

Dear Tomáš KOZÁK,
Please find below this biweekly bulletin on the current situation in
Moldova.
Thank you
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European Partnership for Democracy

Moldova Bulletin – April 30, 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 kristinaprunerova@eupd.eu.

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FOREIGN ENGAGEMENT

Moldovan premier, Russian ambassador discuss bilateral relations

Prime Minister Vlad Filat met on Monday (e.n. 19.04.2010) the Russian Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador to Moldova Valeriy Kuzmin, the government's press service has said. The officials discussed the development of bilateral relations, preparation for the celebration of Victory Day in Chisinau, as well as the forthcoming summit of heads of government from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries, due in Moscow next May. The Russian ambassador spoke out for boosting the Moldovan-Russian cooperation, especially in the economic sector. Kuzmin reconfirmed the Russian business circles' interest in participating in a CIS economic forum due in Chisinau in June 2010. He invited Moldova to participate in an economic forum in St Petersburg. The prime minister said that Moldova is open for cooperation. Filat confirmed willingness to participate in the next summit of the CIS heads of government. He added that an eventual bilateral meeting with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin would be opportune within this forum. "Such a meeting would be very important for us," Filat said. The sides agreed to maintain constant dialogue in order to continuously develop mutually advantageous bilateral relations. *Moldpres, 19 April 2010*

Moldovan delegation in Bucharest to sign several cooperation agreements

The ministers accompanying Acting President Mihai Ghimpu to Bucharest on 27 and 28 April were mandated to sign cooperation agreements with Romanian ministries. Minister of Justice Alexandru Tanase was empowered to sign the agreement of cooperation between the Ministries of Justice of Moldova and Romania. This document will allow extending the bilateral cooperation, especially in adjusting the national legislation to the European and international standards. Legal principles of strengthening cooperation in the areas of penitentiary administration and probation will be agreed. An agreement of cooperation between the Ministry of Construction and Regional Development of Moldova and the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism of Romania will also be signed. Minister of the Environment Gheorghe Salaru will sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of the Environment of Moldova and the Romanian Ministry of Environment and Forests. Minister of the Interior Victor Catan and his Romanian counterpart will sign a Protocol between the Government of Romania and the Government of Moldova for applying the agreement between the EU and Moldova on the readmission of illegal migrants, which was signed in Brussels on October 10, 2007. Under the protocol, the Romanian authorities will provide assistance in implementing the EU-Moldova agreement. *IPN, 23 April 2010*

Moldovan-Romanian parliamentary commission for EU integration to be set up

Head of Parliament Mihai Ghimpu, the Chairman of the Romanian Senate Mircea Geoana and the Head of the Chamber of Deputies Roberta Anastase signed in Bucharest the Protocol of Cooperation and Partnership between the Parliaments of Moldova and Romania. The document provides for the creation of a joint commission for European integration that will include the chairpersons of the most important parliamentary commissions of the two states. 'This agreement meets all the present requirements. Moldova and Romania have a unique relation as Romania undertook the role of the most sincere and reliable advocate of Moldova,' said Roberta Anastase. Mircea Geoana stressed that the unnatural period between the two Parliaments, when the relations between Moldova and Romanian had been frozen, came to an end. *IPN, 27 April 2010*

MOLDOVA POLITICS

Social-Democratic Party elects new leader Victor Shelin

Businessman Victor Shelin, the owner of the chain of movie theaters Patria, was elected president of the Social-Democratic Party (SDP) at its XII congress on Saturday, April 17. Outgoing SDP president Dumitru Braghis was instead elected chairman of the party's national council. Shelin beat his only challenger, Dumitru Braghis, 235 to 193 votes of the attending SDP members. The new SDP leader targets at least 10 percent of popular vote for his

party in the upcoming early parliamentary elections and a fair amount of success in the 2011 local elections. Shelin said the SDP would field a candidate for the Chisinau mayoral run, too. *IPN, 18 April 2010*

Two generations of MPs restore Declaration of Independence

Members of the first Parliament of Moldova (1990-1994) and of the present legislative body came together for a solemn sitting on 26 April, to sign again the Declaration of Independence that was approved on 27 August, 1991, but was destroyed in fire during the April 2009 events. The sitting takes place 20 years from the first meeting of the democratic Parliament and in connection with the adoption of the Tricolor on 27 April. Head of Parliament and Acting President Mihai Ghimpu said the restoration of the Declaration of Independence is 'a real chance to repair the history.' Premier Vlad Filat said the present legislature has the task of continuing the democratic aspirations of the predecessors. 'We had to go through difficult periods until we returned to a normal development path,' he said. The parliamentary group of the Communists Party did not come to the sitting. Earlier, the leader of the party Vladimir Voronin said the restoration of the Declaration of Independence is a lark. *IPN, 26 April 2010*

Marian Lupu says cooperation between PDM and PCRM is possible

The leader of the Democratic Party (PDM) Marian Lupu does not rule out the possibility that his party will cooperate with the Communists Party (PCRM) if the latter undergoes a rebranding. 'It is practically impossible to cooperate with a non-reformed party. The cooperation with a party that will change its name, ideology and, respectively, the human resources is possible,' Marian Lupu said during the program 'Politics Live' broadcast on the public TV channel Moldova 1 on Monday (e.n. 26.04.2010) evening. Marian Lupu said he heard rumors that the PCRM plans a rebranding and started to more seriously discuss the issue. The president of the PDM said that in 2005, when he accepted to become a member of the PCRM, he joined the party with certain thoughts. 'I came with the idea that the party's name should be changed as it is old and does not meet the realities. I proposed changing the party's basic documents and laying emphasis on the classical center-left Social-Democrat platform, including younger people in the party's administration and other things. There are persons in the PCRM who share these ideas,' Marian Lupu said. Lupu added that the reformation of the PCRM is necessary for the prospects of the Moldovan political class. *IPN, 27 April 2010*

FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA

Premier Filat: TVR will be retransmitted in Moldova soon

"Steps will be taken in the near future to solve the problems related to the retransmission of the TVR in Moldova," Prime Minister Vlad Filat said at a meeting with senior officials of the Romanian Television Company (TVR), according to a communiqué from the Government. The interlocutors spoke about the television market in Moldova and Romania and Romania's experience in developing the public television. TVR president Alexandru Sassu said the public television is an important pillar in building democracy. He stressed that he wants the Moldovan people to have access to the information disseminated in Romania. Premier Vlad Filat said the television market in Moldova is developing, informing that new TV channels have been recently launched in Chisinau. "The Moldovan people must have access to information from different sources. Therefore, we welcome the appearance of new sources of information, including TV channels," Filat said. *IPN, 19 April 2010*

More airtime for political parties

The political parties could obtain more airtime on the public television channels and radio stations. The Government approved a bill that allows offering more airtime on the public television channels and radio stations to political parties, and their candidates for elective positions during the election campaigns, free of charge and in equal amount. The bill was submitted by a group of five unaffiliated MPs. Under the legislative initiative, every political party will be offered monthly 15 minutes of radio airtime and 10 minutes of television airtime if they apply by the 20th day of every month so that the radio stations and TV channels can plan the broadcast schedule. *IPN, 22 April 2010*

HUMAN RIGHTS and RULE OF LAW

Former Chisinau police head under indictment

The General Prosecutor's Office (GPO) Monday accused the former head of the Chisinau municipal police, Iacob Gumenita, of power abuse during the post-electoral riots on the night of 7 to 8 April 2009. On 15 April 2010, the Chisinau Centru court accepted an inquiry by prosecutors and issued a ten-day arrest warrant against Iacob Gumenita as a preventive punishment measure. Presently, Colonel Iacob Gumenita is remanded in the Anti-corruption Centre. The former head of the Chisinau police was detained after unveiled video records shot by cameras from the government building on the night of 7 to 8 April 2009 showed him hitting young people on the Great National Assembly Square in Chisinau. *Moldpres, 19 April 2010*

Later this month, The Centru district court rejected the prosecutors' request to extend for another 30 days the warrant for the house arrest of the former police chief of Chisinau municipality Iacob Gumenita and decided that he will be investigated out of prison. *IPN, 23 April 2010*

Mihai Ghimpu questioned by prosecutors

Speaker Mihai Ghimpu considers that the Parliament Building and the Presidential Office could have been saved if the former governors had come out and talked to the protesters so as to calm them down. The leader of the Liberal Party made the statement on 23 April before going to the Prosecutor's Office to give testimony as a witness in the cases related to the April 2009 events. Ghimpu said that he prepared for the questioning and tried to remember as many details as possible. According to him, the Government Building and the National Television Building might have been also devastated, but he convinced the young people not to do it during a discussion with them. Mihai Ghimpu stressed that he went to the Great National Assembly Square when he found out that the Parliament Building was being devastated. 'I succeeded in stopping the young people from going to the National Television Building and the Government Building. The devastation of the Parliament Building and the Presidential Office could have been avoided if the Voronin administration had talked to the people then,' he said. *IPN, 23 April 2010*

Police officers, civilians hurt during April 2009 events will receive allocations

The Government will provide allocations to the civilians and police officers, who were hurt during the protests of 7 April, 2009. The size of the compensation will depend on the damage caused to the victims. The subject was discussed at the first meeting of the governmental commission for identifying the victims of the April 2009 events and the methods of helping them held on 22 April. The Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Health and nongovernmental organizations that have databases about these persons will be involved in the identification process. 'Not much is known about the victims of those tragic events, who included protesters and passersby as well as police officers. We decided to provide compensations so that the people feel they are protected by the state,' Minister of Justice Alexandru Tanase, who heads the commission, said at the meeting. *IPN, 22 April 2010*

Constitutional Court rules that Ion Muruianu was dismissed illegally

The Constitutional Court ruled that the dismissal of Ion Muruianu from the post of president of the Supreme Court of Justice by the Parliament was unconstitutional. Judge-rapporteur of the case Victor Puscas has told that the legislative body abused power. The Court returned the verdict at a hearing on 27 April. Ion Muruianu may be reinstated in his post. Asked what follows next, Victor Puscas said a final decision will be made by the Supreme Council of Magistrates. Minister of Justice Alexandru Tanase, who is a member of Supreme Council of Magistrates, announced that a press briefing will be held, centering on the Constitutional Court's decision. Ion Muruianu was discharged from the post of president of the Supreme Court of Justice by the government coalition on 4 March, 2010. Muruianu became the focus of attention after he named the journalists 'rabid dogs that become dangers for the society' in the speech he delivered at the general assembly of judges. Afterward, a number of mass media organizations demanded that he be dismissed. *IPN, 27 April 2010*

Journalist, political scientist Ernest Vardanean officially indicted on charges of high treason

On 18 April 2010, the Journalist and political scientist Ernest Vardanean, who was recently arrested by Transnistrian authorities, has been officially indicted on charges of high treason. Vardanean's request that he be investigated on parole is rejected. The journalist's lawyer is not allowed to attend the trial during which Mr. Vardanean was officially accused of the crime because the meeting was conducted with closed doors. Transnistrian authorities do not accept lawyers without "Transnistrian citizenship", which the Moldovan lawyer representing Vardanean did not have. The wife of journalist Ernest Vardanian has not seen her husband so far.

The Moldovan government has demanded Vardanean's release, as have numerous human rights and journalists' associations, including Reporters Without Borders, the South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO), the Committee to Protect Journalists. Three Romanian members of the European Parliament have launched an online petition calling Vardanean's arrest "unacceptable" and demanding his immediate release. Ernest Vardanean was arrested on 7 April 2010 by the unconstitutional forces in Tiraspol charged of high treason in favor of the Republic of Moldova. *Imedia, BASA-press, 19 April 2010; RFE/RL's Moldovan Service, 16 April 2010*

The EU Heads of Mission in Chisinau express their deep concern that the journalist Ernest Vardanyan, who was arrested by the Transnistrian security forces, has been denied the basic human rights and that representatives of the civil society have been recently interrogated in the Transnistrian region. The EU Heads of Mission are following closely the case of the journalist Ernest Vardanyan, who was arrested on 7 April 2010 in Tiraspol. The EU Heads of Mission recall that human rights, and in particular the freedom of expression, as well as fundamental rights of detainees should be respected. It underlines in particular that these include the right of legal counsel of their own choosing; the right to be present or represented by a person of their own choosing at pre-trial detention hearings; and the right to contact their families. The EU Heads of Mission note with deep concern that Mr. Vardanyan has so far been denied these basic rights, the statement says. The EU Heads of Mission emphasize more generally that the detention of individuals on the basis that they are considered as undesirable by those exercising power constitutes a violation of human rights and that pre-trial detention should be only permissible in relation to specific and concrete offenses. At the same time, the EU Heads of Mission express their concern as several civil society representatives have been recently interrogated in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova. The EU Heads of Mission recall the key importance of civil society for socioeconomic development and underline that civil society must be able to work freely and without the fear of being subjected to arbitrary reprisal. The Council of Europe Office in Chisinau aligns itself with this statement. *IPN, 22 April 2010*

