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Moldova's Prime Minister asks for German support

During a visit to Germany on 17-20 May, Moldova's Prime Minister Vladimir Filat was able to obtain limited support from Chancellor Angela Merkel on the Transnistrian conflict. However, Merkel avoided supporting the Moldovan government's official position, of refusing the federalisation of the country which Russia has called for.

The purpose of the Prime Minister's visit was to intensify economic cooperation between Moldova and Germany, especially to attract investments; and to obtain Germany's support for a more active involvement by the European Union in Moldova, as well as German assistance for internal reforms and further action by Germany regarding the Transnistria question. Filat received a promise from Chancellor Merkel that Germany would link Transnistria to the agenda of the summit of the Eastern Partnership in Poland, and make a declaration of "the whole Union's responsibility for finding a solution to the conflict". However, Merkel does not support the position of the Chisinau government, which rejects a solution to the conflict based on the federalisation of Moldova, on which Russia has been insisting. Chisinau is ready to offer Transnistria broad autonomy, fearing that federalisation would allow Tiraspol (and Russia behind it) to block Chisinau's policy, particularly with regard to integrating the country with Europe. The Moldovan press, citing sources in the Moldovan foreign ministry, revealed recently that German diplomats have been pressurising Chisinau to annul its law conferring special legal status on Transnistria, a move which would prevent Moldova from resolving the conflict by federalising the country. The advantages of federalisation as a solution were also raised by Patricia Flor, the German foreign ministry's special representative for Eastern Europe, during a visit to Tiraspol at the beginning of March this year. <wrod>