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Plenary sitting

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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on the right to education in the Transnistrian region
(2014/2552(RSP))

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on behalf of the PPE Group

European Parliament resolution on the right to education in the Transnistrian region (2014/2552(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between Moldova and the European Union, which entered into force on 1 July 1998,
 - having regard to the Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova adopted by the seventh EU-Moldova Cooperation Council meeting on 22 February 2005,
 - having regard to the Association Agreement initialled by the EU and Moldova on 29 November 2013 on the occasion of the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation in the Republic of Moldova, and in the Transnistrian region in particular (12 July 2007, 26 October 2006, 16 March 2006),
 - having regard to the judgement of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) of 19 October 2012 in the case of Catan and others against Moldova and the Russian federation
 - having regard to the statements of OSCE Summit in Istanbul of 1999 and the OSCE Ministerial Council in Oporto 2002,
 - having regard to Rule 122(5) and 110(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the European Union and the Republic of Moldova initialled the Association Agreement in November 2013; whereas there is a commitment from both sides to sign and provisionally apply the agreement by September 2014;
- B. whereas the Republic of Moldova has made great progress towards deepening its relations with the EU and the Association Agreement is an opportunity for the entire country, including regions such as Transnistria or Gagauzia, to further deepen their relations to the EU and adopt European values and standards, while improving their economic perspectives;
- C. whereas the 1992 war in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova led to the establishment of a separatist, illegitimate and authoritarian regime in the region; whereas the situation of the frozen conflict persists and human rights violations continue to be gross and widespread;
- D. whereas no final solution has yet been found to the Transnistrian conflict despite the above-mentioned repeated international decisions, which leads to the continued deterioration of respect for human rights in the region;
- E. whereas the 5+2 format negotiations have not led to a sustainable solution of the Transnistrian conflict with the full respect of the Republic of Moldova's territorial integrity and sovereignty; whereas the negotiations are constantly undermined by the so-called Transnistrian authorities; whereas a young Moldovan citizen was shot by the Russian forces on 1 January 2012;

- F. whereas the new round of 5+2 negotiations has been provisionally agreed to take place on 27-28 February 2014 and constitutes a fresh opportunity to end the deadlock and achieve substantial progress;
- G. whereas the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Moldova ruled on 5 December 2013 that the country's official language is Romanian;
- H. whereas the so-called authorities in the Transnistrian region have launched an aggressive campaign against the last 8 Moldovan-administered schools that teach in the Romanian language, ranging from administrative pressures to declarations of the so-called Transnistrian authorities indicating that they will shut down those schools that refuse to recognize the authority of the separatist regime;
- I. whereas many professors from the "Lucian Blaga" highschool in Tiraspol were subject to illegal interrogation by the separatist militia; whereas the bank accounts of the "Lucian Blaga" highschool in Tiraspol were illegally blocked for several weeks by the so-called authorities of the Transnistrian region;
- J. whereas the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) of 19 October 2012 in the case of Catan and others against Moldova and Russia indicated that there has been a violation of Article 2 of Protocol No. 1 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms by the Russian Federation;
- K. whereas the Republic of Moldova has been subject to various forms of pressure from the Russian Federation, including a ban on the import of wine; whereas the European Union lifted all quotas for wine imports from Moldova in response to that ban;
- L. whereas in a report published in November 2012, the OSCE Mission to Moldova has found that the situation of the Latin-script schools in Transnistria remains urgent, issues of concern include rental contracts and conditions of premises, freedom of movement, transport of goods, health, safety and sanitary inspections, declining student populations, pressure or intimidation on parents and teachers, legal status, and the specific situations of the property in Ribnita and the schools formerly located in Grigoriopol and Dubasari;
- M. whereas the last Universal Periodic Review submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Council on Moldova on October 2011 notes that the situation of Moldovan schools teaching in Latin script continues to be an unsolved issue, the teachers of these schools are under permanent pressure from the Transnistrian administration and the Transnistrian administration refuses to talk to Chisinau on issues connected to the situation of these schools;
- N. whereas the so-called Transnistrian authorities have been limiting the OSCE'S mission access to the region and has forbidden access to the head of mission, starting with February 1st;
- O. whereas similar separatist intentions have been noticed, in particular the Southern region of Gagauzia; whereas the local authorities organized a regional referendum on 2 February concerning the direction of the foreign policy of the country; whereas this referendum was declared illegal by the central government and the competent judicial authorities;
1. Strongly deplores the lack of respect for human rights in Transnistria, the denial of the liberties of the population living in that area, ignoring the right to access to information and education in mother-tongue;

2. Believes that the right of freedom of education is a fundamental right and calls for a full respect this right and the cessation of any form of pressure directed towards Romanian teaching institutions in the Transnistrian region;
3. Urges the so-called authorities in the Transnistrian region to fully respect the right of education in mother-tongue;
4. Condemns the pressures on the "Lucian Blaga" highschool in Tiraspol launched in December 2013, ranging from illegal questioning of the teaching staff by the separatist militia, constant threats on teachers, pupils and parents, to the blocking for several weeks of the bank accounts of the institution;
5. Condemns the lack of engagement of the so-called Transnistrian authorities in the 5+2 format negotiations, resulting in minimal progress since the resuming of the talks;
6. Calls for a rapid and final settlement to the frozen conflict in Transnistria, with the full respect of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova within its international recognized borders;
7. Calls for a greater involvement of the EU in solving this conflict in its immediate neighbourhood, including the enhancement of the EU's status to that of a negotiating partner;
8. Deplores all separatist intentions that may arise on the territory of Moldova, including in the autonomous province of Gagauzia; calls on restraint from local authorities and to the full respect of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, including the protection of minorities; encourages dialogue with the Moldovan central authorities in order to avoid unilateral decisions;
9. Believes that the prosperity and stability of the Republic of Moldova, in its internationally recognized borders, and of the entire region can be fully achieved only through a peaceful solution to the Transnistrian conflict;
10. Calls on the Russian Federation, to fulfil the commitments made in 1996 in the Council of Europe and reflected in OSCE Summit decisions (Istanbul, 1999 and Oporto, 2002) concerning the withdrawal of Russian troops and arms from the territory of Moldova; expresses concern over the lack of progress on this issue; notes that the presence of the Russian peace-keeping troops leads to a climate that endangers the respect and promotion of human rights in the region; calls on the establishment of a civilian peace-keeping mission in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova;
11. Calls on a speedy procedure that will lead to the granting, before the end of the Parliament's legislature, of a visa free-regime to all Moldovan citizens;
12. Calls on the Commission to speed up the technical procedures leading to the signing and provisional application of the Association Agreement, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free trade Area Agreement;
13. Calls on the High Representative to devote more attention to the 5+2 format negotiations and to engage at all levels with all the parties involved in order to achieve a comprehensive and peaceful solution to the Transnistrian conflict;
14. Calls on the OSCE to defend the right to education of the students from the latin-script schools in Transnistria; further calls on the so-called Transnistrian authorities to cooperate with the OSCE mission to Moldova and allow it access to its territory;

15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the High Representative, the Council, the Commission, the Government and Parliament of Moldova, the Government of Romania, the Government of Ukraine, the Government of the Russian Federation, the Government of the USA, the Secretary-General of the OSCE and the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.