

Resolution on the situation in the Republic of Moldova

2009/2578(RSP) - 07/05/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate which took place on 23 April 2009, the European Parliament adopted by 467 votes to 27 with 18 abstentions, a resolution on the situation in Moldova.

The text adopted in plenary had been tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP-ED, ALDE, UEN, Greens /ALE groups.

Parliament underlines the importance of a closer relationship between the EU and the Republic of Moldova and confirms the need to work together to contribute to increased stability, security and prosperity on the European continent and to prevent the emergence of new dividing lines. It reaffirms its commitment to continuing a meaningful and goal-oriented dialogue with the Republic of Moldova, but attaches great importance to the introduction of strong provisions regarding the rule of law and respect for human rights, while stressing that further consolidation of relations, including through the **conclusion of a new, enhanced agreement**, should be made contingent on a real and manifest commitment on the part of the Moldovan authorities to democracy and human rights.

Electoral process: Parliament stresses that full compliance with international democratic standards before, during and after the electoral process is of the greatest importance for the further development of relations between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union. It strongly condemns the massive campaign of harassment, grave violations of human rights and all other illegal actions carried out by the Moldovan Government in the aftermath of the parliamentary elections. The Moldovan authorities are urged to immediately cease all illegal arrests and to conduct government action in accordance with the country's international commitments and obligations with regard to democracy, the rule of law and human rights. Parliament is particularly concerned about the illegal and arbitrary arrests and the widespread violations of the human rights of arrested persons.

Remarks from the electoral campaign: Members recall that parliamentary elections took place in the Republic of Moldova on 5 April 2009. They were monitored by an International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) composed of representatives from the OSCE/ODIHR and from the European Parliament, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Serious concern was expressed during the pre-electoral period about government control of the public media, intimidation and harassment of opposition leaders and the private media and misuse of administrative resources for the benefit of the government party. Parliament stresses that a national dialogue must be established, with the participation of the government and the opposition parties, in a serious effort to fundamentally improve democratic procedures and the functioning of democratic institutions in Moldova. It underlines, however, that internal tensions in Moldova are very high and therefore firmly believes that there is an urgent need to set up an independent investigatory committee, involving the EU, the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and independent experts, aimed at ensuring an impartial and transparent process of investigation. Parliament insists that all those found responsible for the brutal violence perpetrated against detainees be brought to justice. It calls for a special investigation to be conducted into the cases of those who died during the events following the elections as well as into all allegations of rape and ill-treatment during detention and politically-motivated arrests, such as those of Anatol Mtsaru and Gabriel Stati.

More freedom for the press: Members condemn the campaign of harassment launched by the Moldovan authorities against journalists, civil society representatives and opposition parties, involving in particular

arrests and expulsions of journalists, interruption of access to websites and TV stations, broadcasting of propaganda on public channels and denial to opposition representatives of access to the public media. They consider that these actions are intended to isolate Moldova from domestic and international media and public scrutiny. Parliament reiterates the importance of the independence of the judiciary, and calls for further steps to ensure the editorial independence of all media, including Radio Television Moldova, and the cessation of any intimidation against the ProTV Channel and of any threats relating to the extension of its licence.

Expulsion of a Romanian Ambassador: Parliament strongly deplores the decision by the Moldovan authorities to expel the Romanian Ambassador and to introduce a visa obligation for citizens of that European Union Member State. It insists that discrimination against EU citizens on the basis of their national origin is not acceptable and calls on the Moldovan authorities to restore the visa-free regime for Romanian citizens. Parliament requests immediate and substantial proof in support of any allegation by the Moldovan Government concerning the supposedly criminal actions of the protesters and the involvement of foreign governments. It takes note of the statements by the Moldovan authorities with regard to the opening of a criminal file on the "attempted usurpation of state power on 7 April 2009" and calls for the investigation to be conducted in a transparent manner and to clarify all the allegations made by the Moldovan authorities with regard to the possible involvement of one or more third countries in these events.

Constructive dialogue with the opposition: according to the Parliament, constructive dialogue with the opposition parties, civil society and representatives of international organisations is the only way out of the current situation in Moldova. It emphasises that any new election will require a consensus between the opposition and government on concrete improvements to the electoral process. Parliament deplores the fact that the Moldovan Government made no efforts to facilitate voting by Moldovan citizens living abroad, in line with the suggestions of the Council of Europe's Venice Commission. Parliament states that between 500 000 and 1 million Moldovans live abroad, and that several appeals signed by a large number of NGOs and associations of the Moldovan diaspora, concerning measures depriving Moldovans living abroad of the right to vote, were sent to the Moldovan authorities prior to the elections of 5 April 2009 and were ignored.

Parliament believes that, in order to preserve its credibility for the people of Moldova, the EU should become involved in the management of the current situation in a proactive, profound and comprehensive way. It urges the Council to consider the possibility of sending a Rule of Law Mission to Moldova, in order to assist the law enforcement authorities in their reform process. The Council, the Commission and the Member States are called upon to make full use of the **European Neighbourhood Policy** (ENP) and, in particular, of the new programme for the Eastern Partnership in order to establish greater stability, better governance and balanced economic development in Moldova. Parliament calls on the Commission to ensure that EU funding available to the Republic of Moldova in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms has greater outreach, in particular by making full use of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. In addition, Parliament calls on the Council and the Commission to strengthen the mission of the EU Special Representative in the Republic of Moldova, in terms of both its scope and its means.

Territorial integrity of Moldova: Parliament reiterates its support for the territorial integrity of the country and points out that a more robust EU role in finding a solution to the Transnistrian question is needed. It stresses once again that the European Union must do everything in its power to offer the people of the Republic of Moldova a **truly European future** and urges all political forces in the Republic of Moldova and Moldova's partners not to take advantage of the current situation of instability to divert Moldova from its European course.