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*Plenary sitting*

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**B10-0085/2024**

2.10.2024

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 136(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on strengthening Moldova's resilience against Russian interference ahead of the upcoming presidential elections and a constitutional referendum on EU integration  
(2024/2821(RSP))

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on behalf of the S&D Group

**B10-0085/2024**

**European Parliament resolution on strengthening Moldova's resilience against Russian interference ahead of the upcoming presidential elections and a constitutional referendum on EU integration (2024/2821(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Republic of Moldova,
  - having regard to the European Council conclusions of 27 June 2024,
  - having regard to the Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Moldova, of the other part<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the Commission Opinion on the Republic of Moldova's application for membership of the European Union (COM(2022)0406),
  - having regard to Rule 136(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Republic of Moldova is a close and valued partner of the EU; whereas its application for EU membership, and the European Council's decision to grant candidate status to the Republic of Moldova on the understanding that nine steps are taken, demonstrates a strong joint ambition for swift EU integration; whereas through the Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, in force since 2016, the EU and Moldova have committed to promoting political association and achieving economic integration;
- B. whereas the Government of the Republic of Moldova has embarked on a political, judicial and institutional reform process of unprecedented ambition and has demonstrated its steadfast determination to fulfil the nine steps identified in the Commission opinion in order to meet the conditions set for the opening of accession negotiations, on which the European Council decided positively on 14 December 2023; whereas the Moldovan Government's enhanced implementation of current agreements demonstrates its commitment to closer cooperation with and integration into the EU; whereas a clear majority of Moldovan citizens supports EU membership;
- C. whereas the decision of the European Council of December 2023 to open accession negotiations with Moldova and the convening of the first intergovernmental conference on Moldova's accession to the European Union in June 2024 are historic milestones in the country's relationship with the EU, reconfirming that the future of Moldova and its citizens lies within the EU;
- D. whereas EU accession remains a merit-based process conditional upon the fulfilment of established criteria and conditions;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 260, 30.8.2014, p. 4, ELI: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree\\_internation/2014/492/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/2014/492/oj).

- E. whereas the Republic of Moldova's democracy has demonstrated its resilience in the face of Russian disinformation and propaganda and despite increased subversive activity on the part of the Russian Federation and Russian-sponsored actors;
- F. whereas the unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression launched by the Russian Federation against Ukraine profoundly affects regional security and stability and endangers the Republic of Moldova's macroeconomic situation and financial stability, as well as its democratic development and social cohesion, while further increasing the incidence and severity of poverty, inflation and emigration; whereas the Russian Federation, in cooperation with domestic Russia-sponsored actors, galvanises and utilises the resultant widespread economic, geopolitical and security uncertainty to delegitimise and foster opposition to the government's pro-European policies;
- G. whereas the active measures envisaged include establishing and promoting front organisations disguised as non-governmental organisations and 'cultural centres', disseminating online and offline disinformation with the aim of establishing strong pro-Russian political and societal constituencies and returning the Republic of Moldova to a state of dependency on Russian hydrocarbons, and taking steps that could result in armed escalation in the occupied Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova;
- H. whereas pro-Russian oligarchs Ilan Shor and Vladimir Plahotniuc, presently in exile in relation to charges and convictions concerning money laundering and embezzlement, are suspected of cooperating with the Russian Federation in order to undermine the Government of the Republic of Moldova; whereas allies of Mr Shor have reportedly actively recruited, arranged logistics for and provided financial compensation to individuals to join their protests since August 2022;
- I. whereas Russia's long-running multi-channel disinformation, propaganda, and political manipulation campaigns in the Republic of Moldova have escalated since its full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022; whereas Moldova's updated national security strategy attributes disinformation campaigns and other hybrid attacks to Russia;
- J. whereas the Council has adopted assistance measures worth EUR 137 million for the benefit of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Moldova under the European Peace Facility since 2021;
- K. whereas the EU has established a non-executive, civilian common security and defence policy (CSDP) mission entitled the 'EU Partnership Mission in the Republic of Moldova' (EUPM Moldova) to enhance the resilience of the security sector in the areas of crisis management and hybrid threats, including cybersecurity and countering foreign information manipulation and interference; whereas strengthening these crucial efforts with increased EU assistance could make a significant difference;
- 1. Expresses its full and unshakeable support for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova; strongly condemns the constant and coordinated attempts by the Russian Federation, pro-Russian oligarchs and Russian-sponsored local proxies to destabilise the Republic of Moldova, sow divisions within Moldovan society and derail the country's pro-European direction through hybrid attacks, the weaponisation of energy supplies, disinformation, bomb threats and staged protests, as well as the threat or use of violence;

2. Highlights the serious impact of Russia's interference on Moldovan society, which fuels social polarisation, erodes trust in democratic institutions and escalates social tensions; expresses its conviction that the EU must demonstrate solidarity with the people of Moldova and provide concrete support and assistance, as determinedly as possible, for the country's efforts to cope with the consequences of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and with the destabilisation attempts of Russia and pro-Russian actors;
3. Calls on the Council to adopt targeted restrictive measures against individuals and organisations conducting hybrid attacks against the Republic of Moldova;
4. Commends the establishment and operations of the EUPM Moldova, a civilian CSDP mission providing tailored support to the Moldovan Government in countering cyber threats, hybrid threats and disinformation; draws attention to the numerous partner and cooperation projects conducted by EUPM Moldova in cooperation with the Moldovan Government, namely those providing support for the development of the national security strategy and the establishment and operationalisation of the Centre for Strategic Communication and Countering Disinformation and the Cyber-Security Agency, and targeted support for various ministries and government structures; calls on the Council, the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) to provide the additional resources, including human and financial resources, equipment and civilian experts necessary to continue carrying out the mission's mandate beyond May 2025;
5. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the EEAS to consider, thoroughly and with the utmost urgency, substantially increasing current support measures, taking into account the increased security risks for the Republic of Moldova and the need to strengthen the resilience of Moldovan state institutions, the armed forces and society against external attempts at destabilisation and provocation; calls in this regard for Moldova to be progressively included in upcoming legislative initiatives and programmes relating to European security and defence;
6. Demands that the Council, the Commission and the EEAS continue strengthening cooperation with the Republic of Moldova to enhance the country's resilience to hybrid threats through targeted measures, including through promoting the dissemination of independent media content in predominantly Russian-speaking regions, supporting the work of journalists and civil society organisations seeking to counter disinformation, and public campaigns aimed at enhancing the public's media and information literacy, building on the Moldovan Government's current efforts; demands, further, that additional resources and technical know-how be provided to the Moldovan Government, aimed at assisting with its strategic communications, internal coordination and capacity-building with respect to hybrid attacks and the rapid detection and debunking of disinformation; commends the efforts by Moldovan civil society to support the Moldovan Government's fight against disinformation, promote democratic values and enhance Moldovan society's resilience against hybrid attacks;
7. Endorses the EU-Moldova Security and Defence Partnership, signed in May 2024, which promotes a strong and tailored partnership aimed at jointly addressing shared security challenges and strengthening Moldova's resilience; further endorses the continued work under the High-Level Political and Security Dialogue between the EU

and the Republic of Moldova to enhance cooperation on foreign and security policy, raise relevant issues of concern for regional security and stability and discuss possibilities for close coordination and effective assistance and support measures; commends the Republic of Moldova's increasing coordination regarding, and alignment with, the common foreign and security policy (CFSP); underlines the significance of Moldova's adoption of restrictive measures against the Russian Federation in line with the CFSP;

8. Insists on the need for the Council and the Commission equally to continue supporting the efforts of the Moldovan authorities to maintain macro-economic stability, guarantee the Republic of Moldova's full energy security and swiftly work towards its energy independence from Russia through the acceleration of energy diversification projects, investments in renewable energy sources and improved energy interconnections, while ensuring energy affordability, in particular for the most vulnerable people;
9. Calls on the Commission to assist the Moldovan Government in putting pressure on social media platforms to address disinformation complaints effectively;
10. Welcomes Moldova's EU-accession-related reforms, on which the country has made significant progress, and encourages the Government, the Parliament and the President of Moldova to continue the ambitious reforms concerning democracy and the rule of law, and, in particular, to continue the judicial reform, the fight against corruption and the investigations and prosecutions regarding the 2014 bank fraud scandal, while ensuring that quality and sustainability are prioritised over pace; recalls the importance of establishing a credible track record of prosecutions and convictions for corruption on the basis of proactive and efficient investigations as a matter of the greatest priority; calls on the Commission and the EEAS to swiftly come forward with a legislative proposal extending the scope of the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime to include acts of corruption as a punishable offence; calls on the Commission and the Member States to firmly support Moldova's preparations for EU membership and proactively assist in strengthening all efforts towards the completion of Moldova's European path;
11. Underlines the importance of advancing the country's reform process in order to improve the living standards of the population, especially of the more vulnerable population groups and those who live in the regions, and to provide the younger generations with attractive prospects for life and work in the country, thereby increasing societal resilience to hybrid attacks and allowing for a reduction in the number of citizens who feel the need to leave the country in order to seek better living conditions elsewhere in Europe; draws attention to the need to create opportunities for young people to engage actively in strengthening the Republic of Moldova's resilience, including through civic education programmes, volunteering opportunities and participation in decision-making processes;
12. Reiterates its support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova and for the efforts in the framework of the 5+2 negotiation process to reach a peaceful, comprehensive and lasting political settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognised borders and with a special

status for the Transnistrian region; calls on the Russian Federation, therefore, to completely withdraw its military forces and equipment from the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova and to ensure, under international oversight, the immediate evacuation and full destruction of all ammunition and equipment in the Cobasna depot;

13. Calls on all political actors to contribute to fulfilling the European aspirations of the people of Moldova by seeking to establish consensus over the most important and urgent reforms, actively engaging in the legislative work of the Parliament of Moldova with the aim of further harmonising Moldova's legislation with EU standards, and further engaging with civil society over all major reforms, as well as the country's European orientation;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the President, Government and Parliament of the Republic of Moldova.