

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe High Commissioner on National Minorities

H.E. Mr. Nicolae Tabacaru
Foreign Minister of the
Republic of Moldova
Chisinau

The Hague, 20 April 2000

Dear Mr. Minister,

Thank you very much for your letter of 31 March. I read your views concerning linguistic legislation with great interest. I am convinced that respect for the linguistic rights of all ethnic groups within a state is essential for the elimination of tension in society and for the consolidation of civic peace. My office has had considerable experience in seeking ways to balance the need to protect the state language and to protect the linguistic rights of national minorities in OSCE States. I therefore welcome your invitation to visit Moldova to undertake a constructive dialogue on these issues in the Moldovan context.

My intention is to come to Chisinau on the evening of 16 May. On the 17th I would very much welcome a meeting with you to discuss issues of mutual interest. I would also appreciate it if the Moldovan Ministry for Foreign Affairs could facilitate meetings for me with the Minister and Deputy Minister of Education, representatives of the Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights, Cults, National Minorities and Diasporas, the Director of the State Department for National Relations and Functioning of Languages, the Parliamentary Ombudsman (in the Center for Human Rights), representatives of the Republican Commission for the Control for the Observation of Linguistic Legislation as well as Chairman of the State Commission for Terminology of the State Language.

You may be aware that international experts under my auspices have developed various general recommendations concerning the educational and linguistic rights of national minorities. Over the past few years my office has organized seminars on these recommendations in a number of OSCE participating States. It is my intention to co-organize a seminar with the OSCE Mission to Moldova on 18 and 19 May in Chisinau on the Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities and the Oslo Recommendations on the Linguistic Rights of National Minorities. I believe that these recommendations could make a valuable contribution to the discussion of these themes in Moldova.

I look forward to meeting you in Chisinau.

Yours sincerely,

Max van der Stoel
OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities