



Opening statement

On behalf of the Vice Chair of the Senate of the Netherlands, Ms Mei Li Vos, on the occasion of the visit of the President of the Republic of Moldova, Ms Maia Sandu.

datum 4 september 2023

Dear Madam President,

On behalf of the States General of the Kingdom of The Netherlands:

Bine ati venit. (*fonetisch: Bienè aatie veeniet*)
Welcome.

It is a great privilege for us to receive you here today in the Dutch Senate.

Your visit to the Netherlands takes place in a period when our continent is faced with a military conflict within its borders since February 2022.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has shocked us deeply. Of course, since Moldova shares a 1200 kilometer long border with Ukraine, and since the Russian army is present in Transnistria, the war is so much closer to home for the people of Moldova.

Therefore, it is not only important to support Ukraine, but to support all European countries that neighbour Russia, and feel threatened by the aggression of President Putin. The past 18 months are proof of the importance of European and international cooperation and solidarity. Between governments, and between people.

We have witnessed great solidarity across the European continent and beyond. And the way in which Moldova has received hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian refugees, is a demonstration of the great solidarity between your countries and the strength and courage of the Moldovan people to help their neighbours despite the threat this poses on Moldova itself.

In February of this year, one year after the invasion of Ukraine, we heard reports from Moldova that your government fears a coup by Russia. With the presence of Russian soldiers in the Moldovan region of Transnistria, that fear is very understandable.

Despite this fear, Moldova hosted the meeting of the European Political Community, and showed that it intends to play an active and constructive role on the international stage, with the support of most European countries, including the Netherlands.

Your excellency,

We need close friends and close cooperation to face not only the war in Ukraine, but also to face the challenges of the future.

The Republic of Moldova and the Kingdom of The Netherlands are partners in the United Nations, partners in the European Political Community, with NATO through the Partnership for Peace-Program and in many other international organizations.

Our bilateral ties are also strong, for instance when it comes to cooperation in the field of justice, cyber security and energy, as well as in agriculture. Also, diplomatically our ties are strong, This was underlined in April of this year when our Minister of Foreign affairs opened the Dutch Embassy in your capitol, Chisinau.



datum 4 september 2023

blad 2

It is good that Moldova as well as Ukraine are now candidate Member States of the European Union. In this way the cooperation between can be further enhanced, although significant progress is still needed. No doubt these subjects are part of the meetings you are having today in the Netherlands, also with members of the Foreign and European Affairs committees of both Houses.

Your excellency,

I am convinced that in all your meetings today the words from the national anthem of the Republic of Moldova will resonate:

*Our language is a treasure
that surges from deep shadows of the past*

Many national anthems tell us a history of war and weapons, whereas your anthem sings about the power of words and how language and words are the foundation of a shared history and culture.

Meetings like ours, where words are our means, so to speak, will bring us further in the end.

Your excellency,

Allow me to give the floor to my colleague from the House of representatives, Ms Roelien Kamminga.

Mulțumesc. (*Fonetisch: moeltoemesk*)

Thank you.