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Situation of Romanian pupils in the occupied Moldovan territories
Written question No 456 to the Committee of Ministers

Reply from the Committee of Ministers
adopted at the 943rd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (19-25 October 2005)

I. Written Question No. 456 by M. Cubreacov ([Doc. 10309](#))

Noting that in the Eastern part of Moldova occupied by Russian troops, which has been described by our organisation as a no-go area, the Russian regime that has been established and is supported by Moscow is carrying out a systematic and methodical policy of cultural genocide against the native Moldovan population of Romanian origin;

Being concerned that in the occupied Moldovan territories the Latin alphabet, part of the identity of the majority Moldovan population, has been banned and replaced by the Russian alphabet, which is being imposed in schools on more than 50 000 Moldovan pupils of Romanian origin;

Pointing out that in the last three months the Russian occupation regime has exercised strong pressure on Romanian language schools to persuade them to renounce the Latin alphabet in favour of the Russian one;

Noting that in August the following Romanian language senior secondary schools: "Lucian Blaga" in Tiraspol, "Alexandru cel Bun" in Tighina and "Evricea" in Ribnita, together with the Romanian orphanage in Tighina, were besieged by illegal Russian militia and their electricity and water supplies were cut off;

Noting that the Tiraspol and Ribnita senior secondary schools have been deprived of their buildings;

Mr Cubreacov asks the Chair of the Committee of Ministers,

1. Whether the Committee of Ministers is monitoring the specific situation of pupils of Romanian origin in Moldovan territories under Russian military occupation;
2. What measures the Committee of Ministers plans to take to ensure that the Russian authorities cease to impede the normal functioning of Romanian language schools in the Moldovan territories controlled by Moscow?

II. Reply by the Committee of Ministers

1. In reply to Written Question No. 456 from Mr Cubreacov, the Committee of Ministers wishes to inform the Honourable Member that it is closely following the issue of Moldovan schools in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova and that it adopted, on 3 November 2004, the following statement concerning this issue:

"The Committee of Ministers expresses its deep concern that schools in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova which use Latin script have experienced serious difficulties in

operating since the beginning of this school year following measures taken by the local leaders. The fact that children are being used as political pawns is totally unacceptable from a human rights perspective.

The Committee of Ministers supports the efforts of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr Gil-Robles, and the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway, Mr Petersen, as well as efforts by the mediators of the Transnistrian conflict, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the OSCE, supported by the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe. The Committee of Ministers calls for a full and satisfactory solution to be found to the school problem in accordance with Council of Europe standards.

The Committee of Ministers expresses its readiness to provide assistance within the sphere of the competence of the Council of Europe to this end."

2. During his visit to Moldova on 31 March 2005, Mr Adam Rotfeld, the Chairman-in-Office of the Committee of Ministers, reiterated the concerns expressed by the Committee, in particular to the authorities of the so-called "Transnistrian Republic of Moldova". He also reconfirmed the readiness of the Council of Europe to assist in finding a rapid solution to the problem.

3. The Committee of Ministers welcomes the fact that following negotiations undertaken since then by the parties concerned in order to find a sustainable agreement on the status of these schools, permanent registration of the schools has taken place and the academic year has started. It however notes that the question of the licensing of the schools is still pending and that the school in Ribnita is still unable to operate from its own building. It will therefore keep the situation under review.