

## ***Moldova Weekly – June 30 – Report on the current situation in Moldova in the weeks coming up to the preliminary elections to be held on July 29***

### **Introduction**

The Moldovan path to democracy and European integration is under enormous threat. The unresolved political crisis after the April elections led to further polarization of the country and, unfortunately, the main setbacks of the political and election systems (ruling party's control over state media, inconsistent list of registered voters, systemic abuse of administrative resources, political and economic harassment of opposition groups) still remain unresolved.

Moldova is part of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and of the new "Eastern Partnership" (EaP), in which the participating countries commit themselves to a cooperation based on principles of international law and fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The European Partnership for Democracy is a Brussels-based organization active in the field of democracy assistance which has Moldova as one of the target countries and is concerned with the pre-election situation. It is difficult to assess the situation from Brussels and the decision makers should be able to hear various independent voices from Moldova. This is why the EPD is issuing this Moldova Weekly bulletin which:

- brings information from Moldova given by established international or Moldovan news agencies and other reliable sources
- raises awareness of the situation in this ENP and EaP country within the Brussels community
- brings proper unbiased coverage in the weeks leading up to the elections

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### **INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

#### **The OSCE opened an election observation mission in Moldova**

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) today opened an election observation mission to monitor the early parliamentary elections in Moldova scheduled for 29 July. The mission consists of 14 international experts based in Chisinau, as well as up to 20 long-term observers expected to arrive by 30 June. In addition, ODIHR has requested 200 short-term observers from OSCE participating States. The mission will assess the election for its compliance with OSCE commitments and other international standards, as well as national legislation. Observers will monitor campaign activities, media coverage, the legislative framework and its implementation, the media situation, the work of the election administration and relevant government bodies and the resolution of election disputes. Source: OSCE

#### **Post-election period revealed further shortcomings, finds OSCE final report on Moldova's April vote**

The monitoring of the post-election situation in Moldova brought to light further shortcomings with the 5 April parliamentary elections, concluded the final report on the election process released by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) on Tuesday.

Adding to the concerns raised by international observers in a preliminary statement issued the day after the vote, the final report found that the post-election period was overshadowed by violent demonstrations and 'revealed further shortcomings that challenged some OSCE commitments, in particular the disregard for due process in adjudicating complaints of alleged irregularities and deficiencies in the compilation of voter lists lodged by opposition political parties.' 'The authorities now have an opportunity before the new elections to take effective measures to address the lack of public trust in the election process,' said Ambassador Janez Lenarcic, the Director of ODIHR. Lenarcic added that 'improving the voter lists and ensuring an atmosphere free of violence and intimidation will be essential elements in creating an environment for a genuinely democratic election.' The full report is available on the OSCE website at: [www.osce.org/odhr/38185](http://www.osce.org/odhr/38185) (in English and Romanian).

## **PACE Monitoring Committee holds exchange of views on Moldova situation**

On 23 June, the PACE Monitoring Committee held an exchange of views on the situation in Moldova and made public the Information Note on follow-up to Resolution 1666 (2009) prepared by the Committee's co-rapporteurs, Josette Durrieu (France) and Egidijus Vareikis (Lithuania), on the basis of their visit to Chisinau on 10 June 2009. In this Note, the rapporteurs called on the Moldovan authorities to scrupulously apply the new provisions of the Electoral Code. They also recommended that the Assembly Bureau appoint a strong delegation to observe the elections in Moldova on 29 July 2009. Lastly, the co-rapporteurs expressed their desire to see the election campaign take place under the best possible conditions, in accordance with European standards, particularly with regard to access to the media.

In the said Resolution 1666 (2009) the observers noted that the electoral process was marked by a number of significant procedural shortcomings and that significant improvements in the electoral process were required. The Assembly disapproved of the statements made by the Moldovan authorities immediately after the outbreak of violence, in which officials at the highest political level, without first having conducted a thorough investigation, accused the opposition of staging the violent protests in an attempt to organize a coup d'etat. The Assembly is strongly concerned about acts of violence that were committed by the police during the post-electoral events. Source: Infotag, 24 June 2009

## **FOREIGN ENGAGEMENT**

### **The European Parliament planning to send an election observation mission**

The European Parliament Office for Elections Observation is planning to send an EP Election Observation Mission to Moldova for the upcoming elections on July 29. Since the new EP will only be in session for the first time on July 14 it is not clear whether such mission will be possible. The European Parliament resolution of 7 May 2009 on the situation in the Republic of Moldova stresses the need for the EU to use all its possible resources to help solve political crisis in Moldova. Source: European Parliament

## **MOLDOVA POLITICS**

### **Russia to give Moldova 500 million dollar credit**

President Vladimir Voronin, on a working visit to Moscow, on Monday June 22 met Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. The officials discussed diverse issues of Moldovan-Russian cooperation in different fields, focusing

on economic relations. The sides agreed that Russia will provide Moldova with credit of 500 million dollars. The Russian prime minister said that the first installment, worth 150 million dollars, will be transferred in the nearest time. President Vladimir Voronin said that the proceeds will be used to finance a string of investment projects, discussed within the Economic Council of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), held in Chisinau last week. Source: Moldpres, 22 June 2009

## **ELECTIONS**

### **Opposition parties form Council for Political Dialog and Cooperation**

The opposition parties with seats in parliament: the Liberal Party (PL), the Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM), and the Moldova Noastra Alliance (AMN) have formed a Council for Political Dialog and Cooperation in an attempt to send a signal of political solidarity. The announcement was made on Monday June 22. 'In the light of the upcoming early parliamentary elections and with a view to initiating a civilized dialog between the opposition and the government, between the civil society, and in order to send a clear message of political solidarity, we, the PL, the PLDM, and the AMN, expressing our allegiance to the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova and to its constitutional regime, have decided on the foundation of the Council for Political Dialog and Cooperation', the AMN leader Serafim Urecheanu read from a joint statement of the parties. PLDM leader Vlad Filat said this political council has three 'very clear' goals: 'We need to coordinate our actions in this election campaign, to mobilize our forces, and to conduct strict monitoring to ensure that these parliamentary elections are free and fair', explained Filat.

### **PL says to have discovered more irregularities in April elections**

The Liberal Party (PL) says that it has discovered more than 15 vote rigging methods used in the April 5 elections. Some of the proofs were presented at a news conference on Tuesday June 16. They will be submitted to the Prosecutor's Office of the municipality of Chisinau and to district prosecutor's offices. 'In 2009, the electoral registers contained 408,000 more people than in the 2007 local elections. The Central Election Commission (CEC) explained that this is the number of people born during 1990-1991 that obtained the right to vote in 2009. The statistical data show that over 90,000 people were born in 1990, while in 1991 – about 60,000. The figure of 408,000 was included in order to obtain votes in favor of the Communist Party,' said the PL leader Mihai Ghimpu. Another method of fixing the elections identified by the PL is multiple voting. 'Checking 100 polling places in the municipality of Chisinau, we discovered 2,000 cases when the people voted two, three or even four times,' Ghimpu said. Liberal MP Oleg Bodrug said that many people voted without identification documents, while in some of the polling stations many signatures had been falsified. Source: IPN, 16 June 2009