

Moldova Weekly – September 2 – Report on the current situation in Moldova in the weeks after the preliminary elections held on 29 July

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MOLDOVA POLITICS

Parliament officially formed

On Friday August 28, the first session of the newly elected Parliament was held. The chairman of the Moldovan Constitutional Court, Dumitru Pulbere, presented in parliament a report on the July 29 elections, stating that the ballot was free and correct and declaring the parliament as formed. The meeting’s chairman, the oldest MP Ivan Calin, delivered a speech thanking all those who contributed to the holding of quality elections. In his speech, Calin also said that "the Party of Communists does not have the necessary number of votes to form a parliamentary majority. Talks with the other parliamentary factions who want to participate in the government are necessary. We should come to an agreement. I call on Voronin, Filat, Ghimpu, Lupu and Urechean to hold negotiations in the next ten days and then hold another meeting."

The leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM), Vlad Filat, announced the formation of the parliamentary majority made up of the PLDM, the Liberal Party, the Democratic Party and the Our Moldova Alliance. The Party of Communists asked for a break until September 4, which Mr. Calin duly granted. The remaining 4 parties, with a total of 53 deputies, were strongly against any breaks. Communist MP Vladimir Turcan told journalists that if the meeting continued it would be illegal because it would be a violation of procedures. Turcan also said that the party had 10 days to form its parliamentary faction. So, the Communists left the room, while the remaining MPs continued the plenary sitting. Its chairing was entrusted to the oldest member of the Liberal Party faction - Ion Hadarca. Marian Lupu, the leader of the Democratic Party, proposed that the Speaker of Parliament be elected today. The nine-member commission for the election of the speaker was set up. That work done, all 4 factions concerned unanimously nominated Liberal Party Chairman Mihai Ghimpu as candidate for that post. The Parliament then announced a break to prepare ballot-papers for a secret vote for Speaker.

The new legislative body is made up of 48 representatives of the Party of Communists, 18 of the Liberal Democratic Party, 15 of the Liberal Party, 13 of the Democratic Party and seven of the Our Moldova Alliance. The latter four have formed a coalition entitled "Alliance for European Integration" and are holding talks on forming of the government. Moldpres, Infotag, 28 August 2009

Parliament speaker elected Liberal Party's leader Mihai Ghimpu

The leader of the Liberal Party, Mihai Ghimpu, was elected Speaker on Friday August 28 with the votes of 53 MPs representing four parliamentary factions. The next session was announced for September 2. The Party of Communists, which has 48 parliamentary seats, did not participate in the meeting. The deputies of the Party of Communists took a legal break to form the party's parliamentary faction. Vladimir Turcan, who made it to the parliament on the ticket of the Party of Communists, told journalists that if the meeting continued after the chairman of the first parliamentary session, Ivan Calin, announced a break until 4 September, it will be illegal because it would violate procedures is violated. Turcan also said that the Party of Communists would appeal against the election of the Speaker in the Constitutional Court very shortly. He said that what the representatives of the four parliamentary parties did today was a step towards destabilizing the situation in the country. Moldpress, IPN, 28 August 2009

PD to nominate candidate for presidency, PLDM – for premiership

The new Speaker of the Moldovan Parliament elected on Friday, Mihai Ghimpu, stated to the press that candidacy for President of Moldova would be nominated by Marian Lupu's Democratic Party (PD), and candidature for Prime Minister by Vlad Filat's Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM). As for the 4th pillar in the majority Alliance for European Integration, the Moldova Noastra Alliance (AMN), its scope of functions will be announced later. Marian Lupu reminded journalists that the AEI's invitation to dialog, sent earlier to the Communist Party, remains in force. Lupu said the new Government, to be headed by a PLDM representative, will be a coalitional body, so all four AEI member parties would be responsible for the results of governing the country brought about by the liberal democratic coalition. The new Parliament has decided to resume work on September 2, when the forum will start forming its working groups. Infotag, 28 August 2009

MP Tkachuk: PCRM ready to be in opposition to avoid another election

The Moldovan Communist Party (PCRM) stands ready to be in opposition for the sake of sparing the country another early parliamentary election, MP Mark Tkachuk, former Political Advisor to the Moldovan President and presently the head of the Communist Party's electoral headquarters, stated in his interview with the Timpul (Time) newspaper of Chisinau, published on Friday. He stated, 'It's better to be in opposition, if only we fail to achieve a consensus with the rest parties... Another early election would be a tragedy for Moldova'. The parliamentarian said the Communist Party has scrutinized a possible scenario of the party's passing over into opposition: 'We know how and by which mechanisms we could go into opposition. The MCP does not cling to power. If we fail to achieve a common denominator (with the Alliance for European Integration), we will all the same be the largest faction in parliament, and will demonstrate our worth, and the would-be respected power will have to deal with us'. He refrained from providing a clear answer concerning whether or not the Communist Party will provide the 8 votes necessary for electing a new president of Moldova. Tkachuk said only that, 'The 8 votes will be available only if the party decides so'. Infotag, 28 August 2009

Communists challenge Ghimpu's election as parliament speaker in Constitutional Court

The Communists Party (PCRM) filed a request on Tuesday with the Constitutional Court challenging the legality of the election of the Liberal Party's leader Mihai Ghimpu as speaker of the Moldovan Parliament. The request was filed by PCRM's lawyer Sergiu Sarbu and the MPs Vladimir Turcan and Maria Postoico. "We have notified the Constitutional Court requesting an examination of the constitutional content of the Parliament's decision of August 28. We believe a number of articles of the Moldovan Parliament's Regulation, as well as of the Constitution of our country, were violated", says Sarbu.

The Constitutional Court has three months to hear the appeal. "Bearing in mind the importance of the subject in question, we've asked for a fast-track procedure. But it's up to the Court to decide. We'd like to hear an answer by September 4", said Sarbu. Sarbu added the Communists would comply with any decision of the Court as all of its pronouncements are irreversible.

Mihai Ghimpu was elected speaker on August 28, by the vote of the majority Alliance for European Integration (AEI), and in the absence of the Communists MPs, who walked out immediately after the speech of the chief of the Constitutional Court on the validation of the July 29 elections. Leonid Bujor, a member of parliament representing the Moldova Noastra Alliance (which is part of the AEI) and a lawyer, stated in a broadcast on Vocea Basarabiei Radio that the decisions adopted on August 28 by the parliamentary majority were perfectly legal and was surprised by the Communists' appeal. "The Constitutional Court examines only documents of legislative nature, but in this case we talk about the establishment of Parliament, an organizational procedure and an internal affair of Parliament. The Parliament's Regulation doesn't stipulate the condition that Parliament is inaugurated only after the establishment of the factions; this is merely a formal procedure of announcing the contact people from each political group that entered the parliament", said Bujor.

Lawyer Alexandru Tasnase, also an MP representing the AEI, has told the same program on Vocea Basarabiei that the country faces a deep crisis and there is no time to wait until this situation is solved. Tasnase reiterated the legality of Ghimpu's election and urged the Communists to act in "strict conformity with the law". IPN September 1, 2009

Republic of Moldova should not join NATO - Marian Lupu

The most probable candidate for Republic of Moldova presidency, Democratic Party Chairman Marian Lupu presumes Moldova may well need to hold a new parliamentary election if the incumbent legislative forum fails to elect a head of state. Lupu stated in his interview with Vremya Novostei [News Time] newspaper of Moscow published on Monday, "We hope that Communist Party representatives will realize the entire complexity of the current situation, aggravated by a global economic crisis, will demonstrate flexibility, and will enter into negotiations with the [majority] coalition. Such dialog is necessary. Moldova does not need another early election. So far, chances of avoiding another early election are fifty-fifty. But as a Moldovan proverb says, "A summer day brings more than a whole year". Presently, the situation changes not even every day, but every hour".

He said that, at the moment, the Moldovan Parliament [of 101 seats] has almost a mirror-like reflection of the situation after the 2005 elections, when the Communists had 56 mandates and the other parties 45. "Then, some parties supported the candidacy of Communist Party leader Vladimir Voronin for presidency, demanding no essential state posts in exchange. As such, a precedent has already been created, I guess it can well be repeated in the analogous circumstances of 2009", presumes Marian Lupu.

He said the Democratic Party of Moldova is going to adhere to an external political course that would guarantee a stable development of the Republic. Among the party's foreign policy priorities he mentioned the preservation of Moldova's neutrality status, not envisaging accession to NATO, a continuation of partnership relations with Russia, and the development of cooperation with other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). "The centre-leftist Democratic Party of Moldova has been called to act as an anchor that would save the coalition ship from rocking too much. As the leaders of coalition parties have agreed to act on the basis of a consensus, I guess we will avoid geopolitical hurricanes during the forthcoming 4 years of our governance", said Marian Lupu. He presumes it is not quite correct to debate at the moment where the state power should be concentrated, for "currently, we should avoid arguing about who of us is the chief, for we must ensure a general efficient governance of the country". Infotag, Sept 1, 2009

PCRM says early elections possible

The Communist Party (PCRM) does not rule out the possibility of new early legislative elections. This topic was discussed at Wednesday's plenary meeting of the PCRM, Info-Prim Neo reports. The Communist MP Vladimir Turcan said that there is a 50% probability that early elections will take place. "At today's meeting, we will not take a definitive decision as we will yet follow how things develop," he said. He reiterated that the invitation to the four parties – the PLDM, PL, PDM and AMN – to form a wide coalition is still valid. Another Communist MP, Mark Tkachuk said today that the Communists would assess the political situation in the country and adopt a resolution that will be made public. "The political style adopted by the Alliance for European Integration (AEI) does not suit us. We will not be to blame if early elections take place," he said.

Asked if the Communist MPs will go to the sitting that they scheduled for September 4, Tkachuk said that they will go, but if a quorum is not present, the meeting will be adjourned. The member of the PCRМ Vadim Misin recommended the AEI to yield power to the PCRМ. He says it is the only party able to take the country out of the crisis. After the meeting, the leaders of the party gathered to draw up the list of members of the parliamentary group of the PCRМ.

The meeting was attended by the outgoing first deputy prime minister Igor Dodon. Asked why the Prime Minister did not accept the MPs' invitation to attend the Parliament's sitting, Dodon said that the Government resigned, but presented a report on the social-economic situation in the country a week ago. "I don't think it is the opportune moment to go to the Parliament today, as they don't want to obtain information, but something else," he said, without giving more details. The AEI called the Parliament's sitting for September 2. The MPs of the PCRМ did not attend.