

Testimony of William H. Moser
Ambassador-Designate to the Republic of Moldova
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Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Madam Chairman, Ranking Member Barrasso and Members of the Committee, it is an honor and a privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova. I deeply appreciate the confidence and trust that President Obama and Secretary Clinton have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Congress to promote U.S. interests in Moldova.

I want to introduce my wife Marie and two of my three children, Daniel and Stephen. I was born and raised in North Carolina and visited my family there over the recent July 4 holiday. The State of North Carolina and Moldova have a strong partnership. If confirmed, I hope to play a role in maintaining and expanding this partnership.

If confirmed, I will work to strengthen our relations with Moldova and to support Moldovan efforts to strengthen democratic and free market reforms at home and further integration with Europe. Vice President Biden delivered this message in his recent trip to Moldova, when he stated, "the American people have watched [your] struggle and celebrated your successes, and we are determined to help you build on your achievements. We strongly support your commitment to political and economic reforms and taking on hard issues." As Moldova prepares to celebrate the 20th anniversary of its independence, the United States will continue to support the Moldovan people in their efforts to build a democratic, prosperous and secure European state. I would like to take a moment today to touch upon the strategic focus areas in our relationship with Moldova: democratic development, free market development, and security.

First: Democratic Development

Moldova's parliamentary elections in 2009 and 2010 met most international commitments and were generally well administered and offered voters genuine choice. However, the international election observer mission fielded by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe noted that "further effort is needed to improve public confidence in Moldova's democratic process." If confirmed, I will look for new ways to support the

efforts of the Moldovan people to further their nation's democratic development and to continue to expand our dialogue with all responsible elements of the political spectrum. Moldova's governing coalition has an ambitious reform agenda, based on a widespread recognition that much remains to be done to reach to its stated goal of good governance. Judicial reform, greater transparency and other efforts to reduce corruption are among the governing coalition's top priorities, priorities which we support through our assistance programs. Moldova has taken steps to combat trafficking in persons, which remains a significant problem, and we are cooperating closely with Moldovan authorities to address this issue. Moldova's chosen foreign policy of European integration is one that the United States strongly supports. Moldova's steps towards association with the European Union involve meeting European standards and norms for democracy, good governance, free trade and in many other areas. If confirmed, I will work closely with my European counterparts in Chisinau to advance our shared agenda in Moldova.

Second: Free Market Development

Moldova remains one of Europe's poorest countries with per capita GDP of less than \$3,000 a year; many of its citizens, unable to find adequate work at home, work abroad. Thanks in part to a nearly \$600 million IMF stand-by agreement, Moldova's economy is beginning to recover, but more reform is required to achieve sustained economic growth. Moldova seeks a diversified, export-oriented economy; improvements to the investment climate are key to attracting the investment that could increase exports. If confirmed, I plan to work with Moldova on these issues. The U.S. has been helping to bolster private sector competitiveness and improve the legal and regulatory environment. We have dramatically increased our investment in Moldova's future through the Compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation signed last year. The \$262 million package provides assistance for irrigation and road infrastructure improvements intended to support Moldovan farmers in their transition to high value-added agriculture and to help them get their produce to market.

Third: Security

Moldova's number one security challenge remains the unresolved conflict with Transnistrian separatists. Moldova has been a divided land for the past 19 years after the brief armed conflict ended between government forces and

the separatists. The United States is committed to a peaceful resolution of the Transnistria conflict that guarantees Moldova's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. I am convinced that this long-standing conflict can and should be resolved. The United States remains committed to the 5+2 process, involving the two parties to the conflict, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Russia and Ukraine, with the EU and the United States serving as active observers. The United States has repeatedly called for the immediate resumption of official negotiations, which have been stalled since 2006. Recent discussions among the 5+2 participants, which have facilitated confidence-building initiatives and explored conditions for the resumption of formal talks, have shown some progress. If confirmed, I intend to do what I can to move this process forward, including outreach throughout Moldova, as well as the Transnistria region. Beyond the Transnistria conflict, the United States provides assistance to Moldova through various programs to help create a modern, sustainable, military force, led by a Ministry of Defense and Joint Staff that are compatible with Euro-Atlantic structures and can integrate into multinational structures and missions. Moldova currently receives \$750,000 in International Military Education and Training funds (IMET) and \$750,000 in Foreign Military Financing (FMF). These funds are used to support Moldova's efforts to achieve its NATO Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) objectives, enhance Moldova's capacity to conduct peace and stability operations in support of multinational coalition operations, and strengthen Moldova's cooperation with other partners to enhance regional security and stability.

Moldova continues to make strides in its economic and political development and its integration into Europe. The United States wants to assist Moldova on this journey, not just because of the long-standing friendship between our peoples, but also because a democratic, peaceful and prosperous Moldova would contribute to our long-standing objective of a Europe whole, free and at peace. Moldova deserves our continuing support and encouragement.

Madam Chairman, Ranking Member Barrasso, I thank you again for the opportunity to share my thoughts about the relationship with Moldova. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you and this committee.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.