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Possible consequences of the end of the war in Ukraine:

political context for Transnistria.

The end of hostilities, but not the end of the war in Ukraine, will not only be an interim result of this conflict, but also the beginning of a new, much more difficult stage of the struggle for the restoration and redistribution of influence between Russia and the West on the territory of Ukraine. For the post-Soviet space, and in particular for Moldova and Transnistria, this transition period will be determined by several factors at once.

1. Post-military uncertainty

The political consequences of the cessation of hostilities between Russia and Ukraine cannot be assessed in isolation from the geopolitical architecture of Eastern Europe. Let us assume that a ceasefire is achieved through negotiations at this stage, and not by a military defeat of one of the parties. This means maintaining subjectivity for all participants and, consequently, increasing the need to negotiate, not dictate.

For the Republic of Moldova, this creates both challenges and opportunities. Firstly, the EU's comprehensive support for accelerating European integration processes will be strengthened. The formation of a new balance of power will be in the process and that is why the EU will try to "anchor" Moldova in its orbit as quickly as possible, including institutional transformation, security reform and legal adaptation. However, this process may exacerbate internal contradictions: between supporters of Moldova's neutrality and European integration, between Chisinau and Tiraspol. In this context, the Transnistria factor will again become relevant. Tiraspol will insist on the resumption of the 5+2 negotiation format, thereby preserving Moscow's leverage in the region. And this means that "peace" will not necessarily mean "stability". At the same time, it should be borne in mind that the war has clearly demonstrated that in the event of acute geopolitical pressure, Russia could theoretically agree to legal recognition of Transnistria as part of a scenario of retaliatory steps to the introduction of an

international expeditionary corps by the EU countries into the territory of Ukraine or the strengthening of NATO's influence in Moldova. This does not mean that such a scenario is desirable or probable in the short term, but it should no longer be excluded by researchers from strategic calculations. In many ways, its implementation or neutralization will depend on the results of the parliamentary elections in Moldova in September 2025. In the event of the defeat of the Party of Action and Solidarity (PAS) in the 2025 parliamentary elections, the consequences of such a result go far beyond the domestic political competition. It should be seen as an indicator of structural changes in the public perception of the European integration project itself in Moldova. In this context, the defeat of PAS as the inability to obtain a new parliamentary majority becomes not so much the end of the political cycle as the beginning of a stage of rethinking the course, methods and subjectivity of Moldovan European integration.

At the same time, Tiraspol itself inevitably faces the need for internal restructuring. The existing oligarchic model of governance, based on the symbiosis of power and monopolized capital, is starting to lose in terms of growth, efficiency and attractiveness. Against the backdrop of Moldova's accelerating European integration and a gradual change in citizens' expectations, Transnistria is facing the challenge of adaptation: from a model of closure and managed manual control to a more flexible, open and sustainable development-oriented system. Without internal modernization, the region risks finding itself not only isolated, but also unable to respond to the challenges of the new geopolitical context.

2. Economic Transformations: From War to Peace through Recession

Any post-war world is primarily a recovery economy. However, in the case of Ukraine and neighboring countries, this will not be so much a recovery as a rethinking of the development model. The expected attraction of external aid, the participation of international funds and corporations will have their price: political loyalty and limitation of economic sovereignty.

For Moldova, the consequences will be twofold. On the one hand, it is possible to expand exports, access to recovery programs and inclusion in regional logistics chains. On the other hand, this will lead to increased competition for resources, an outflow of labor and increased dependence on external financing. In this scheme, Transnistria gets its chance to develop, but only if, according to the terms of the ceasefire between Ukraine and Russia, the Transnistrian issue will also begin to be resolved as part of the regional security problem. Tiraspol will be extremely interested in the restoration of part of the logistics routes that previously passed through Transnistria. It is not worth excluding the scenario that Kyiv may meet Tiraspol halfway

on this issue. Especially if Chisinau begins an independent movement towards the EU without Ukraine.

3. Energy map of the region: from diversification to politicization

Energy, as always, will not only be an economic sphere, but also an arena of political pressure. One of the consequences of the war has already been a profound reconfiguration of energy flows: refusal of Russian supplies, diversification through Romania, connection to ENTSO-E. However, the end of the war does not mean an automatic return to the "good old days". On the contrary, the energy system of Eastern Europe will find itself between two logics: market and political. The EU will insist on the full integration of Moldova into the European energy market, including through directives on decarbonization and liberalization. This will require investment, but will create dependence on Western suppliers and finance.

In Transnistria, the energy crisis will take the form of a structural challenge. The 2022–2024 power cutoff campaign has shown that the region is vulnerable to external pressure. The Moldovan GRESS depends on gas supplies from Russia and consumers from Moldova. Any political change could upset this balance, especially if Chisinau insists on “reintegration through the market” in the new round of negotiations.

Conclusion: Peace as a New Battlefield

Peace in Ukraine, no matter how compromised, frozen or formally negotiated it may be, will not automatically bring stability to the regions in the neighbourhood. It will become a new context in which old conflicts will take on new forms and previous development models will be questioned. For Moldova and Transnistria, this is a window of opportunity, but only on condition of strategic thinking, an interdisciplinary approach and the rejection of political illusions. If this chance is missed, the consequences may be no less destructive than the war itself.