

«GreetingLine»

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Thank you

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European Partnership for Democracy

Moldova Bulletin – June 11, 2010 – Report on the current situation in Moldova

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 an independent view on Moldova to the Brussels decision makers. Please address any questions or comments to klaraweger@epd.eu.

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FOREIGN ENGAGEMENT

PLDM to join European People's Party next autumn

The Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM) will join the European People's Party (EPP) next autumn. PLDM leader Vlad Filat and President of the European People's Party Wilfried Martens made this announcement. Vlad Filat said that this step is important not only for PLDM, but also for Moldova, as the efforts taken over the last time in the integration process would not have been possible without the support of the European partners, among which there is EPP as well. The EPP president explained that, following the accession, PLDM will become a member with rights of observer of EPP, as full-fledged members may become only the parties from the countries which joined EU. EPP has already a partner in Moldova, the Christian Democratic Popular Party, which is a member with right of observer. Moldpres, 27 May 2010

European experts analyze performance of communist authorities on April 7

Two European experts will soon pronounce on the performance of the former administration of Moldova on April 7, 2009, when the peaceful protests degenerated into riots. Francesc Guillen Lasiera and Ralph Roche are specialists in masses management. The Council of Europe delegated them to work in Chisinau at the request of the parliamentary commission of inquiry. The two experts will formulate recommendations and conclusions over the April 7 events on the basis of the video and photo evidence collected by the commission. The conclusions will be attached to the commission's report and will be made known. IPN, 29 May 2010

EU provides €66 million to support poverty reduction and economic growth

The European Commission adopted on June 1 the Annual Action Programme 2010 for the Republic of Moldova, worth a €66 million. The new cooperation programme will support the anti-poverty agenda of the new Moldovan government seeking to stimulate economic growth throughout the country. A special focus of the programme is put on reducing poverty in rural areas. Moreover, the assistance programme will support developments in the fields of energy and biomass, in order to contribute to a more secure and sustainable energy production in the Republic of Moldova. This support aims to reduce Moldova's almost complete dependence on foreign primary energy sources. "Moldova faces formidable challenges that require decisive and determined action on reform. We stand by Moldova in these efforts. Today's decision proves that our support is real and substantial," said Štefan Füle, Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighborhood Policy. This €66 million allocation is provided through the EU's European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). IPN, 3 June 2010

MOLDOVA POLITICS

Protests in Cahul, Balti and Orhei: "Down with the Liberal Quartet"

The PCRМ's project Social Action has staged protests against the central administration in Cahul, Balti and Orhei on May 29. The PCRМ said the protest in Cahul took place in front of the building of the district administration. The participants shouted slogans such as "Elections!" and "Down with the Alliance!", "Down with the Liberal Quartet". More than 6,000 people protested against the administration in Balti. Communist MP Vladimir Vitiuc said the town is crushed by the Liberal regime Filat-Ghimpu and the townspeople are ready to put up resistance to the betrayal course taken by the central authorities. Former Premier Zinaida Greceanyi thanked the protesters for their initiative and determination. "Only this way can Moldova and its people effectively defend their rights," said Greceanyi. IPN, 29 May 2010

Referendum to be held next September, parliamentary, presidential polls in November 2010

The leaders of the Alliance for European Integration (AIE) announced on June 3, 2010, a consolidated position on the overcoming of the constitutional crisis. The decision is to organize a referendum on the amendment of the article 78 of the Constitution (on the presidential election mechanism) in early September 2010, and presidential and parliamentary elections next November. The decision was made public at the end of a joint meeting of AIE and Council of Europe Secretary-General Thorbjorn Jagland. The leader of the Liberal Party (PL), Mihai Ghimpu, has announced that, following discussions with European officials, AIE decided that the only viable solution to overcome the present crisis is to organize a referendum during which the Moldovans are to express their opinions on the way their president should be elected. Parliamentary and presidential elections will be organized afterwards, in early November 2010. The leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM), Vlad Filat, said that this is the solution which will help Moldova overcome the crisis. "Everybody witnessed that we were looking for ways to avoid snap elections, but the reality is as it is. The decision taken today is backed by the European structures, and the elections will be a step which will turn the state institutions functional (...). We have no right to miss the prospects," Filat said. The leader of the Democratic Party (PD), Marian Lupu, said that the decision unveiled is consolidated and supported by all the AIE members. For his part, Council of Europe Secretary-General Thorbjorn Jagland said that the decision taken on June 3 is European, and backed by the European structures, as well as by the Venice Commission. The European official also asked the Moldovans to come to vote, so that Moldova may move forward and become an important EU partner. An MP of the Party of Communists, Vadim Misin, said that the communists do not agree with AIE's decision. He emphasized that the referendum is not a way to overcome the crisis, but will involve Moldova in problems more. "We will decide how we further act, but we certainly protest against the decision," Misin said. *Moldpres, 3 June 2010*

The decision to hold a consultative referendum on the method of electing the President in September and legislative and presidential elections in November advantages the government coalition, political analyst Igor Munteanu, the head of the Institute for Development and Social Initiative "Viitorul" told. "This is a compromise solution. The decision allows calming things down and overcoming the constitutional crisis," Igor Munteanu said. He considers at the referendum the population will vote in favor of the Alliance's proposal to allow electing the head of state directly by the people. He stressed that the organization of elections in November is in accordance with the recommendations made by the Venice Commission. "The Alliance shows that it can maneuver. Its political maneuvers comply with the national legislation and the observations of the European institutions," Igor Munteanu said. The analyst said the AIE deserves praise, while the Communist Party deserves criticism as its message was fully disproportional. *IPN, 3 June 2010*

Moldovan parliament to be dissolved next October at earliest

The parliament will be dissolved next October at the earliest, as the legislation sees that the parliament should be dissolved 45 days before elections are organized. The leader of the Democratic Party (PD), Marian Lupu, made this statement at the end of a meeting of the Alliance for European Integration (AIE). Lupu said that, under the AIE's decision, the parliament could not be dissolved earlier than early October 2010, as this is provided for in the legislation. "We will have referendum next September, during which the residents will express their opinions on the way to elect the president, after which the parliament will be dissolved 45 days before the day of the snap elections," the PD leader said. Lupu specified that the polls are likely to be organized in early next November, only after the parliament adopts a string of amendments to the Election Code. The code sees that elections may be organized only 120 days after a referendum. AIE's decision to dissolve the parliament after the referendum discontented the Communist Party, which has repeatedly said that the parliament should be dissolved on 16 June, one year after the last dissolution of the legislative body.

PCRM ready to support AIE's initiative on direct election of President

The Communist Party (PCRM) is willing to vote in favor of the Alliance for European Integration's initiative on direct election of the head of state. "In order to quickly unlock the political crisis and call early elections, the PCRM

is ready to back in Parliament the legislative initiative allowing for the direct election of the President. This will be the consensus expected by the whole Moldovan society,” the leader of the PCRM Vladimir Voronin told a press briefing on June 4. The former President of Moldova said the PCRM's position was determined by the Council of Europe's support for the Alliance's proposal to modify the Constitution by referendum. The Communists Party suggests not spending money and time on organizing a referendum to amend Article 78 of the Constitution. Thus, the PCRM is ready to support in Parliament the Alliance's initiative on direct election of the President. Vladimir Voronin informed that the PCRM canceled the protests scheduled for the next weeks and is waiting for a prompt answer from the Alliance. “The decision about the PCRM's return to the parliamentary sittings will be taken after the party receives guarantees that the Parliament will be dissolved and early elections will be called,” the former head of state said. Until now, the PCRM pleaded for the election of the President in Parliament by three rounds of voting. *IPN, 4 June 2010*

Premier Filat: referendum will be successful

Prime Minister Vlad Filat, the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM), is certain that the referendum to choose the method of electing the head of state set to take place in September will be successful. During the program “Public Life” on Radio Moldova on June 5, Vlad Filat said it is the people, not the Parliament that should give a mandate to the head of state. “I don't think that many people are against the direct election of the President of Moldova. I think the referendum will be successful. Afterward, we will hold presidential and parliamentary elections so as to elect the head of state and have a parliamentary majority,” Vlad Filat said. Referring to the Communist Opposition's proposal to amend Article 78 of the Constitution in Parliament, not by referendum, Vlad Filat said the Communists Party wants to throw the country into a new period of expectation. *IPN, 5 June 2010*

Modified Electoral Code adopted in first reading

The Parliament passed the amended Electoral Code in first reading. The amendments allow creating electoral blocs and setting up polling stations in places outside embassies and reduce the election threshold for parties from 5% to 4% and for independent candidates from 3% to 2%. According to Valeriu Nemerenco, chairman of the special parliamentary commission for improving the electoral legislation, 55 articles of the Electoral Code have been modified and several new articles have been added. Valeriu Nemerenco said that a number of proposals submitted by NGOs, political parties and other organizations will be discussed when the document is voted in the second reading. ‘The amended Code contains a number of recommendations that were made by the Venice Commission in 2007-2008, but were not taken into account then,’ Valeriu Nemerenco said. *IPN, 7 May 2010*

AEI parties will run in elections separately?

The leaders of the Alliance for European Integration (AEI) say that most probably they will take part in the elections separately and will not field a common candidate for the presidential elections. No related agreements have been reached so far. Mihai Godea, the leader of the parliamentary group of the Liberal Democratic Party, said two parties of the Alliance already made public their positions: the PLDM and the PDM announced they will run in elections separately. The leader of the Liberal Party (PL), Speaker Mihai Ghimpu said every party will decide by itself how to act as they are separate legal entities. According to Ghimpu, it is highly improbable that the Alliance will form an electoral bloc. *IPN, 4 June 2010*

Dialogue on visa regime liberalization to be opened on June 15

The dialogue on the liberalization of the visa regime for the Moldovan people will be opened in Luxemburg on June 15 by the European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy Štefan Füle. “The liberalization of the visa regime is a very important step not only because the Moldovan citizens will be able to move freely throughout the European Union, but also because this can help identify a solution to the Transnistrian conflict,” Prime Minister Vlad Filat said in a meeting with Štefan Füle in Brussels on Wednesday evening. The Commissioner said that Moldova makes progress in meeting the European standards and deserves benefiting from a liberalized visa

regime. The Premier went to Brussels to take part in the hearing on the sociopolitical situation in Moldova that was held at the European Parliament. *IPN, 10 June 2010*

HUMAN RIGHTS and RULE OF LAW

More cases of sexual exploitation of children by foreign tourists reported

A new trend in human trafficking is witnessed in Moldova – sexual tourism involving children. The term is new for the Moldovan specialists, but the phenomenon is well known in such countries as Brazil, Ecuador, Thailand and Indonesia. Eleven cases opened against foreigners accused of sexual crimes against minors have been sent to Moldovan courts during the last two years, but the real number of such cases is much higher, jurist Tatiana Fomina, the manager of the analysis and lobby service of the international center La Strada, said in a news conference. According to the jurist, the poor living standards in Moldova contribute to the development of the phenomenon. The problem of sexual tourism shouldn't be neglected as the poverty, corruption and imperfect legislation can lead to its expansion, said Tatiana Fomina. The jurist of La Strada recommended strengthening the capacity of the law enforcement bodies, informing the service providers about the consequences of this phenomenon, amending the legislation. The recommendations will be submitted to the Ministry of the Interior and the Prosecutor General's Office. *IPN, 2 June 2010*