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Moldova Hits Kremlin-Backed Transnistria Leader With 5-Year Travel Ban After Putin Award

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Vladimir Putin and Vadim Krasnoselsky at the Kremlin on Oct. 4, 2026. **kremlin.ru**

Moldova has banned the Moscow-backed leader of its breakaway region of Transnistria from traveling abroad for the next five years after he went to Russia and accepted a state award from President Vladimir Putin.

Putin on Wednesday presented Vadim Krasnoselsky with Russia's Order of Honor during a Kremlin ceremony, crediting him with "strengthening ties" with Moscow despite "external pressure." During the ceremony, Krasnoselsky told Putin that Transnistria is "indisputably part of the Russian world," a term used to describe places with cultural and historical ties to Russia.

Moldova's bureau for reintegration policies announced that Krasnoselsky will face "restrictive measures," including a 5-year ban on leaving the country, upon his return, according to a statement carried by the local outlet Newsmaker.

It was not immediately clear where Krasnoselsky was located at the time of the announcement. On Wednesday, Krasnoselsky posted a photo of a military reburial ceremony in Transnistria without indicating whether he was in attendance.

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The Moldovan reintegration bureau added that it was considering additional penalties against Krasnoselsky "without escalating the situation," citing Russia's "constant" intent to destabilize the country, which borders western Ukraine.

The bureau condemned Krasnoselsky's visit and Putin's award as a Russian "provocation aimed at hindering Moldova's European integration." Moldova's parliament speaker and ruling party leader Igor Grosu echoed that statement.

Moldova submitted an EU membership bid after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022.

Transnistria, internationally recognized as part of Moldova, declared independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union and has relied on Russian financial and military support ever since. Russia has around 1,500 troops stationed in the region.

Unrecognized presidential elections are scheduled to be held in Transnistria next month. Krasnoselsky is not expected to seek a third term.

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