



Plenary sitting

**B9-0408/2023 }
B9-0410/2023 }
B9-0411/2023 }
B9-0417/2023 }
B9-0420/2023 } RC1**

4.10.2023

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 132(2) and (4) of the Rules of Procedure

replacing the following motions:

B9-0408/2023 (S&D)
B9-0410/2023 (Verts/ALE)
B9-0411/2023 (PPE)
B9-417/2023 (Renew)
B9-20/2023 (ECR)

on taking stock of Moldova's path to the EU
(2023/2838(RSP))

**Siegfried Mureşan, Andrzej Halicki, Michael Gahler, Rasa Juknevičienė,
David McAllister, Vangelis Meimarakis, Andrius Kubilius, Isabel
Wiseler-Lima, Traian Băsescu, Vladimír Bilčík, Vasile Blaga, Ioan-Rareş
Bogdan, Daniel Buda, Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Gheorghe Falcă,
Mircea-Gheorghe Hava, Danuta Maria Hübner, Sandra Kalniete, Andrey
Kovatchev, David Lega, Miriam Lexmann, Lukas Mandl, Marian-Jean
Marinescu, Dan-Ştefan Motreanu, Gheorghe-Vlad Nistor, Radosław
Sikorski, Eugen Tomac, Loránt Vincze, Iuliu Winkler**

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PE754.302v01-00 }
PE754.304v01-00 }
PE754.305v01-00 }
PE754.311v01-00 }
PE754.314v01-00 } RC1

on behalf of the PPE Group

Pedro Marques, Tonino Picula, Thijs Reuten, Juozas Olekas, Victor Negrescu

on behalf of the S&D Group

Dragoş Tudorache, Abir Al-Sahlani, Petras Auštrevičius, Nicola Beer, Dita Charanzová, Katalin Cseh, Olivier Chastel, Dacian Cioloş, Vlad Gheorghe, Klemen Grošelj, Bernard Guetta, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Nathalie Loiseau, Karen Melchior, Javier Nart, Dragoş Pîslaru, Frédérique Ries, Ramona Strugariu, Hilde Vautmans

on behalf of the Renew Group

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Anna Fotyga, Angel Dzhambazki, Ryszard Czarnecki, Assita Kanko, Joachim Stanisław Brudziński, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Bogdan Rzońca, Elżbieta Rafalska, Eugen Jurzyca, Adam Bielan, Elżbieta Kruk, Anna Zalewska, Carlo Fidanza, Alexandr Vondra, Veronika Vrecionová

on behalf of the ECR Group

Fabio Massimo Castaldo

**Motion for a European Parliament resolution on taking stock of Moldova's path to the EU
(2023/2838(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its recent resolutions on the Republic of Moldova,
 - 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 part¹, which includes a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (AA/DCFTA),
 - having regard to the Republic of Moldova's application for EU membership of 3 March 2022, and the European Council's consequent granting of candidate status on 23 June 2022 based on a positive assessment by the Commission and in line with the views expressed by Parliament,
 - having regard to the Commission opinion of 17 June 2022 on the Republic of Moldova's application for membership of the European Union (COM(2022)0406) and the joint staff working document of 6 February 2023 entitled 'Association Implementation Report on the Republic of Moldova' (SWD(2023)0041);
 - having regard to the Commission analytical report of 1 February 2023 on Moldova's alignment with the EU *acquis* (SWD(2023)0032),
 - having regard to the joint statement following the seventh meeting of the EU-Moldova Association Council of 7 February 2023 and to the final statement of the 13th meeting of the EU-Moldova Parliamentary Association Committee of 23 March 2023,
 - having regard to Articles 2 and 49 of the Treaty on European Union,
 - having regard to the European Council conclusions of 23 and 24 June 2022, 23 March 2023 and 29 and 30 June 2023,
 - having regard to the updated EU-Moldova Association Agenda for 2021-2027 of 22 August 2022 and to the Support Package for the Republic of Moldova presented by the Commission on 28 June 2023,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Republic of Moldova submitted its application to join the EU on 3 March 2022 and has been an EU candidate country since 23 June 2022;
- B. whereas EU-Moldova relations have intensified since then, based on a mutual commitment to strengthening their political association; whereas the Council

¹ OJ L 260, 30.8.2014, p. 4.

conclusions of 13 December 2022 on enlargement and stabilisation and association process put emphasis on further deepening the EU's sectoral cooperation with Moldova and its integration into the EU internal market;

- C. whereas the Government of the Republic of Moldova has been pursuing an ambitious political, judicial and institutional reform process and has demonstrated its determination and ability to fulfil the nine steps identified in the Commission opinion to meet the conditions set for the opening of accession negotiations; whereas EU accession remains a merit-based process that requires fulfilment of the EU membership criteria;
- D. whereas on 22 June 2023, the Commission provided an oral update to the Council on Moldova's progress and a more detailed review will form part of the 2023 Enlargement Package reports on the 10 enlargement countries; whereas the Commission, in its oral update provided to the Council in June, as requested by the EU Member States, assessed that three steps had been fulfilled (2, 8 and 9) and that there had been significant progress on three other steps (1, 4, 7);
- E. whereas the Republic of Moldova has been making tremendous efforts and significant progress in implementing all the conditions laid out by the Commission, namely by addressing the shortcomings identified by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the Venice Commission on the judicial reform and the reform of the electoral code, by increasing the involvement of civil society in decision-making processes, strengthening the protection of human rights, particularly of vulnerable groups, enhancing gender equality and combating violence against women; whereas the upcoming Commission assessment on the progress made by the Republic of Moldova will send a clear political message and have a significant impact on the country's future;
- F. whereas the EU-Moldova Priority Action Plan was also agreed on in June 2023 and will function as a roadmap for the full implementation of the EU-Moldova DCFTA and Moldova's further integration into the EU single market, with jointly agreed priorities for 2023-2024; whereas on 28 June 2023, the Commission presented the Support Package for the Republic of Moldova, which addresses the impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and aims to bring Moldova closer to the EU;
- G. whereas despite the dramatic effects of the war on Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova has managed to significantly consolidate its democracy and maintain the reform trajectory; whereas the improvements in the country's democratic system have been reflected in its progress on various international indexes: 28th place out of 180 countries in the 2023 Reporters Without Borders World Press Freedom Index (up from 40th place in 2022); 91st place out of 180 countries in the 2022 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (up from 105th place in 2021); 68th place out of 140 countries in the World Justice Project's 2022 Rule of Law Index (up from 73rd place in 2021);
- H. whereas the Russian Federation has been using provocation, disinformation, illegal funding of political parties, cyberattacks and other hybrid means to undermine the stability, sovereignty, constitutional order and democratic institutions of the Republic of Moldova; whereas Russia's subversive activities in Moldova seek to undermine popular

support for the European path chosen by the Moldovan people and foster destabilisation; whereas Russia has used its gas exports as a tool to pressure the Moldovan Government, including as regards its pro-European orientation; whereas Russia's weaponisation of energy has further exposed the fragility of the Moldovan energy sector, while the country's connections to the EU gas and electricity markets and mechanisms have helped it to tackle the crisis; whereas high energy prices led to inflation rising to over 30 % and Moldova's economic output fell by 5.9 % year-on-year in real terms in 2022; whereas although the Republic of Moldova has diversified its natural gas supplies away from Russia, its electricity supply remains largely dependent on the Russian-owned Cuciurgan power station in the Transnistria region; whereas, despite all these attempts at destabilisation, the Moldovan people and the Moldovan leadership have remained determined to follow their chosen pro-European path;

- I. whereas Russian missiles targeting Ukraine have flown over the Republic of Moldova's territory on several occasions, in clear violation of Moldova's sovereignty, and on several occasions Russian missile debris has fallen on Moldovan territory, causing damage and endangering the lives of civilians; whereas Moldova's air surveillance and defence is in urgent need of investment and modernisation and the Moldovan Government has asked its Western partners for air-defence systems;
 - J. whereas on 20 July 2023, the EU granted another one-year extension, until 24 July 2024, of its temporary suspension of tariffs and entry-price systems still applicable to seven Moldovan agricultural products;
 - K. whereas on 24 April 2023, the EU set up the Partnership Mission in Moldova under the common security and defence policy, with the objective of enhancing the security sector's resilience in the areas of crisis management, hybrid threats and countering foreign information manipulation and interference;
 - L. whereas on 18 September 2023, Moldova joined the EU Civil Protection Mechanism as a participating state;
1. Reaffirms its commitment to the Republic of Moldova's future membership of the EU and acknowledges that its place is in the EU; believes that it would constitute a geostrategic investment in a united and strong Europe; looks forward to the Commission's assessment on the Republic of Moldova's fulfilment of the steps identified in the Commission's opinion as part of the 2023 enlargement package;
 2. Reiterates its call on the Commission and the European Council to start the EU accession negotiations with the Republic of Moldova by the end of 2023;
 3. Underlines the importance of continuing the country's reform process, not only in order to achieve the political objective of EU membership, but above all to tangibly improve the living standards of the population, especially of the more vulnerable groups, and to provide the younger generations with attractive prospects for life and work in the country; welcomes the broad popular support in the Republic of Moldova for its European integration, as shown in the most recent opinion polls and as seen at the European Moldova National Assembly on 21 May 2023, where over 80 000 people

gathered in the Great National Assembly Square in Chişinău to express their support for the European future of Moldova;

4. Calls for the EU and its Member States to increase financial and technical assistance to the Republic of Moldova to facilitate the process of the country's swift and effective integration into the EU; calls on the Commission to swiftly disburse the next instalment of the ongoing macro financial assistance for the Republic of Moldova and to identify additional funds for Moldova during the revision of the multiannual financial framework in 2023; welcomes, in this regard, the decision by the European Council to increase macro financial assistance to Moldova; calls on the Commission to ensure that all its future requirements remain clear and precise and to avoid setting moving targets for candidate countries; underlines that the Commission's engagement with the authorities at an early stage of elaboration of policies and reforms, accompanied by its providing technical assistance, will enable the Republic of Moldova to maintain the speed and quality of the reforms required for EU accession;
5. Welcomes the Commission's proposal to create a dedicated Ukraine facility to support the recovery, reconstruction and modernisation of the country; notes that the planned allocation of up to EUR 50 billion for the facility between 2024 and 2027 for both grants and loans will replace the planned support for Ukraine under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) - Global Europe; calls for all bilateral support for Ukraine provided for in the NDICI - Global Europe to be redirected to the Republic of Moldova, as an EU candidate country neighbouring Ukraine that has also suffered the most from the consequences of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine;
6. Calls on the Commission to work towards the inclusion of the Republic of Moldova in the revised IPA III Regulation², including by sufficiently increasing the overall IPA III budget and by providing support to help the country adequately prepare for optimal utilisation of pre-accession funds; welcomes the ongoing implementation of the wider AA/DCFTA and calls on the Moldovan authorities to continue work towards its full and effective implementation, as well as on democracy, governance and rule of law reforms in general, as a demonstration of their ambition to prepare for EU membership and to fulfil the obligations of an EU Member State; is pleased with the presentation of the EU-Moldova Priority Action Plan in June 2023, which will function as a roadmap for the full implementation of the DCFTA and Moldova's further integration into the EU single market, with jointly agreed priorities for 2023-2024;
7. Reiterates its call for an innovative, complementary and flexible interaction between the implementation of the Association Agreement and the accession negotiation process, allowing for the Republic of Moldova's gradual integration into the EU single market, based on a priority action plan and relevant sectoral programmes and providing access to relevant EU funds, enabling Moldovan citizens to reap the benefits of accession

² Regulation (EU) 2021/1529 of 15 September 2021 establishing the Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance (IPA III), OJ L 330, 20.9.2021, p. 1.

during the process rather than only at its completion;

8. Welcomes the Moldovan authorities' considerable efforts to advance the reform agenda in order to progress towards EU membership; commends the progress made by the Republic of Moldova on justice-sector reform, especially in the context of the implementation of the Commission recommendations on Moldova's accession application; encourages the government to work with all stakeholders towards a sustainable and comprehensive justice and anti-corruption reform, in line with EU and Venice Commission recommendations; calls on the government to continue its work on de-oligarchisation, the public finance management reform, the fight against organised crime and the public administration reform;
9. Emphasises the absolute priority of strengthening the rule of law, which has substantially gained in importance in the EU accession process and remains one of the most important conditions for EU membership to ensure that EU enlargement strengthens rather than weakens the EU and its single market; expects, therefore, the Republic of Moldova to continue and complete the vetting process of its judiciary and recommends that it strengthen coordination among all institutions established for and involved in the fight against corruption and develop a holistic anti-corruption approach that would cover all stages from prevention to prosecution;
10. Recalls the rapid pace of transformative economic reforms that the Republic of Moldova has embarked on, including spearheading a massive deregulation process for its economy, cutting red tape and limiting bureaucracy, while accelerating the pace of digital transformation, in order to improve Moldova's business climate and make it easier to do business in Moldova; recalls that trade synergies between the Republic of Moldova and the EU are significant, constituting nearly half of Moldova's commerce last year, with more than 58 % of its exports going to EU countries;
11. Welcomes the efforts undertaken to enhance the involvement of civil society in decision-making processes; notes that the consultations portal particip.gov.md has been updated and now allows for automatic forwarding of policy and legal drafts to stakeholders and collection of their comments and proposals; encourages the authorities to continue improving the transparency of decision-making and involving civil society at all levels, as this will strengthen public support for the reforms; welcomes all initiatives by civil society and the international community to support judicial integrity and reform in the country, in particular those efforts that make the general public aware of the positive impact that an independent, competent and efficient judiciary has on the everyday lives of citizens;
12. Welcomes the agreement associating the Republic of Moldova with the Connecting Europe Facility, signed on 9 May 2023, and the agreement on its participation in the EU single market programme, signed on 8 September 2023; reiterates its call for the EU and its Member States to support the Republic of Moldova's integration by incorporating the country into EU programmes, instruments and agencies such as the Digital Europe programme, the European Environment Agency, the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC), DiscoverEU and the Justice Programme (JUST),

as well as strengthening the country's participation in programmes it has already joined, such as Erasmus Mundus; welcomes recent developments regarding 'roam like at home' and security, which will accelerate legislative harmonisation and result in the concrete benefit of closer ties between the EU and citizens of the Republic of Moldova;

13. Calls for the EU and its Member States to continue to provide political, economic, and humanitarian support to the Republic of Moldova, including through the Moldova Support Platform;
14. Welcomes the renewal of the temporary trade liberalisation measures to support the Republic of Moldova's economy by suspending all tariff-rate quotas and calls for their further extension; calls for the EU to take swift and significant steps towards the permanent liberalisation of its tariff-rate quotas in order to ensure predictability and increase the country's medium-to-long-term attractiveness for investors; reiterates its call for the EU, given the structure of the small Moldovan economy and based on positive audit assessments, to further permit the import of Moldovan goods of animal origin and to increase its financial assistance to Moldovan farmers affected by the market disruption as a consequence of the war in Ukraine; notes that the aforementioned measures should also be accompanied by support for the sustainability of Moldova's agricultural production;
15. Strongly condemns the unprecedented hybrid operations orchestrated by the Russian Federation, conducted through its criminal proxies, which are subverting electoral processes in the Republic of Moldova by means of illicit financial support to political parties, with a view to undermining the security, sovereignty, and democratic foundations of the country; calls, in this context, for the EU to increase its support for the Moldovan Government's efforts to prevent such interference in the country's democratic processes, including through additional targeted sanctions listings;
16. Calls on all political actors to contribute towards 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 engaging with civil society over all major reforms as well as the country's European orientation; expresses its willingness to contribute to supporting and strengthening parliamentary democracy in the Republic of Moldova, including through the Jean Monnet Dialogue, when appropriate within its domestic context; welcomes, in this respect, the ongoing work to revise the rules of procedure and code of conduct of the Parliament of Moldova; calls in this regards for consideration to be given to strengthening the everyday cooperation between the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova and the European Parliament by establishing the permanent presence of staff in each other's parliaments, which could entail appointing a permanent European Parliament representative to the Moldovan Parliament and inviting the Moldovan Parliament to appoint a permanent representative in Brussels; believes that such a decision would be a proactive sign of that the EU and Moldova are making the best use of the current opportunities between them and will strengthen information exchanges, the implementation of joint projects and future EU accession talks; calls on the

Moldovan Government to invite civil society representatives to also be part of the 35 working groups responsible for negotiating the EU accession chapters and to intensify cooperation with civil society in helping the country to advance along the European path;

17. Welcomes the adoption by the Council of a new sanctions framework to target actions aimed at destabilising Moldova, including attempts to undermine its sovereignty and independence by means of corruption; welcomes the Council's decision to use this framework to sanction Ilan Șor, Vladimir Plahotniuc, Igor Ceaika, Gheorghe Cavcaliuc and Marina Tauber; calls for the EU and national authorities to make sure those sanctions are duly implemented; calls on the respective hosting states and territories to extradite Ilan Șor and Vladimir Plahotniuc to stand trial in the Republic of Moldova; calls on the Commission and the Council to strengthen the policy targeting legal entities and individuals who attempt to obstruct or undermine the democratic political process of the Republic of Moldova;
18. Reiterates its call on the Russian authorities to respect the Republic of Moldova's independence, its sovereignty and territorial integrity, to cease its provocations and attempts to destabilise the country and undermine its constitutional order and democratic institutions, to withdraw its military forces from the territory of the Republic of Moldova and to support a peaceful resolution of the Transnistrian conflict, in line with the principles of international law and with the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit decisions;
19. Calls for the EU and its institutions to continue to support the Republic of Moldova's efforts to modernise its payments system so as to enable it to meet the conditions for integration into the Single Euro Payments Area;
20. Calls for the EU and its Member States to ensure that all necessary assistance is provided to the Republic of Moldova to strengthen its institutional mechanisms and its ability to respond to hybrid threats; calls for the EU and its Member States to fully operationalise and strengthen the EU Partnership Mission in the Republic of Moldova (EUPM Moldova) so that it can fulfil its mission to enhance the Republic of Moldova's resilience; welcomes, in this regard, the signature on 29 September 2023 of the Agreement on the Status of the EUPM as an important step towards enabling the Mission to fully implement its mandate; calls for the necessary financial resources to be ensured to efficiently implement projects, particularly in the field of training and equipping, so as to strengthen the Republic of Moldova's capabilities;
21. Notes, with satisfaction, 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; stresses the importance of such dialogue in the context of Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine and its direct consequences for the security of the Republic of Moldova and the stability of the political, economic and social situation in the country: commends the Republic of Moldova's ability to withstand these

destabilising circumstances and actions; commends, in particular, the Republic of Moldova's gradually increasing coordination on, and alignment with, the common foreign and security policy, which testifies to the country's willingness and preparedness to contribute to the policy and positively distinguishes it from certain other candidate countries;

22. Calls on the Commission and the European External Action Service to improve strategic communication about the EU in the Republic of Moldova; calls on the Commission and the Member States to continue to support media literacy and the independence of the media in the Republic of Moldova, as well as to support the digital hardening of its critical infrastructure and the replacement of Russian-origin ICT systems;
23. Welcomes the signature on 29 September 2023 of the Agreement allowing the Republic of Moldova to become a participating state in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism; underlines that the country has already proven to be a reliable partner by hosting and sheltering Ukrainians fleeing the war and that, by joining the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, the Republic of Moldova will contribute directly to enhancing emergency preparedness and building a more resilient disaster risk management system in Europe;
24. Calls for the EU and its Member States to consolidate the EU Support Hub for Internal Security and Border Management in Moldova, which will coordinate the support that the EU and its Member States provide to Moldova to strengthen law enforcement and thus also better deal with the criminal and security implications of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine;
25. Reiterates its call for the EU and its Member States to continue to help the Republic of Moldova to ensure its energy independence, including by increasing its generating capacity, connectivity, diversification and energy efficiency; urges the EU to use emergency funding to enhance the connection of the Republic of Moldova to the EU's electricity grid, through projects such as the Bălți-Suceava interconnection; calls for the EU and its Member States to increase their support for the rehabilitation and upgrading of the Republic of Moldova's transport infrastructure, including through the laying of a European-gauge track connection from Chișinău to Iași (Romania), as a way of supporting the EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes and Moldova and Ukraine's economies;
26. reiterates its call on the Commission, in the light of the Republic of Moldova's challenges and status as an EU candidate country, to further increase its staff capacity dealing with and supporting the country's accession process, both in Brussels and in Chișinău and to establish a dedicated unit for the Republic of Moldova within the Commission's Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations; calls on the Commission to expand the opportunities for Moldova to participate in and observe the work of the EU institutions, as well as to enhance structured political dialogue, including dialogue on the margins of the European Council;
27. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Government and Parliament of the Republic of

Moldova, the Russian Federation, the UN, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Council of Europe.