

The Foreign Policy of the Voronin Administration

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Moldova, which declared its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, is a young and very poor state with few diplomatic resources and with little experience in foreign policy compared with Romania, for example.¹ Moldova is a small state, consisting of a population of about 4.3 million.² Moldova also is a multiethnic society,³ with a population that is approximately 65 percent Romanian extraction, with the remainder consisting of Russians (about 13 percent) and Ukrainians (about 14 percent), numbering approximately 650,000 of Ukrainians.⁴ There also are approximately 150,000 Gagauz, a Turkic-Christian group of people who live in the southern part of the country and have managed to acquire a certain degree of political autonomy. Moldova, which no longer shares a border with Russia (separated from Russia by Ukraine), is located in the former Soviet West and shares close historic and cultural ties with Romania, underscoring the existence of a special or privileged relationship between the two states. Most of current-day Moldova, previously known as Bessarabia, was once part of historical Greater Romania.⁵ As a small state, Moldova finds itself in a weak and vulnerable position in the post-cold war international system. Moldova faces the problem of trying to preserve its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity while undergoing a difficult transition to democracy and a market economy.

The victory of the Party of Moldovan Communists in 2001 marked a major change in the internal power structure of Moldova. The Communists gained control of a majority of seats in parliament in the elections of February 25, 2001. This occurred after parliament had been dissolved by President Petru Lucinschi, following the legislature's failure to elect a president on three separate occasions.⁶ On April 4, 2001, the single-chamber legislature elected the leader of the Moldovan Communist Party as president by a vote of seventy-one out of one hundred one.⁷ The triumph of the Party of Moldovan Communists underscores the need to realize the importance of the relationship between the historical and

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cultural context of a country, especially the “legacies of the past” approach, and to understand the foreign policy behavior of the Voronin administration. The historical legacy or path dependency of a country’s past has an important effect on the foreign policy behavior of a state, as argued by the realist school of thought known as neoclassical realism. In short, the foreign policy of a country clearly has domestic roots.⁸ An example of the influence of path dependency on Moldova occurred at the Fourth Congress of the Party of Moldovan Communists in April 2002, when President Voronin talked about the “rebirth of socialism” and the historic mission of the Communist Party of Moldova, the only country in Europe that returned the Communists to power.⁹ As a further example of the grip of the Communist legacy on Moldova, President Voronin also expressed his “great interest in the experience” of the Communist parties of China, North Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam.¹⁰ The return of the Communists to power in Moldova reflects the need to consider the importance of path dependency by previous rulers of the country, specifically by the Communists, to understand the nature and scope of Moldova’s foreign policy. Voronin apparently believed that the collapse of Communism in Europe was only temporary and that the socialist system would be restored.

Realism and Moldovan Foreign Policy Concepts

Voronin’s foreign policy also can be explained by classical realism and its variations, such as neoclassical realism and neorealism. Classical realism always has stressed the primary importance of the state as a rational, unitary actor, focusing on the pursuit of its foreign policy goals in the international system. The classical realist believes that the state is the most important actor in the international system;¹¹ however, classical realists have been criticized for not paying enough attention to the role of domestic factors to explain a state’s foreign policy behavior. A variation of classical realism, known as neoclassical realism,¹² places more emphasis on domestic factors to explain the foreign policy behavior of a state. Neoclassical realists focus on the importance of “Innenpolitik,” such as ideology, the nature of political regimes and systems, political institutions, the political economy of the state, and the perceptions that leaders have of the world around them as it affects the formulation and execution of their state’s foreign policy behavior. These factors certainly should be considered important to understand the foreign policy of the Voronin administration. In a postcommunist transitional state such as Moldova (although Moldova currently is not a postcommunist state, because it has suffered a regression and is currently not pursuing a unilinear path toward democracy), the neoclassical realist would argue that “foreign policy choices are made by actual political leaders and elites, and so it is their perception of relative power that matters, not simply relative quantities of physical resources or forces in being.”¹³ Other factors that are supposedly devoid from the framework of classical realist theorists, such as Hans Morgenthau,¹⁴ but are considered important by the neoclassical realist are the impacts of culture and history on the foreign policy behavior of a state. Another tenet of neoclassical realism that should be considered is the importance of national identity—the extent to which a group of peo-

ple consider themselves to constitute an imagined community. This is another factor that explains the behavior of a state in the world political system, and certainly this seems to have been the case in Moldova. Clearly, Moldovan foreign policy under Voronin can be partially explained by neoclassical realism.

Neoclassical realism focuses on the effect of domestic factors on the foreign policy behavior of a state, but an understanding of Moldovan foreign policy also has to take into account the approach known as neorealism. Neorealism is an approach that pays a great deal of attention to the effect of the structure of the international system on the state's participation in that system. This is helpful in understanding the nature of Voronin's foreign policy. "Neorealist or structural theory leads one to believe that the placement of states in the international system accounts for a good deal of their behavior."¹⁵ The location or position of a state in the international hierarchy of power is an important component of neorealism theory. Weak and small states, such as Moldova, are dependent on external actors such as the Great Powers (Russia and the United States), medium-sized regional hegemony (Ukraine and Romania), and on nonstate actors (the European and Euro-Atlantic international organizations, such as the European Union, the Council of Europe, NATO, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe [OSCE]), for their survival.

These factors help us understand the shifts that have taken place in Moldova's foreign policy from 2001–04. The primary concern of a small, weak state, such as Moldova, in the international system is to ensure its security, since Moldova's existence following independence has been marked by the constant potential threat of war and instability in its relationship with the separatist region of Transnistria. Realism postulates that "defending the state from military threats" is most important.¹⁶ According to the realist perspective, the international system is marked by a considerable amount of anarchy, because there is no central governmental authority to guarantee security. "States have to do whatever they think necessary for their own preservation, since no one can be relied on to do it for them."¹⁷ Security is a very real problem for Moldova. In such an anarchic world, Moldova has opted for a policy of permanent neutrality but also has pursued a survival strategy by engaging in balance-of-power politics. Moldova has to practice a form of "defensive realism" to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity.¹⁸ The leadership of Moldova also perceives itself currently as threatened by the "offensive realism" of the great and medium-size powers (regional hegemony) that are its neighbors, such as Russia, Ukraine, and Romania.¹⁹ On June 1, 2004, Voronin called for these states, along with the United States and the European Union, to negotiate a stability and security pact to guarantee Moldova's security in the aftermath of the failure to reach a Transnistrian settlement.

It is also not surprising, from a realist perspective, that the first postcommunist foreign policy concept elaborated by the Moldovan government in 1995 prioritized the preservation of its independence and territorial integrity.²⁰ As Moldova's 1995 foreign policy concept states, a major priority is "the establishment of the legal status of Moldova as an independent state with all the characteristics and responsibilities resulting from this status."²¹ It is important to stress that the 1995 post-

communist foreign policy concept of Moldova did not place relations with Russia as a top foreign policy priority. Rather, the 1995 foreign policy concept stressed collaboration with the CIS countries, primarily Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, “which should be done primarily for economic reasons, and should not hinder Moldova’s major foreign policy priority of integration into the European structures.”²²

An interim set of foreign policy principles for 1998–2000, sketched out by the Moldovan foreign ministry, also stressed the importance of maintaining good bilateral relations with Moldova’s neighbors. The foreign policy concept developed by the Voronin administration in 2002 elevated Russia to the status of a long-term strategic partner. Given that a basic premise of Moldovan foreign policy is a balance of interests between the East and West, Chişinău argued that elevating Russia to the status of a long-term strategic partner would not affect Moldova’s orientation toward Europe and would facilitate the integration of Russia with Europe. Chişinău’s neorealist perspective of international relations was evident in the perception of Moldova’s leadership of the structure of power in the post-cold war international system as delineated in the foreign policy concept of 2002, which had a bearing on the priorities sketched out by the Communist regime.²³ The Moldovan foreign policy concept of 2002 stressed that the bipolar world of the cold war had been replaced, in terms of the structure of the international system, by a multipolar distribution of power. This represented a classic neorealist depiction of the international system which, in Moldova’s estimation, was still characterized by the existence of spheres of power and influence.²⁴ According to Chişinău, the European Union constitutes a major pole of power and attraction on the continent within this framework, even for a peripheral European state such as Moldova. This explains why a major strategic priority of Moldovan foreign policy, as elaborated in the Communists’ foreign policy concept of 2002, continued to be membership in European institutions, such as the European Union. Moldova’s foreign policy under Voronin actually shows an element of continuity with the various “post-communist” administrations that preceded it, in that it is balanced and pragmatic in pursuit of its national interest, seeking an equilibrium between its East and West interests, given its geographical location.²⁵ Geopolitics continues to be an important determinant of foreign policy under Voronin, just as it was in the previous regimes. Although Moldova sees itself as located in the geographical space between the former Soviet Union (as a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States) and Eastern Europe, it also sees itself as Central European (attending the annual summit meetings of the Central Europe leaders), as well as a southeastern European state. Moldova also envisages itself as a bridge, located in the space between Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (IS), although the concept of functioning as a bridge is an example of the imitative quality of Moldovan foreign policy, as it copies the foreign policy of Romania, which also has touted itself as a bridge in a number of different contexts. The notion of bridge-building also is a major feature of Romanian foreign policy. Neorealists contend that weak states tend to imitate the successful foreign policies of larger states.

Moldovan-Russian Relations

The new foreign policy concept unveiled by the Communists in 2002, which was marked by an eastern orientation, was followed by frequent official and unofficial visits to Moscow to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin during Voronin's first year in office. The Moldovan president's foreign policy style was to place emphasis on personal diplomacy. There was a certain element of balance, as Voronin also visited Washington and met with President Bush in 2002.

Moldova's eastern orientation was explained as motivated by economic diplomacy, because Russia and the CIS constituted Moldova's largest markets. Moldova also was overwhelmingly dependent on Russia for energy

supplies. Moldova had accumulated a large debt to the Russian energy giant Gazprom, and throughout the next three years, the relationship between Moldova and Russia was characterized by an effort to secure a reduction in the amount of the debt owed to Moscow. In

Voronin's presidential cam-

campaign, he had advocated that Moldova join the Russian-Belarus political union.²⁶ Over the next three years, this foreign policy goal was allowed to lapse, because of a lack of public support for approval of a referendum. During the past three years, Moldova and Belarus have cooperated with one another in economic and military affairs, although Lukashenko's neo-Stalinist regime was hardly a model of good governance, the kind of benchmark standard necessary for membership in the European institutions.²⁷ Voronin also pushed a policy of Russification, seeking the adoption of Russian as the second official state language of the country, despite considerable internal opposition, as well as criticism from Romania.

Moldova belongs to GUUAM—a subregional organization consisting of Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Moldova—created with United States influence in 1997.²⁸ The relationship between Moldova and GUUAM has deteriorated somewhat during Voronin's presidency. Chișinău sees GUUAM as an organization created by the United States to provide a framework for the transit of Caspian Sea energy to the West.²⁹ Chișinău also believes that GUUAM was set up as a counterweight to the Russian-created CIS.³⁰ Consequently, Moldova has resisted efforts to provide GUUAM with a military dimension. Voronin did attend GUUAM summit meetings in 2001 and 2002, but sent the deputy foreign minister to represent Moldova at the 2003 summit meeting. President Voronin also announced that he would not attend the 2004 GUUAM summit meeting that was scheduled to meet in a territorially disputed area of Georgia, tilting toward the Russian position on the dispute. Keeping in line with its policy of balance, Moldova also is a member of the Russian-sponsored CIS, its membership pre-

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dating the Communists' rise to power, although Moldova initially was reluctant to join the CIS when it was set up in 1991. In 2002, Moldova hosted the annual summit meeting of the CIS. Moldova has stressed that its interest in the CIS is primarily economic, although Moldova under the Voronin administration has shown somewhat more interest in the military aspect of the organization. In June 2004, Moldova hosted a meeting of the interior ministers of the CIS to discuss security and antiterrorist issues and suggested the creation of a single legal space to deal with terrorism.³¹

Most of Moldova's trade is with the CIS states, and Chişinău expressed interest in the creation of a free trade zone within the organization. However, Moldova was dissatisfied with the creation within the CIS of an economic organization known as the Single Economic Space, consisting of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, because Moldova did not have full economic access to it.³² Voronin stated that Moldova does not want to withdraw from the CIS, but being frozen out of the Single Economic Space may have been another factor in the aftermath of the failure of the Kozak Memorandum, which recently has propelled Chişinău in the direction of the European Union. Moldova has suggested that the CIS statute be reformed so that it would be more in alignment with European standards.

Most important, Voronin hoped that becoming a Communist regime would give Moldova leverage with Moscow to pressure the separatist regime in Transnistria to reach a settlement to the "frozen conflict" that had evaded a solution since 1992.

The new foreign policy concept was followed by the ratification of a Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation between Russia and Moldova in 2002. The Russian-Moldovan Basic Treaty consisted of thirty-three articles, and central to it was the Russian commitment to find an end to the intractable conflict in Transnistria.³³ Pavel Petrovsky, the Russian ambassador to Moldova, stated that "with the coming to power of RM President Voronin, Russian businessmen were convinced that Moldova had turned its face toward Russia."³⁴

One of the top foreign policy priorities on Voronin's agenda when he assumed power in 2001 was the resolution of the situation in Transnistria. However, by 2004, there still was no resolution of the Transnistrian conflict. Given the pro-Russian orientation of Voronin's foreign policy, Voronin tended to pursue a resolution of the problem based on a Russian model. The OSCE had unsuccessfully tried to resolve the problem for more than a decade after the United Nations turned the problem over. The OSCE supported a federal solution to the reintegration of Moldova, as did the United States in 2003–04. In October 2003, the U.S. ambassador to Moldova, Pamela Hyde Smith, said that "The federal solution is the only effective plan launched in the last ten years."³⁵ The basic problem was to figure out how to divide the powers between the central government and Transnistria and Gagauzia. Moldova favored an asymmetrical federation in which power would be concentrated in the central government. Igor Smirnov, the leader of Transnistria, favored a federal solution in which power would be equally divided—a confederation rather than a federation. There were many other complex issues that had to be settled, such as the right of Transnistria to self-determination, the

demilitarization of the two armies of Moldova and Transnistria, a referendum to approve a new constitution, security guarantees, and more. The Transnistrian leadership wanted “guarantees for the preservation of the Transnistrian state,” “equality of all sides in the negotiating process,” and “no interference in each other’s domestic affairs.”³⁶ In November 2003, Voronin seemed prepared to sign a Russian-sponsored settlement (“Basic Principles of the State Structure of a United State”), as spelled out in a memorandum presented by Dmitry Kozak, the deputy chief of staff to the Russian president.³⁷

Before Voronin could sign the Kozak Memorandum, there was a firestorm of protest by opposition political forces in Moldova. In an example of what neo-classical realists would call “Innenpolitik,” internal opposition political forces in Moldova formed the National Committee to Defend Moldova’s Independence and Constitution in opposition to the plan contained in the Kozak Memorandum, as a majority of Moldovans were opposed to federalization. Important external actors, such as the United States, the European Union, and the OSCE also expressed their opposition to the Kozak Memorandum.³⁸ Opponents of the Russian plan argued that, if accepted, it would have resulted in the “Transnistriazation” of Moldova. The plan would have transformed Moldova into a Russian protectorate, since Russia could have possibly been the sole military guarantor, with its troops staying up to twenty years. The OSCE, which had not been completely involved in the complex negotiations resulting in the Kozak Memorandum, stated in November 2003 that it would adopt a neutral position as a sign of nonsupport. The political system outlined in the Kozak Memorandum would have given Transnistria a veto over decisions reached in the new federal structure and recognized Transnistrian sovereignty. It would have given Transnistria and the Turkic Christian area of Gagauzia coequal status with Moldova. Street demonstrations in Chişinău, led by Iurie Roşca, the leader of the Christian Democratic People’s Party, frightened Voronin, as he feared a possible Georgian-style revolution, which had forced the resignation of Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze at about the same time. Iurie Roşca protested that acceptance of the Kozak Memorandum would have resulted in the reduction of Moldova to the status of a Russian satellite. This, combined with pressure from the United States (which also is a strategic partner of Moldova and provides about \$40 million a year in aid), the European Union, and the OSCE, forced Voronin to cancel his earlier intention to sign the Kozak Memorandum.³⁹ The failure of Voronin to sign the Kozak Memorandum resulted in the first serious breach in Russian-Moldovan relations since Voronin assumed office in 2001. In the aftermath of the Kozak Memorandum imbroglio, Russia appointed Yuri Zubatov as the new ambassador to Moldova, while Moldovan foreign minister Nicolae Dudau was replaced by a Europeanist, Andrei Stratan. Russian officials used very strong language reprimanding Voronin. The result was a statement from Kozak accusing Voronin of “lacking political courage.”⁴⁰ Voronin explained that although the Russian plan was a good one, it was necessary to consult with the European organizations before signing on to it, since Moldova was a European state.⁴¹ The European Union may have overzealously interpreted this to mean that Moldova had

replaced its eastern orientation with a European orientation, but Moldova simply was continuing to pursue its national interest through a policy of balance of power, not jumping on the European Union bandwagon.⁴² In early January 2004, Voronin stressed that a solution would not be feasible without the Russians, but also pointed out that “there are certain forces in Russia that are not interested in solving the problem.”⁴³ After Voronin’s refusal to sign the Kozak Memorandum, Russian withdrawal of material supposedly halted because of the obstruction by the Transnistrian authorities.⁴⁴ There was a hiatus in the negotiations on the Transnistrian issue for about five months. Negotiations resumed at the end of April 2004, after Smirnov had spent a week in Moscow preparing for them. Moldova agreed to continue with the pentagonal format of negotiations (Ukraine, Moldova, Transnistria, the OSCE, and Russia), although critics argued that the pentagonal format for the conduct of negotiations provided Russia and Transnistria with an advantage. Moldova submitted a somewhat modified set of proposals designed to create an “asymmetric federation,” which Voronin claimed was based on the Russian plan that had been contained in the Kozak Memorandum, but still insisted on the withdrawal of Russian forces from Transnistria. The Transnistrian stance did not change much from the previous position favoring a confederal approach. The negotiations were inconclusive, and another round of talks was scheduled to take place toward the end of June 2004. The “frozen conflict” remains frozen, with no movement expected until after the 2005 parliamentary elections in Moldova. There was speculation that Putin may have come to the conclusion that he could no longer deal with Voronin and instead would prefer to deal with Serafim Urecheanu, the mayor of Chişinău, hoping that Urecheanu will be elected president of Moldova in 2005. The negotiations also were affected by the position of the United States, the European Union (which had become more actively involved in seeking a resolution to the Transnistrian problem as it expanded eastward) and the United States, which supported Moldova’s position that EU troops under an OSCE mandate could be deployed in Transnistria as a security guarantee, especially along the border between Transnistria and Ukraine. The Transnistrian leadership has reacted with the position that they would not accept NATO stabilization forces under any conditions and would resist deployment of such forces with armed force.

Part of the solution to the reintegration of Transnistria lies in the ability of Russia to live up to the commitment that it made at the OSCE summit in Istanbul in 1999 to withdraw its troops and material from Transnistria. The Russian withdrawal of troops and material has been sabotaged at times by the leadership at Tiraspol as a way to blackmail Moscow to reach a political settlement favorable to their interests. Following the failure of Voronin to sign the Kozak Memorandum, the EU failed at a summit meeting in Maastricht in early December (December 1–3, 2003) to persuade Russia to provide a firm date for the withdrawal of its forces and ammunition from Transnistria, resulting in a serious breach of Moldovan-Russian relations.⁴⁵ One also could argue that the slowness of the Putin regime to live up to the OSCE commitments made in Istanbul in 1999 also is due to a policy that is aimed at countering NATO’s eastward expansion. On the other

hand, the West is not ratifying the revised CAFE (Conventional Armed Forces in Europe) agreement until Russia lives up to its commitment to withdraw its military equipment and troops from Transnistria. The European Union and the United States were eager to see a solution to the problem because Transnistria was viewed as a black hole of criminality and instability in the region, a source of illegal arms smuggling to terrorists, and a hotbed of other illicit activities. As the European Union expanded eastward, it took a renewed interest in Moldova. Romanian admission to NATO in 2004 also increased pressure to stabilize the situation in Moldova. On the other hand, the Putin administration seemed interested in keeping Moldova in its sphere of influence. Although the Transnistrian issue could be considered an internal Moldovan problem, it holds ramifications for Moldova's foreign policy.

Moldova and Europe

A major strategic priority of Moldovan foreign policy continues to be membership in the European institutions.⁴⁶ Moldova was the first member of the CIS to be admitted to the Council of Europe and later assumed the rotating chairmanship of the committee of ministers for six months, starting in May 2003. Membership in the Council of Europe is viewed as preparation for membership in the European Union. Moldova would like to negotiate an economic stabilization and association agreement and be admitted to the European Union as an associate member in 2007, the same year that Romania expects to be admitted as a full member of the organization.⁴⁷ In November 2002, Moldova created a National Commission for European Integration by presidential decree to prepare for EU membership. Moldova would like the European Union to establish a permanent mission in Chişinău to assist with preparations for European integration. In October 2003, Moldova drew up a Concept of European Integration, focusing on the harmonization of its laws with the EU's *Acquis Communautaire*. Moldova's European orientation gives the European institutions some leverage as external actors to try and steer the process of democratization in Moldova, such as it is, in the direction of "European standards."⁴⁸ Efforts to encourage acceptance by the European Union as a state according to "European standards" have been set back by the negative image of Moldova as an authoritarian state without freedom and based on a "dictatorship of the laws," which is not inclined to tolerate any opposition to the Voronin administration (although one assumes that there is internal friction within the Communist party itself, based on some of Voronin's foreign policy stands). According to Voronin, Moldova will join the European Union when conditions are "ripe"—when the Transnistrian problem has been solved and when corruption has been eliminated, along with the double standards imposed on the country by the international financial institutions.⁴⁹

Moldova does not want the conclusion of a stabilization and association agreement with the EU to prolong the period of negotiations for associate membership in the European Union. Moldova has been critical of the EU's "New Neighbor" policy, which may delay full membership in the EU for those states that have been placed in that category. With the addition of ten new members in 2004 and the

prospects that Bulgaria and Romania will join the EU in 2007, the “New Neighbor” policy represents an effort by the EU to stabilize its eastern borders.⁵⁰ The European Union does not want any instability on its eastern borders and has become more involved in looking for a Transnistrian solution by creating a “ring of friends” on its periphery.⁵¹ Moldova, which advocates a policy of differentiation toward aspiring EU members, resents being lumped together with Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine as “new neighbors,” along with southern Mediterranean states such as Algeria and Egypt, which are not European.⁵² Moldova sees itself as having more in common with the neutral states that are already members of the European Union, such as Austria, Finland, Ireland, and Sweden. The “New

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Neighbor” policy was introduced in 2003 to encourage the new East European neighbors of the expanding EU to harmonize their laws with the *Acquis Communautaire* by rewarding them with increased investment from the European Bank for reconstruction and development. Moldova also has linked its prospects for joining the European Union to mem-

bership in the various regional and subregional organizations that sprang up in Central and Southeastern Europe after the end of the cold war. Moldovan foreign policy supposedly is based on a dynamic approach to participation in regional and subregional organizations. For example, with Romanian support, Moldova became a member of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe on June 28, 2001. Moldovan membership in the Stability Pact provides the West with further leverage to pressure Chişinău into living up to Western standards in making the transition toward the consolidation of democracy, especially in the area of freedom of the press, as well as promoting regional security. Also during the Voronin administration, with Romanian support, Moldova was admitted to associate status in a subregional organization known as the SEECP (Southeastern European Cooperative Process). Participation in this organization helps pave the way for Moldovan membership in the European Union.

Moldova and NATO

Most important of all, the admission of Romania to NATO in 2004 has pushed NATO’s borders to Moldova, making Moldova more important to the United States in the “war against terror.” Moldova has become a more valuable asset in the strategic calculations of the United States in connection with its geographical location close to the Black Sea, the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Caucasus region. However, the Voronin administration has continued to follow a policy of permanent neutrality that is embodied in its constitution. Supposedly, Moldova’s policy of permanent neutrality has meant that it would not allow any foreign mil-

itary bases on its soil (in 2004 in the aftermath of the Kozak imbroglio, Voronin called for the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from Transnistria), would not join any military alliances (but Moldova has continued to participate in NATO's Partnership for Peace, and continues to receive technical military assistance and training from the United States), and would not engage in overseas military activities (Moldova did send a team of mine removal experts to participate in the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq).⁵³ The position of the Voronin administration is that although Romania has joined the military alliance, and there is a possibility that Ukraine might join in the future, Moldova has no intention of joining NATO.⁵⁴

Moldova and Romania

Relations between Moldova and Romania worsened between 2001 and 2004. Following Voronin's election in 2001, Romanian Prime Minister Adrian Nastase stated that "Romania takes note of the geopolitical change on its Eastern border and the creation there of a Moscow-oriented entity."⁵⁵ For example, although the two countries enjoyed a privileged relationship from the Romanian perspective as late as the summer of 2004, a basic treaty between the two countries had not yet been concluded, largely due to the unwillingness of Romania to cooperate. A "cold war" developed between Moldova and Romania as relations between the two states worsened—Chișinău accused Bucharest of intervening in its domestic affairs, and Romania criticized the Voronin regime's efforts at pursuing a policy of Russification through the adoption of Russian as a second official state language, rewriting texts from a Moldovan historical perspective, and the policy of creating a sense of national identity based on "Moldovaness" reminiscent of similar efforts undertaken during the Stalinist totalitarian era.

A major source of friction between the two countries also stemmed from Romania's position that there existed two Romanian states. Critical Romanians referred to Moldova as an "imposter state" and a "political fiction." Moldova resented what it considered to be the Romanian paternalistic attitude toward Chișinău. In 2003, Moldova appealed to the Council of Europe to persuade Romania to sign a Basic Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.⁵⁶ In September 2003, for example, Romanian Prime Minister Nastase had stated that Romania was not interested in concluding a Basic Treaty with Moldova. Romania was the first to recognize Moldova as a sovereign, independent state and "conducted bilateral relations with it on the basis of international law."⁵⁷ As both NATO and the European Union extend eastward, Romania is under pressure to stabilize its relations with Moldova. Therefore, it was not surprising that in April 2004, Romania placed the issue of Transnistria on NATO's agenda.⁵⁸ Following the debacle over the Kozak Memorandum, Moldova tried to balance things a bit by initiating a rapprochement of sorts with Bucharest. It looked like there was an effort by Chișinău to thaw the "cold war," during which Bucharest had accused Moldova of "Romanophobia." Consequently, on May 28, 2004, President Voronin met with President Ion Iliescu within the framework of the eleventh meeting of the Central European leaders, which took place in Mamaila, Romania. At that time, Moldova expressed

its desire to conclude the long-delayed Basic Treaty of Friendship between the two countries, while Romania emphasized that it still followed a policy of a special and privileged relationship between the two countries.

Conclusion

The foreign policy of the Voronin administration over the past three years has been based on the classic principles of realism. Moldova has attempted to pursue its national interest by engaging in balance of power politics between East and West, attempting to carefully balance pro-Russian and pro-Western orientations. This is not surprising, given Moldova's position in the international stratification of power as a small and weak state, in an international system that is dominated by global and regional hegemony. The foreign policy of the Voronin administration (2001–04) also has been marked by elements of continuity with the previous noncommunist regimes. This is not surprising either, given Moldova's geographical location between the CIS and NATO countries. At the same time, a basic theme of Moldovan foreign policy has continued to be permanent neutrality, as stated in the country's constitution. Moldovan foreign policy during the Voronin administration also has been characterized by a fair amount of pragmatism. The pragmatic character of Moldovan foreign policy can be attributed to the geopolitical realities of Moldova's position in the region and in the international system. Other themes that characterize Moldovan foreign policy are self-identity as a communist state, a neutral state, a Central as well as a Southeast European state, and a Francophone state. Moldovan foreign policy also has been marked by an imitative quality, whereby in some respects it has imitated the foreign policy of Romania. In the final analysis, one would expect Moldova to continue to pursue a carefully balanced policy in the future, designed to protect its national interests and security.

NOTES

1. For example, as of 2002, Moldova maintained only diplomatic representation in twenty-one of the most important states. See *Moldova Azi*, January 9, 2002, <http://www.azi.md/news?ID=17258>.

2. One definition of a small state is a state that has a population of less than 10 million. See Mark Hong, "Small States in the United Nations," *International Social Science Journal* 144 (June 1995): 277.

3. A large concentration of Russians and Ukrainians live on the left bank of the Dniester River in eastern Moldova, mostly in urban enclaves like Tiraspol. Between 1924 and 1940, this Transnistrian region was incorporated into Ukraine as the "Moldavian ASSR" (Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic) before it was merged with that portion of Bessarabia that had been annexed from Romania by the Soviet Union in 1940, following the conclusion of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. As Germany's ally during the Second World War, Romania regained control of it in 1941 but lost it again to the Soviets in 1944. See Charles King, *The Moldovans* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2000), 81.

4. See "Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister on Working Visit to Moldova," *Moldova Azi*, April 9, 2004, <http://www.azi.md/news?ID=28630>.

5. See Paul E. Michelson and Dennis Deletant, "Moscow 1939–Kishinev 1991: The Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact Conference in Romania," *Report on the USSR* (August 23, 1991): 16–18.

6. See also Paul D. Quinlan, "Moldova Under Lucinschi," *Demokratizatsiya* 10, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 83–102.

7. See *U.S. State Department Background Note: Moldova*, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5357.htm>.

8. For the importance of the "legacies of the past" or path dependency to the study of the evolution of postcommunist transitions, see Philip G. Roeder, "The Revolution of 1989: Postcommunism and the Social Sciences," *Slavic Review* 58, no. 4 (Winter 1999): 750; see also Valerie Bunce, "The Political Economy of Postsocialism," *Slavic Review* 58, no. 4 (Winter 1999): 761. The path dependency approach argues that "the set of options available . . . is constrained by the legacies of the past, i.e., by nationally different paths of state socialist and postsocialist development." See Jurgen Beyer and Jan Wielgohs, "On the Limits of Path Dependency Approaches for Explaining Postsocialist Institution Building: In Critical Response to David Stark," *East European Politics and Societies* 15, no. 2 (Spring 2002): 362. "Path dependency suggests that the . . . legacies of the past limit the range of current possibilities and or options in . . . innovation." See Klaus Nielsen, Bob Jessop, and Jerzy Hausner, "Institutional Change in Post-Socialism," in *Strategic Choice and Path Dependency in Post-Socialism: Institutional Dynamics in the Transformation Process*, ed. Jerzy Hausner, Bob Jessop, and Klaus Nielsen (Brookfield, VT: Aldershot, 1995), 6.

9. See *Moldova Azi*, April 21, 2002, <http://www.azi.md/news?ID=11510>.

10. President Jiang Zemin of China visited Moldova in 2001, and President Voronin visited China in February 2003. See "President Jiang Zemin Held Talks with President of Moldova," <http://www.fmprc.gov/eng/wjb/zzjg/dozys/gjib/3205/3207/t/6715.htm>. Moldova supports China's position on Taiwan, and China supports Moldova's position on Transnistria. According to Eugenia Ostapciuc, president of the Moldovan parliament, China and Moldova signed thirty-seven agreements between 2001 and 2004. See *Moldova Azi*, June 7, 2004, <http://www.azi.md/news?ID=29418>. Moldova also views itself as the Cuba of Eastern Europe, surrounded by "imperialist predators"; Moldovan-Vietnamese relations have been facilitated by the fact that both countries are members of the Francophone organization, underscoring the fact that the foreign policy of the Voronin administration has a cultural dimension to it as well.

11. See Joseph M. Grieco, "Realist International Theory and the Study of World Politics," in *New Thinking in International Relations Theory*, ed. Michael W. Doyle and G. John Ikenberry (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 164–65.

12. For an interesting discussion of neoclassical realism, see Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics* 51, no. 1 (October 1998): 144–72.

13. *Ibid.*, 156.

14. For the classic study of classical realism, see Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, rev. Kenneth W. Thompson (Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 1993).

15. Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Emerging Structure of International Politics," in *The Perils of Anarchy: Contemporary Realism and International Security*, ed. Michael E. Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 45; see also David A. Baldwin, "Neoliberalism, Neorealism, and World Politics," in *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*, ed. David A. Baldwin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 3–25.

16. See Stephen G. Brooks, "Dueling Realisms," *International Organization* 51, no. 3 (Summer 1997): 446; for the perception of threats to the security of a state as an important factor in foreign policy, see Theo Farrell, "Constructivist Security Studies: Portrait of a Research Program," *International Studies Review* 4, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 49–72.

17. See Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Anarchic Structure of World Politics," in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, ed. Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis (New York: Longman, 2003), 62.

18. For the view that states are “profoundly defensive actors,” see Grieco, “International Theory and the Study of World Politics,” in Doyle and Ikenberry, *New Thinking*, 167.

19. For a discussion of the theory of “offensive realism,” see John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2001), 4–8; see also Jennifer Sterling-Folker, “Realism and the Constructivist Challenge: Rejecting, Reconstructing, or Rereading,” *International Studies Review* 4, no. 4 (Spring 2002): 80.

20. See “Moldovan Foreign Policy Concept—1995,” <http://www.undp.org/rbec/uhdr/1996/moldova/chapter6.htm>.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*

23. For Moldova’s 2002 foreign policy concept, which was elaborated after the Party of Moldovan Communists assumed power, see *Proiectul Conceptiei Politicii Externe A Republicii Moldova*, http://Europa.yam.ro/ipp_news/2002/mai/11/html.

24. *Ibid.*

25. For example, Voronin’s predecessor, speaking at the fifty-fifth session of the UN General Assembly in 2000, stated: “Being realistic, we realize that the security of the twenty-first century will depend on how the big states succeed in understanding and cooperating with each other and on the degree of harmonization of their interests. At the same time, we would like this to take place under conditions of respect for small states’ legitimate interests.” For Lucinschi’s speech, see <http://daccessods.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/NOO/633/24/PDF/NOO63324Pdf?OpenElement>.

26. In June 2001, Moldova proposed observer status for Russia in GUUAM, but the Russians were not interested. On June 12, 2003, following the proposal of Moldova, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Organization extended observer status to the Russian-Belarus Union. See <http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2003/06/4-SEE/see130603.asp>.

27. See “Moldova, Belarus Scaling Up Military Cooperation,” May 26, 2004, <http://www.interfax.com/com?item=Mold&py=0&id=572506&req=>.

28. For more information about GUUAM, see “The GUUAM Group: History and Principles,” <http://www.guuam.org/general/browse.html>.

29. See *Moldova Suverana*, January 4, 2004, <http://www.moldovasuverana.md/articol.php?id=1994>.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Moldova is a member of the CIS Antiterrorism Center. See “Russia Stages ‘CIS Collective’ Antiterrorism Exercises in Central Asia,” *Jamestown Monitor* 8, no. 79 (April 23, 2002), http://jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=25&issue_id=22448&article_id=19338.

32. See “Russia, Moldova Have More Common Economic Interests,” <http://english.pravda.ru/diplomatic/2002/08/05/33848.html>.

33. Transnistria criticized the Russian-Moldovan Basic Treaty because there was neither a mention of the rights of Transnistria in it, nor of Transnistria’s rights to pursue a separate foreign policy from that of Moldova.

34. “Russian-Moldovan Relations Reached a New Level,” *Interlic*, August 1, 2002, http://www.interlic.md/page_2.php?rubr=1015232823&1028195854&lang=eng.

35. For a statement of support by the U.S. military attaché to Moldova for a federal solution, see *Moldova Suverana*, October 9, 2003, <http://www.moldovasuverana.md/stire.php?id=1891>.

36. See “Smirnov for Continuing Ties With Moldova,” *Moldova Azi*, March 22, 2004, <http://www.azi.md/news?ID=2836971>.

37. For the text of the Kozak Memorandum, see “Russian Draft Memorandum on the Basic Principles of the State Structure of a United State in Moldova (Kozak Memorandum),” http://www.eurojournal.org/more.php?id=107_0_6_M5. The plan called for the creation of a “neutral, demilitarized state”; the “Transnistrian Moldovan Republic” would

be considered a “subject of the federation” and a “state entity within the federation” with “its own state symbols and other attributes of state status.” The Russian plan also stipulated that “subjects of the federation have the right to leave the federation in case a decision is taken to unite the federation with another state and (or) in connection with the federation’s full loss of sovereignty.”

38. For criticism of the Russian plan by Stephen Minikes, U.S. Ambassador to the OSCE, see “U.S. Representative Criticizes Kozak Memorandum,” *Moldova Azi*, February 16, 2004, <http://www.azi.md/news?ID=27876>.

39. The U.S. planned to extend \$40 million in aid to Moldova in 2004. See “U.S. to Continue Financial Help to Moldova,” *Moldova Azi*, June 4, 2004, <http://www.azi.md/news?ID=29405>. President Voronin had met earlier with President Bush in Washington in 2002; see “Joint Statement of President George W. Bush and President Vladimir Voronin on U.S.-Moldovan Relations,” <http://www.usembassy.md/en-jointstate.htm>.

40. See <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2003/11/26112003170812.asp>.

41. See “The RM President Considers Premature To Sign The Memorandum,” <http://www.interlic.md/part2.php?rubr=10515232823&id=1069759122&lang=eng>.

42. Bandwagoning means that a weaker state usually aligns itself with a stronger political force rather than trying to join with a group of weaker states that will attempt to form a coalition to check a hegemon. For an excellent discussion of the merits of bandwagoning versus balance of power politics, see Randall Schweller, “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In,” in *The Perils of Anarchy: Contemporary Realism and International Security*, ed. Michael E. Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 249–84.

43. See “Vladimir Voronin” *Moldova Suverana*, January 4, 2004, <http://www.moldova-suverana.md/articol.php?id=1994>.

44. See “Russian Deputy Chief of Staff Blames Moldova for Transdnister Evacuation Halt,” *RFE/RL*, <http://www.rferl.org/newsline/4-see>.

45. For example, Voronin was not invited to Putin’s inauguration after the Russian politician had been reelected as president in March 2004.

46. See “The Foreign Policy Priorities of Moldova for 2003,” <http://www.mfa.md/en/policykeyelements/policypriorities%20.html>.

47. Moldova negotiated an Association agreement with the European Union in the 1990s and, therefore, participates in a number of joint institutions with the European Union.

48. For example, the European Union has made it clear that for Moldova to join the organization, it must develop a “stable democracy, respect for human rights and minorities . . .” See *Moldova Azi*, June 13, 2003, <http://www.azi.md/news?ID=24467>.

49. *RFE/RL*, February 4, 2003, <http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2003/02/4-SE/see040203.asp>.

50. See “The European Commission’s Delegation to Moldova, Tacis Branch Office,” http://www.eumoldova.org/pressrelease/press_all_8.html.

51. See “Wider Europe—Overview,” http://www.eu.moldova.org/eu_wider_europe/index.htm.

52. See Nicu Popescu, “Optiunile Republicii Moldova in Relatiile cu Uniunea Europeana,” <http://www.yam.ro/articles/2004/februarie/06/2.html>.

53. See “Moldova—Relations with U.S.,” http://www.geographyiq.com/countries/md/Moldova_us_relations_summary.htm.

54. President Voronin did attend the NATO summit meeting that met in November 2002 in Prague. See “Moldova si NATO; Buna Vecinatate in Baza Paritatii de Interese,” <http://www.interlic.md/interviu.php?group=1026924845&id=1038241987&lang=>. Of course, even Russia is a member of a NATO mechanism.

55. See “Romanian Premier ‘Takes Note’ of Moldova’s Moscow Orientation,” <http://www.hri.org/news/balkans/rferl/2001/01-03-06>.

56. See Eugen Tomiuc, “Moldova: COE’s Help Requested in Diplomatic Spat with

Romania,” <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2003/10/141020033161838.asp>.

57. See Dan Dungariu, “Moldova, Romania si Provocarile Regionale alei Integrarii Euro-Atlantice,” March 23, 2004, <http://www.yam.ro/articles/2004/martie23/html>.

58. “New Ally Romania puts Moldova on NATO’s Agenda,” http://www.salvaeco.org/stiri/comments/295_0_1_0C/.