

## ***Moldova Weekly – August 5 – Report on the current situation in Moldova in the weeks after the preliminary elections held on 29 July***

The European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) is a Brussels-based organization active in the field of democracy assistance which has Moldova as one of the target countries. Using our partner organizations in Moldova we try to bring current information from established international and Moldovan news agencies in order to provide independent view on Moldova to the Brussels decision makers. Please address any questions or comments to [kristinaprunerova@eupd.eu](mailto:kristinaprunerova@eupd.eu).

### ***Results of Early Parliamentary Elections in Moldova***

On July 29 the Republic of Moldova held early parliamentary elections. The Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova (PCRM) has gained the largest share of votes of 44.69%, followed by the Liberal Democratic Party with 16.7% (PLDM); the Liberal Party with 14.68% (PL) and the Democratic Party with 12.54% (PD). The fifth party to overcome the threshold of 5 percent is Moldova Noastra Alliance with 7.35% and these 5 forces will be present in the new Parliament. The voter turnout was 58,8 % which is about one percent more than in the April elections and was sufficient for the elections to be acknowledged as valid (the minimum voter turnout in Moldova is one third). The distribution of the votes to the seat in the Parliament is the following: Party of Communists of Moldova 48 seats, Liberal Democratic Party 18 seats, Liberal Party 15 seats, Democratic Party 13 seats and Alliance Moldova Noastra 7 seats. The details of the results can be seen at <http://www.alegeri.md/en/>. Currently the 4 opposition parties have started talks about the form of the democratic government in Moldova but no program or declaration is known yet.

The International Elections Observation Mission of the OSCE has issued a statement about the elections on July 30th in which it concludes that early parliamentary elections in Moldova met many international standards, but the process underscored the need for continued democratic reforms to restore public trust. Several shortcomings were highlighted by the observers: the election campaign was affected by subtle intimidation and media bias, the inaccuracy of the voters lists has once again exposed weaknesses, the misuse of administrative resources had a negative effect on the equality of campaign opportunities. "Many OSCE commitments were met, but important challenges remain if the lack of trust among the country's political parties and voters is to be overcome so that Moldova's democracy can continue to improve," said Petros Efthymiou, head of the delegation Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) and special co-ordinator of the OSCE short-term observers at the press conference. The full press release and preliminary report can be found here <http://www.osce.org/item/39082.html>.

The group of Moldovan non-governmental organizations Coalition for Free and Fair Election 2009, which comprises of about 70 Moldovan NGOs and was monitoring the campaign and the elections, has issued a statement on the elections as well calling them not fair and only partially free. Among the main problems they stated the unfair campaign in which the contestants did not have equal access to media, they were being intimidated during their campaign events and also several cases of misuse of administrative resources were recorded by the Coalition member organizations. Many problems were observed with the voters' lists: multiple cases of inclusion of unknown persons into the voters' houses; cases of fraudulent voting instead of other persons; cases of multiple inclusion of same voters of electoral lists, sometimes even with different data of their identity cards; the voters in a number of polling stations did not find themselves on the electoral lists. To see the full declaration please visit <http://www.alegeliber.md/index.php/en/declarations>.

The Swedish Presidency of the European Union issued a statement of behalf of the EU in which it welcomed the fact that the elections met many international standards but stressed the need for the Moldovan authorities to

address the concerns raised by the International Election Observation Mission of OSCE, and to investigate any alleged irregularities in the election process in a timely and transparent manner. The Presidency called on all Moldovan political parties to create a constructive and trustful political climate, so that Moldova will be able to tackle current challenges, such as the economic and financial crisis. To see the statement please visit <http://www.se2009.eu/en/2.543/2.578/2.610/2.640/1.11034>.

Javier Solana, the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy issued a statement about the elections in Moldova in which he welcomed that elections met many international standards although some negative aspects persisted. He concludes that "The Republic of Moldova should regain political stability. Good governance is of utmost importance, not least due to the challenges faced by Moldova in the context of the global financial crisis. The European Union remains ready to assist the country face important political and economic challenges." The full statement can be found at [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/declarations/109463.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/declarations/109463.pdf).

Commissioner Benita Ferrero Waldner has issued a statement in which she congratulated the Moldovans on peaceful conduct of elections but reminded the future government that it needs to work on the necessary improvements identified by the International Elections Observation Mission of the OSCE. Her full statement can be found at [http://www.delmda.ec.europa.eu/whatsnew/press\\_releases\\_en.shtml](http://www.delmda.ec.europa.eu/whatsnew/press_releases_en.shtml).

Inspiring and reassuring, that's how US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry, a former presidential candidate, described the parliamentary elections held in Moldova on 29 July. 'This is an important moment for the Republic of Moldova. It is inspiring and reassuring to see Moldovans exercising their democratic rights through the electoral process, but it is likewise troubling when political differences turn violent', the American senator said in a statement issued Thursday, 30 July. According to the Democrat senator, the politicians in Moldova need to find common ground. 'If they can set aside their personal and political interests, there is a chance that a fresh approach to their nation's problems may be found', added Senator Kerry. 'Observers have claimed that Moldova is a victim of its geography, caught between European and Russian 'spheres of influence'. I believe Moldova's geography can be its strength; with cooperation and determined effort, Moldova can and should be a bridge between Central and Eastern Europe. Moldovans deserve a better, more prosperous future', stated the former US presidential candidate. <http://kerry.senate.gov/cfm/record.cfm?id=316509>. IPN, 31 July 2009

Early elections were called after two failed attempts to elect a president after previous elections on April 5th, 2009 which were followed by mass demonstrations. The demonstrators found the elections results illegitimate, especially the overwhelming victory of the Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova of 49,48 %. The demonstrations were violently suppressed by the police leaving hundreds of people wounded and about 700 people were arrested in the aftermath of the demonstrations. About 260 of them still remain under criminal prosecution with various accusation of robbery, mass disorder, or hooliganism. An investigation commission set up to study the incidents of April 6 and 7 was established by the parliament without the participation of the opposition parties but this commission did not come up with any report until now. The April events became a major issue in the campaign of the July elections and increased the already very polarized environment of the campaign.

Several incidents marked the days before elections. European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO), which was invited by the Central Elections Committee to observe the elections, faced problems with their observers who were detained or not allowed to enter the country on several occasions. As the outcome the ENEMO cancelled the whole mission to Moldova.

### ***Opinion leaders sign manifesto for future government***

15 opinion leaders and NGO representatives ink a joint manifesto “for a responsible and democratic government.” The message is addressed to the Liberals and Democrats having won in the snap elections of July 29, 2009. They are urged to lay the foundations of an essentially new government, able to provide European quality to the process of democratic change in Moldova, Info-Prim Neo reports. The signatories ask the new coalition-to-govern to back the democratic objectives promoted by the civil society, with more care and responsibility.

First of all they mean depoliticizing the office of the Moldovan President. “We believe the future head of the state must renounce his/her capacity of a member of a political party, during the office, thus treating the citizens with moderation and balance, or that he/she is elected from renowned personalities, enjoying popularity among the Moldovans.”

The second request refers to the full and objective investigation of the April events, with international support. “It’s every Moldovan’s right to know the truth about the authors of the provocations and violence of April 2009,” the manifesto reads. The signatories also ask the new parliament to set up a special committee, with international experts, to probe all the evidence and accusations.

Other requests refer to strengthening the Parliament as the supreme representing authority, to rigorously applying the principles of the power branches’ cooperation and separation, to forming the a Cabinet with necessary skills to step up the democratic reforms. “We want a Government distinctive through its professionalism and efficiency, transparency, assumed individually and as a team, in the spirit of European and democratic management,” the manifesto reads.

Other requests refer to the constitution of an Anti-Crisis National Board, to insure a favorable climate for media, to enhance the people’s trust in the public authorities and to strengthen Moldova’s status in its relation with the EU, the urgent normalization of the relationships with the neighboring countries.

The manifesto is signed by Sergiu Ostaf (CreDO), Igor Munteanu (IDIS “Viitorul”), Ion Manole ( PROMO-Lex), Nadine Gogu (IJC), Igor Botan (ADEPT), Lilia Carasciuc (TI Moldova), Victor Chirila (APE), Vanu Jereghi (IDOM), Vlad Lupan (independent analyst), Vasile Spinei (Acces-Info), Petru Macovei (IPA), Alexandru Dorogan (APEL), Lucia Cucu (ANTEM), Valeriu Prohntitchi (Expert Grup) and Valeriu Saharneau (JUM.) IPN, August 4, 2009