău, at the invitation of the Republic of Moldova confirmed the quality of endeavours in this regard, and gave a green light to a necessary co-operation in the context of European integration and regional development co-operation. To an equal extent, it is significant to initiate a constructive dialogue with the new authorities from Kiev, who fought for a state based on such values as democracy and rule of law. The Republic of Moldova supported this from the outset, especially in regards to the Transnistrian settlement problem.

The Republic of Moldova considers the active engagement of the international actors, definitely interested in overcoming the conflict – USA and European Union, but also of Romania, as a neighborhood state, as well as the new approach of Ukraine, as factors whose exploiting will contribute to step up the settlement of the Transnistrian problem.

Last but not least, the Transnistrian conflict is in itself a border problem, perceived as a phenomenon, more specifically in its distorted perceptions and unjustified superposition of the border and spheres of influence.

The authorities of the Republic of Moldova will continue to make sustainable efforts for reposition the Transnistrian problem in a real and concrete co-coordinated system, correlated with national interests and defined by following axioms:

- Country reintegration which encompass Transnistrian region as a part of sovereign, integrated and independent state;
- Unconditional withdrawal of the Russian troops from territory of the Republic of Moldova
- Proper security of Moldovan-Ukrainian border especially on the Transnistrian sector
- Inefficiency of pentilateral dimension of negotiations and its improvement through new international and regional actors involvement
- More active involvement of EU and USA in the settlement process

International monitoring and common control of Moldovan-Ukrainian border, inclusively on the Transnistrian sector are essential conditions for stability and

security in the region and as a result for the settlement of the Transnistrian problem. Or, the interest for Transnistria of the political and economic people from abroad is determined by considerable incomes, which smuggling and traffic are bringing.

The security of Moldovan-Ukrainian border on the Transnistrian sector means first of all establishment of international observers. The democratization and demilitarization of the region has to precede the discussion process concerning the settlement mode of the problem.

The Moldovan-Ukrainian security, inclusively on the Transnistrian sector constitute an absolute essential element for the settlement of the Transnistrian problem, an important role in this sense belongs to EU and last but not the least to Ukraine.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The signing of the EU Accession Treaty by Romania and Bulgaria represents the progresses obtained by our partners and neighbors on the way to European integration, confirming concomitantly that EU enlargement continues to be a dynamic and open process. This fact encourages the Republic of Moldova to persevere in realization of its aspirations of European integration. Anchored through its history and attachment to European values in European space, Moldova remains devoted to its pro European options and its wishes to contribute plenarily, as a full-fledged member of the European family and in the spirit of good neighborhood relations to the edification of an united and indivisible Europe.

Thank you for your attention!

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