

EU-MOLDOVA PARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION COMMITTEE

SIXTH MEETING

11 June 2003

CHISINAU

Final Statement and Recommendations

23 June 2003
EUR/TB/ES

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Co-Chairmen: Mr Jan Marinus WIERSMA and Mr Victor STEPANIUC

Final Statement and Recommendations **pursuant to Article 89 of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement**

Under the co-chairmanship of Mr Jan Marinus WIERSMA (PSE, Netherlands) and Mr Victor STEPANIUC (Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova) the sixth meeting of the EU-Moldova Parliamentary Cooperation Committee was held in Chisinau on 11 June 2003. The Committee exchanged views with Mr Vasile TARLEV, Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Moldova, H.E. Mr Panagiotis GOUMAS, Ambassador of Greece to Ukraine and Moldova, on behalf of the Greek Presidency-in-Office of the Council of the European Union, and Mr Steffen SKOVMAND, Chargé d'affaires of the Head of Delegation to Moldova in Kyiv, on behalf of the European Commission.

The Parliamentary Cooperation Committee agrees the following:

EU-Moldova relations

1. stresses that the EU is a community of shared values of respect for human rights and democracy as outlined in the Copenhagen Criteria; reiterates its view that the EU-Moldova relationship must be based on the acceptance and implementation of these values;
2. welcomes the European aspiration of the authorities and the people of the Republic of Moldova and all efforts to deepen their relationship with the EU;
3. urges the Republic of Moldova and the European institutions to examine how further relations might be strengthened within a realistic political framework, including the new political framework of a Wider Europe that is proposed by the European Commission;
4. taking into account that the Commission will elaborate an Individual Plan of Action for the Republic of Moldova, stresses that the success of the Plan will depend on the active implementation of the necessary obligations by the Moldovan authorities and underlines that the Plan should take into consideration Moldova's aspirations to integrate to the EU;
5. notes that the present enlargement process should also bring benefits in terms of peace and security, as well as economic and social prosperity, for the people of the Republic of Moldova; takes note of the request to treat the Republic of Moldova in the same manner as the EU treats other South-East European states and reiterates the conclusions of the fifth Parliamentary Cooperation Committee meeting on this issue;
6. reiterates its support for all efforts by the Government of the Republic of Moldova to approximate its legislation to that of the EU and to European standards; underlines the

EU's readiness to continue cooperation and support with regard to legislative approximation; welcomes the prospect offered of access to the Single Market and encourages the Republic of Moldova to undertake all necessary steps to achieve this goal;

7. acknowledges the stipulation of the Communication of the European Commission which opens the way for granting a preferential commerce regime for Moldovan products to the Single Market, provided these products meet the necessary quality criteria;
8. welcomes the resolution of the European Parliament of 5 June 2003 which invites the EU institutions to evaluate the feasibility of including the Republic of Moldova in the Stabilisation and Association Process and, if appropriate, to clarify the conditions to be fulfilled for that purpose;
9. stresses that the Republic of Moldova is an independent country which has the right to choose its own political course, that it has a high interest to develop regional cooperation and that it has elected to move towards the EU;
10. welcomes the signing by the Republic of Moldova in November 2002 in Athens of the Memorandum on the regional electricity market and its integration into the internal market of the EU; invites the Moldovan authorities to make every effort to ensure the successful implementation of this important regional project; supports the Republic of Moldova's desire to be included in the similar regional project currently elaborated by the European Commission in the field of gas;

Economic and social situation in the Republic of Moldova

11. expresses grave concern at the increase in the Moldovan national debt in recent months and reiterates its call on the Moldovan authorities to accelerate economic reforms and to cooperate more closely with the international financial institutions in order to adapt to the demands of the global economy;
12. welcomes progress made in the economic sphere, including the growth of 7.2% in 2002 and the decline in inflation in the year; nevertheless underlines that these improvements must benefit all sectors of society including the vulnerable, such as the elderly and children; in this respect welcomes the pioneer work being undertaken in de-institutionalised day care at the Speranza centre; also urges the rapid adoption and implementation of the draft legislation on children at risk;
13. reiterates its view that further structural, administrative and judicial reforms are essential for the economic development of the country; underlines the importance of creating a transparent and secure business environment that will attract foreign direct investment to the Republic of Moldova and in which corruption is not tolerated; underlines the need for significant steps to be taken to combat corruption as a precondition for the receipt of further EU aid;
14. supports the extension of the remit of the European Investment Bank to the Republic of Moldova in order to further economic development and investment in infrastructure projects, in coordination with EBRD and World Bank programmes;

Human rights and freedom of expression in the Republic of Moldova

15. underlines its position that respect for the principles of democracy and the rule of law are the foundation of EU-Moldova relations and an essential element of the Partnership and

Cooperation Agreement and underpin the obligations to which the Republic of Moldova has committed itself as a Member State of the Council of Europe;

16. reiterates its statement that, opposition parties and minority interests must be given a full opportunity to participate actively in the political course of the country; supports continuing dialogue between government and opposition as a means of encouraging political stability; in this respect supports the promotion of the Round Table talks and the development of a less polarised political situation;
17. supports the continuing efforts of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to promote the strengthening of democracy, human rights, religious liberty and freedom of expression in the Republic of Moldova; in this respect welcomes those positive steps taken to date by the Moldovan authorities and urges full implementation of the Council's resolutions of 24 April 2002 and 26 September 2002;
18. takes note and support the conclusions of the OSCE/ODIHR on the local elections of 25 May 2003 in the Republic of Moldova and urges the Moldovan authorities to take steps to implement the recommendations;

Situation in Transnistria

19. underlines its view that the resolution of the Transnistria issue is one of the key elements in promoting economic prosperity and political stability in the whole of Republic of Moldova; stresses again the need for urgent steps to be taken to find a peaceful solution to the conflict, in line with OSCE declarations and with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova;
20. supports attempts to draw up a new constitution for the Republic of Moldova by means of the Joint Constitutional Commission; stresses the importance of discussions being transparent and open;
21. welcomes the new active approach of the EU in the search for a settlement of the Transnistria dispute; welcomes in particular the nomination by the EU of an observer to the Joint Constitutional Committee and looks forward to the EU institutions - including the European Parliament – playing a more active role in the search for a constitutional settlement; welcomes greater EU involvement in resolution of border issues; also looks towards increased engagement by the EU in the implementation of an agreement, including the possibility of sending peacekeepers;
22. regrets the failure to achieve a complete fulfilment of the OSCE/Istanbul commitments on arms and troops withdrawal from Transnistria by the target date of 31 December 2002, and calls for the new deadline of 31 December 2003 to be observed;

Border issues

23. reiterates its emphasis on the importance of establishing a common and secure border management regime that is based on a common understanding on the fight against organised crime, terrorism and corruption, as well as on common rules for immigration, protection for asylum seekers and re-admission;
24. supports recent moves by the European Commission to promote cross border cooperation and welcomes in particular the possible introduction of mobile monitoring units; welcomes too the Ukraine-Moldova customs agreement and mutual recognition of the new

Moldovan customs seal; also takes note that the Republic of Moldova asks for a greater EU involvement in issues of border security;

25. supports the activities of the new Euroregion “Upper Pruth” made up of five regions of the Moldova, Ukraine and Romania, in particular the implementation of the environmental projects: expresses its hope that the Moldovan government will also provide financial support for the agreed projects;

European Commission delegation

26. strongly urges the establishment of a permanent European Commission delegation in Chisinau as a matter of urgency; stresses that a full delegation would significantly strengthen the EU’s political influence in the country and provide a focus for its activities; considers that the current situation is not sustainable in view of the significant and pressing demands on the EU; reiterates too its call on EU member states to strengthen their diplomatic presence in the Republic of Moldova.

Adopted unanimously.