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1 February 2006

MDA100828.E

Moldova: The Moldovan President's decree regarding the procedure initiated for the population located in Transnistria to get Moldovan citizenship and a Moldovan passport free of charge
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

The granting of free passports to the population located in Transnistria was based on a decision of the Moldovan government, and not on any decree of the Moldovan President (Moldova 26 Jan. 2006a).

The following information was received in correspondence from the consul of the Embassy of Moldova in Washington, DC, on 26 January 2006:

According to the Decision nr. 959 from September 09, 2005 of the Government of the Republic of Moldova regarding the "assurance of the confirmation measures for citizenship and documentation of population from the left bank of Nistru River (Transnistria)" during September 10 - December 31, 2005, the people residing in localities on the left bank of Nistru River, who are eligible under the provisions of the Law nr. 1024-XIV from June 02, 2000 on Moldovan citizenship can confirm their Moldovan citizenship in any regional office of record and documentation of population.

As regards the citizens from the left bank of Nistru River (Transnistria), the passports for internal use issued previously by the former USSR authorities (type 1974) possessing the reference to Moldovan citizenship and state identification number of the physical person (IDNP), are valid for an unlimited period.

The identification documents from the National system of passports are issued free of charge for the citizens who on September 10, 2005 were registered in the localities on the left bank of Nistru River (Transnistria).

The identification documents from the National system of passports are issued free of charge for the citizens residing on the left bank of Nistru River (Transnistria) only once - when applying for the first time (Moldova 26 Jan. 2006b).

According to the consul of the Embassy of Moldova in Washington, D.C., residents who do not have an old USSR passport with a Moldovan stamp must prove that they are residing in Transnistria (Moldova 26 Jan. 2006a). The consul did not have information on how those without proof of Transnistrian residency

could apply for a free passport, but indicated that the Moldovan Ministry of Information Development would have internal regulations on the procedures to follow in such cases (ibid.).

Those persons residing in Transnistria who are eligible for a free passport can apply at any regional passport office (ibid.). The closest offices at which residents of Transnistria can apply for a free passport are located in the towns of Varniata and Aneniinoi (ibid.)

According to a Moldova.org news release, Moldova's President Vladimir Voronin stated at a 19 December 2005 meeting that "the term of legalizing free of charge and according to a simplified procedure the documents confirming the Moldovan citizenship of the residents of the Transdniestrian region should be extended" (Moldova.org 21 Dec. 2005). The consul of the Moldovan embassy in Washington indicated that, although the President may have proposed an extension of the 10 September 2005 - 31 December 2005 term, it is a decision to be made by the Government of Moldova (Moldova 26 Jan. 2006a). As of 26 January 2006, the Embassy in Washington had not received official confirmation of an extension of the term (ibid.). No information could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate regarding whether or not the 10 September 2005 - 31 December 2005 term (Moldova 26 Jan. 2006b) was extended.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Moldova. 26 January 2006a. Embassy of Moldova, Washington, DC. Telephone interview with the Consul.

Moldova. 26 January 2006b. Embassy of Moldova, Washington, DC. Correspondence from the Consul.

Moldova.org. 21 December 2005. "Transdniestrian Peasants Will Be Compensated for Lost Crop." <<http://www.moldova.org/print/eng/1/7579>> [Accessed 23 Dec. 2005]

Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including: *Citizenship Laws of the World*, Einnews.com, European Country of Origin Information Network, Factiva, Interlic News Agency, International Crisis Group, Jamestown Foundation, Moldova - Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Moldova <<http://www.unhcr.md/article/citizenship.htm>>, OSCE, *Pravda*, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

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