



Plenary sitting

B10-0072/2024

4.10.2024

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 presidential elections and constitutional referendum on EU integration (2024/2821(RSP))

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on behalf of the Renew Group

B10-0072/2024

**European Parliament resolution on strengthening Moldova's resilience against Russian interference ahead of the presidential elections and 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 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, which includes a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area,
 - 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 Rule 136(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 20 October 2024, the Republic of Moldova is scheduled to hold presidential election and a constitutional referendum on EU integration, amid ongoing Russian interference and attempts to destabilise the political situation and electoral process in the country;
- B. whereas the Russian Federation has been using economic blackmail, 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;
- C. whereas one of the tools used by the Russian state is the state-funded RT network, which has moved beyond media activities, becoming actively involved in cyber operations, covert influence, military procurement, and information warfare across various regions; whereas in June 2024, the United States, together with the United Kingdom and Canada, exposed Russia's efforts to engage in subversive activities and electoral interference targeting the Republic of Moldova;
- D. whereas in September 2024, the United States imposed sanctions on three entities and two individuals for their involvement in Russia's destabilising actions abroad, including in the Republic of Moldova; whereas these covert efforts have included RT personnel providing direct support to fugitive Moldovan oligarch Ilan Shor, the key perpetrator of the 2014 USD 1 billion bank fraud scandal; whereas, according to the US State Department, RT and its employees, including editor-in-chief Margarita Simonyan, have directly coordinated with the Kremlin to support Russian Government efforts to

influence the Moldovan presidential election of October 2024, with the apparent aim of inciting unrest in the Republic of Moldova;

- E. whereas despite the dramatic effects of the war in Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova has managed to significantly consolidate its democracy, continue its reform trajectory and develop its relations with the EU, with the convening of the first intergovernmental conference on Moldova's accession to the European Union in June 2024 representing a recent significant milestone in the country's European integration;
- F. whereas the EU opened accession negotiations with the Republic of Moldova during the first accession conference at ministerial level, held in Luxembourg on 25 June 2024, following the European Council's decision of 14-15 December 2023 to open accession negotiations with Moldova, and the Council's approval of the negotiating framework for these negotiations on 21 June 2024;
1. Strongly condemns the Russian interference and hybrid operations aimed at subverting the electoral processes, security, sovereignty and democratic foundations of the Republic of Moldova ahead of the upcoming presidential election and the constitutional referendum on EU integration;
 2. Reiterates its call on the Russian authorities to respect the Republic of Moldova's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to cease its provocations and attempts to destabilise the country and undermine its constitutional order and democratic institutions; reiterates its calls on Russia 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 Istanbul Summit Declaration of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe;
 3. 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 increased EU support to the Republic of Moldova in countering disinformation, hybrid threats and cyberattacks; underlines that this should entail boosting Moldova's capacity to combat disinformation, strengthen its cybersecurity infrastructure and enhance resilience against external malign influences;
 4. Calls on the Council to adopt additional targeted sanctions listings against individuals and entities responsible for supporting or carrying out actions which undermine or threaten the Republic of Moldova's sovereignty and independence, as well as the country's democracy, stability or security, and the rule of law; calls for the EU and national authorities to make sure those sanctions are duly implemented; reiterates its call on the respective hosting states and territories to extradite Ilan Shor, Vladimir Plahotniuc and other individuals sought for trial in the Republic of Moldova;
 5. Highlights the important role played by the EU Partnership Mission in the Republic of Moldova (EUPM Moldova) which works with the Moldovan institutions to enhance the resilience of the security sector of the Republic of Moldova in the areas of crisis management and hybrid threats, including cybersecurity and countering foreign information manipulation and interference; asks the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

to ensure that EUPM Moldova performs to the best of its ability, taking stock of progress and adapting its operations if necessary to make it as efficient as possible while proposing to further extend its mandate and scope and increase the mission's resources; calls for the EU and its Member States to increase their support to Moldova's Center for Strategic Communication and Combating Disinformation;

6. Applauds the Republic of Moldova's steadfast support for Ukraine since the start of Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression; commends the Republic of Moldova for welcoming 1.5 million Ukrainian refugees throughout the war, of which an estimated 125 000 remain in the country;
7. Reaffirms its commitment to the Republic of Moldova's future membership of the EU and recognises that Moldova's rightful place is within the EU; recognises that the desire of the people of the Republic of Moldova to join the EU stems from a shared commitment to democratic principles, the rule of law and human rights; stresses that the Republic of Moldova's European integration represents not only a path towards greater economic prosperity but also a safeguard for political stability and security in the face of external threats;
8. Calls for the acceleration of the screening process and the timely organisation of the subsequent intergovernmental conferences, where negotiations on cluster 1 on Fundamentals should be initiated; calls for the EU to adequately support accession related reforms by developing robust and adaptable financial instruments tailored to the Republic of Moldova's specific needs with a view to effectively addressing its economic and structural challenges, ensuring the country remains resilient and capable of implementing the necessary reforms throughout its EU accession process; urges the acceleration of Moldova's gradual integration into the EU and the single market by allowing participation in new initiatives and EU programmes which will deliver tangible socio-economic benefits in specific areas even before the country formally joins the EU;
9. Calls for the EU and its Member States to prioritise and allocate additional resources to efforts to support the rule of law and anti-corruption reforms in the Republic of Moldova in order to address vulnerabilities, including those related to corruption in the security sector, justice system, public administration and media, which could enable Russian interference and disinformation;
10. Reiterates its support for stronger cooperation on security and defence policy between the EU and the Republic of Moldova; commends the Republic of Moldova for becoming the first country to sign a security and defence partnership with the EU and calls for this partnership to be put into practical action;
11. Calls on the Member States to increase the European Peace Facility's funding for the Republic of Moldova to further enhance the country's defence capabilities;
12. Reiterates its call for the EU and its Member States to support the Republic of Moldova in enhancing its energy security by supporting the construction of new electricity interconnections with neighbouring countries; calls for the EU and its Member States to financially support energy efficiency and renewable energy projects as a clean and sustainable way to reduce Moldova's energy demand and diversify its supply;

13. Urges 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 supporting media literacy and media independence, as well as the strengthening of Moldova's critical digital infrastructure, including through the replacement of Russian-origin information and communications technology systems; calls for the EU and its Member States to expand and intensify their direct engagement with Moldovan citizens by including them in various EU and bilateral programmes and projects, such as citizen consultations, and to foster people-to-people connections;
14. 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 governments and parliaments of the Member States, the President, Government and Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Council of Europe and the Russian authorities.