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Russian Troops Hold Drills in Moldova's Separatist Region

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Russian troops have conducted military exercises in Moldova's pro-Russia separatist region.

Russian news agencies on Thursday quoted an army representative saying that 400 troops and 30 pieces of weaponry were involved in drills in Transdnestr, a narrow strip of land squeezed between Moldova and Ukraine.

Predominantly ethnic Russian Transdnestr broke away from Moldova in 1990 over fears that Moldova planned to reunite with Romania. Russian troops have been stationed in Transdnestr since a 1992 war that killed more than 1,500 people.

Army spokesman Oleg Kochetkov said that troops used 100,000 rounds of ammunition during the drills that involved armored personnel vehicles and grenade launchers.

Moldova's fears of Russian presence in Transdnestr intensified after Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimea last year and supported a separatist movement in eastern Ukraine.

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