PREFACE

The Republic of Moldova is a relatively new country located in the area of former Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, the second smallest republic of the former Soviet Union. The country is landlocked between Ukraine in the north, east and south and Romania in the west. Its area including Transnistria is about 33,850 sq km and population amounts to 4.4 million. Moldova was part of the eastern Moldavia, a principality that was under Ottoman Empire since 16th century. In 1812, the Russian Empire annexed Bessarabia, which included present-day Republic of Moldova and parts of Ukraine. In early 1918, Moldova declared its independence but was incorporated into Romania a few months later. This move was sanctioned by the 1920 Treaty of Paris but was never recognized by the Soviet Union, which in 1924 established the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic on the eastern bank of the Dniester river as part of the Ukrainian SSR. After the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact in 1939, Romania was forced to cede Moldova, east of the river Prut along with northern Bukovina to the Soviet Union in 1940. Between 1941 and 1944, it was under Romanian control. In 1944 the Soviets reclaimed the territory and in 1947 the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic was established. The same year, the territory was formally ceded to the Soviet Union under the Paris Peace Treaty.

The political developments in Moldova are result of fighting for its identity as sovereign state from former USSR. Significant change came after Mikhail Gorbachev became leader of the USSR, in 1987, the policies of Glasnost (openness) and Perestroika (restructuring) provided the opportunity to discuss openly various economic and political issues in Moldova for the first time. In the climate of openness, political self-assertion escalated in the Moldavian SSR in 1988. The year 1989 saw the formation of the Moldovan Popular Front (commonly called the Popular Front), an association of independent cultural and political groups that had finally gained official recognition. Large demonstrations by ethnic Romanians led to the designation of Romanian as the official language and the replacement of the head of the Communist Party of Moldova. However, opposition was growing to the increasing influence of ethnic Romanians, especially in Transnistria, where the Yedinstvo-Unitatea (Unity) Inter movement had
been formed in 1988 by the Slavic minorities, and in the south, where Gagauz Halkı (Gagauz people), formed in November 1989, came to represent the Gagauz, a Turkic-speaking minority. The first democratic elections to the Moldavian SSR's Supreme Soviet were held on 25 February 1990. The Popular Front won a majority of the votes. After the elections, Mircea Snegur, a communist leader was elected chairman of the Supreme Soviet and became president of the republic in September 1990. The reformist government that took over in May 1990 made many changes that did not please the minorities, including changing the name of the republic in June 1990 from the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova and declaring it sovereign the same month. On 27 August 1991, following the coup's collapse, Moldova declared its independence from the Soviet Union. New parliamentary elections were held in Moldova on 27 February 1994. Although the election was described by international observers as free and fair, authorities in Transnistria refused to allow balloting there and made efforts to discourage the inhabitants from participating. Only some 7,500 inhabitants voted at specially established precincts in right-bank Moldova. The new Parliament, with Democratic Agrarian Party of Moldova majority, did not face the same gridlock that characterized the old Parliament with its majority of Popular Front hard-line nationalists. Legislation was passed and in April 1994, Parliament approved Moldova's membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States. On 29 July 1994, Parliament adopted a new constitution, which went into effect on 27 August 1994 and provided substantial autonomy to Transnistria and Gagauzia.

The political development in Moldova's after its independence have been difficult, complicated by a short war and Transnistrian secession, a political tradition of strong central power and citizen apathy, a lack of governmental experience and capacity, a large emigration of working-age population, an agriculturally-based economy dependent on eastern markets and a geography that traps Moldova between Russia and Europe. For a country faced with the challenges of creating the means to govern and administer in democratic manner in a relatively short period of time, it is indeed a daunting task. However, Moldova had some success on the road to a more democratic future. It has conducted a series of elections that, with one exception, have met international standards.
It has changed ruling parties and leaders regularly and peacefully. It has also developed a political and occasionally effective opposition. It has privatized many aspects of its economy, has reduced governmental regulation of business, and has kept inflation within manageable limits. Nonetheless, Moldova faces some continuing obstacles in its transition to democracy.

This work attempts to study the political developments in the wake of evolving political system in Moldova. It will undertake the study of political developments in Moldova in a comprehensive fashion covering the operation of nation state in Moldova, the building of democracy, the consequent changes and the administrative and legal developments as an aspect of political developments since the 1991. The six chapters of this research work explore the different dimensions of the political developments and evolving political system in Moldova.

The first chapter, Introduction: A Theoretical Perspective on Political System summarizes the theoretical perspective on political system and attempts to build a theoretical framework for the present study.

The second chapter, Historical Background of Political Developments in Moldova, attempts to trace the political developments in historical context in the republic of Moldova, prior to its independence in the 1991. In doing so it will look into that how these historical developments in Moldova are important factor in shaping the present political system in Moldova, which is still evolving after its independence. This chapter will explore the origin and formation of Moldova in ancient and medieval period. It will further explore the annexation and influence of Russia on the Moldova. This chapter will also attempt to highlight the formation of Moldova SSR and its merger with USSR. It will also discuss the unification and partition of Moldova with Romania and relations between them, which will include ethnic and religious factors. Thus, this chapter will serve as a proper background for the subsequent chapters of this thesis.

The third chapter, Independence and Inter Ethnic Conflict in Moldova, attempts to discuss the attainment of independence by Moldova and major challenges facing the
republic of Moldova after its independence. It further attempts to study and analyze the issues like ethnic conflict, question of national identity, language problem, economic underdevelopment and autonomy of regions like Transdniester and Gagauz.

The fourth chapter, Evolution of Political System, attempts to study the evolution of political system in Republic of Moldova after its independence. An attempt has been made in this chapter to explore and analyze the nature, direction and extent of change in the political system and process of Moldova. It will also study the formation of the new constitution, electoral laws, role of the political parties, pressure groups and media in the political fabric of Moldova.

The fifth chapter, Moldova's Foreign Policy and External Relations, is an attempt to study the Moldova's foreign policy after independence and its external relations. This chapter will enquire about the modes of diplomacy and reflect on the changing priorities and trends in foreign policy of the Moldova. It will further explore the international relations of Moldva with its neighbours, world powers, international organizations and emerging powers like India.

The last chapter gives a conclusion of major findings and analysis of political developments in Moldova with a focus on the prospect for such development.

Thus, this thesis in its course will examine the developments taking place in the political sphere of Moldova since 1991. This will involve the study of the political institutions that are evolving since independence. The demand for unification with Romania, vis-à-vis its status of an independent state, the minority question and ethnic conflict, foreign policy and the international relations of Moldova will also be thoroughly analyzed.

This research work will test the following hypothesis:

• The emerging political system in Moldova is a result of the collapse of Soviet Union, which is based on western democracy. In this context, it is a significant departure from its past socialist system.
• The political developments in Moldova cannot be isolated from its past colonial background, as it had become the victim of loosing its independence from one power to another. Therefore its ultimate direction is yet to be evolved.

• Post independent Moldova's political developments basically emerged from three different ideas, the idea of reunification with Romania, the pro-Russian tilt and urge for an independent sovereign state.

• Like many other states which emerged after the collapse of Soviet Union, Moldova has also been a victim of ethnic conflict which is yet to be resolved.

• The tendency towards autonomy in deferent regions and separatist movements in Moldova will also continue to affect its political developments.

Methodology: This study has adopted historical analytical method, which is obvious from the proposed nature and purpose of the political developments in Moldova. It will primarily depend on the primary sources like Foreign Broadcast Information Service (USA), Current Digest of the Post Soviet Press (Ohio), Summary of World Broadcast (London), World Bank Annual Report (Washington, D.C.), Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee (Moscow), selected speeches and articles (Moscow) UN Reports. Apart from them available secondary sources like books, articles, periodicals, newspaper reports etc have also been used for this study. The dearth of published works on this topic is an indication of the relevance of this study.