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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0204/2023**

12.4.2023

## 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 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the challenges facing the Republic of Moldova  
(2023/2595(RSP))

**Anna Fotyga, Angel Dzhambazki, Joachim Stanisław Brudziński, Elżbieta Kruk, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Adam Bielan, Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Beata Mazurek, Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, Beata Kempa, Anna Zalewska**  
on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on the challenges facing the Republic of Moldova (2023/2595(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Republic of Moldova and on Eastern Partnership countries,
  - 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>, which includes a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area and which fully entered into force on 1 July 2016,
  - having regard to its resolution of 20 October 2020 on the implementation of the EU Association Agreement with the Republic of Moldova<sup>2</sup>,
  - having regard to the Republic of Moldova's application for EU membership, submitted on 3 March 2022,
  - having regard to the Versailles Declaration of 10 and 11 March 2022,
  - having regard to the statement of 29 April 2022 by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, on the recent security incidents in the Transnistrian region,
  - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 9 February 2023, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy informed the European Council that Ukraine had intercepted a Russian secret service plan to destroy the democratic system in Moldova and establish control over the country; whereas this was later confirmed by the President of the Republic of Moldova, Maia Sandu, who declared that the country had received intelligence that suggested that Russia was plotting to violently overthrow the country's pro-European leadership;
- B. whereas the Republic of Moldova has been severely affected by the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, owing mainly to the arrival of more than 730 000 refugees from Ukraine since 24 February 2022, of whom around 90 000 (half of whom are minors) have remained in the country;
- C. whereas the Moldovan economy has been largely dependent on Russia when it comes to trade and energy security; whereas Russia artificially created a severe gas supply crisis in the latter part of 2022 in order to pressure the Moldovan Government and attempt to divert the country from its pro-European path;
- D. whereas the Russian Federation has been using provocation and conducting hybrid

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 260, 30.8.2014, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 404, 6.10.2021, p. 136.

operations, including disinformation and manipulation campaigns, with the objective of undermining the stability and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova;

- E. whereas the EU has mobilised over EUR 1 billion in loans and grants for Moldova since October 2021;
  - F. whereas on 23 June 2022, EU leaders granted EU candidate status to Moldova;
  - G. whereas the de facto occupied region of Transnistria is receiving direct support from the Russian Federation, with at least 1 500 Russian troops, supplemented by an additional 5 000 soldiers from the so-called armed forces of Transnistria, present on the ground;
  - H. whereas, on 17 March 2022, an agreement was signed between the EU and Moldova on border management cooperation, enabling Frontex to support the Moldovan authorities in daily border management and border security activities;
  - I. whereas Russian missiles aimed at Ukraine have flown over Moldovan territory on several occasions, in clear violation of Moldova's sovereignty; whereas Moldova's surveillance and air defence system is in urgent need of investment and modernisation;
  - J. whereas there have been serious concerns about potential false flag operations in Moldova since the beginning of Russia's war against Ukraine;
  - K. whereas the Kremlin is relying on pro-Russian forces in Moldova, rallied around oligarchs, to destabilise the political situation in the country, with the most notable example being the Șor Party; whereas Ilan Șor and another oligarch, Vladimir Plahotniuc, who have both left the country, have been sanctioned by the United States and the United Kingdom for their involvement in a case of bank fraud worth USD 1 billion and other illicit schemes;
  - L. whereas the Republic of Moldova applied for accession to the EU on 3 March 2022, which demonstrates the determination of the authorities and citizens of Moldova to pursue the country's European integration, and whereas it is an EU candidate country;
  - M. whereas, during the meeting with Moldovan President Maia Sandu in Warsaw in February 2023, President Joseph R. Biden Jr reaffirmed the USA's strong support for Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity; whereas Biden also highlighted the USA's ongoing assistance to help Moldova strengthen its political and economic resilience, including its democratic reform agenda and energy security, and to address the consequences of Russia's war against Ukraine;
1. Strongly condemns Russia's attempts to destabilise the Republic of Moldova, and particularly its government and society, including through the use of hybrid means, as well as its repeated threats to invade Moldova and its plans to overthrow the country's democratically elected government and parliament; expresses its full solidarity with the people of Moldova in these difficult times;
  2. Strongly condemns the repeated violations of Moldova's airspace by Russian missiles; considers the repeated Russian threats and provocations a breach of the Republic of Moldova's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and calls on the Russian

regime to immediately cease all such hostile action;

3. Welcomes the leadership and political courage of President Sandu, as well as the determination and responsibility with which the Moldovan authorities have managed to expose and counter Russian-backed attempts to destabilise the government; strongly supports Moldova's passage towards EU membership and acknowledges that its place is in the EU and it has long been part of Western culture and civilisation;
4. Reaffirms its full commitment to the Republic of Moldova's membership of the EU; welcomes the Moldovan authorities' considerable efforts to advance the reform agenda and their determination to fulfil the nine steps identified in the Commission's opinion of 17 June 2022<sup>3</sup> in order to progress towards EU membership, despite Russia's pressure on Moldova and the crises triggered by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine;
5. Calls on the Russian Federation to withdraw its military forces from the territory of the Republic of Moldova and to support a peaceful and sustainable resolution of the Transnistrian conflict, in line with the principles of international law;
6. Calls for the EU and its Member States to closely monitor the situation in the Republic of Moldova, and to take action to counter the Russian Federation's use of hybrid means;
7. Welcomes Moldova's condemnation of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine; welcomes the Moldovan Government's pledge to adopt the EU's restrictive measures against Russia;
8. Welcomes the substantial increase in European Peace Facility (EPF) support for Moldova in 2022 to foster the modernisation of the Moldovan Armed Forces; invites the Member States to increase the contributions to the Republic of Moldova through the EPF, especially with regard to air surveillance, air defence, cyber capabilities and command and control capabilities;
9. Recalls that managing the situation of the around 90 000 refugees from Ukraine who have found shelter in the country, as well as many more who have transited through the Republic of Moldova, constitutes a heavy financial burden for the Moldovan State, which already found itself in a precarious financial situation as a result of the economic slowdown generated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the increase in gas prices triggered artificially by Gazprom; calls for the EU to continue to provide financial support in the form of further support packages; welcomes, in this regard, the additional EUR 145 million increase in macro-financial assistance proposed by the Commission on 24 January 2023<sup>4</sup>; calls for the rapid adoption of the proposal in order to allow the funds to be disbursed during the course of 2023;
10. Commends the great solidarity shown by the citizens of the Republic of Moldova towards the refugees from Ukraine who have been fleeing Russia's war of aggression, its destruction of Ukrainian cities and towns, and its perpetration of atrocities and war

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<sup>3</sup> COM(2022)0406.

<sup>4</sup> Commission proposal of 24 January 2023 for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision (EU) 2022/563 as regards the amount of macro-financial assistance to the Republic of Moldova (COM(2023)0053).

crimes, by opening their homes to welcome them in their thousands; welcomes the efforts undertaken by the authorities of the Republic of Moldova to support the Ukrainian refugees;

11. Underlines the fact that, during his meeting with President Sandu in Warsaw in February 2023, President Biden reaffirmed the USA's strong support for Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as highlighting the USA's ongoing assistance to help Moldova strengthen its political and economic resilience, including its democratic reform agenda and energy security, and to address the consequences of Russia's war against Ukraine;
12. Stresses the important role played by the Republic of Moldova so far in the safety and stability of the EU's eastern border in the context of the humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine;
13. Welcomes the establishment of the Moldova Support Platform by EU Member States, G7 countries, international partners and like-minded states, intended to mobilise and coordinate international support, as a clear sign of the EU's and its partners' commitment to the Republic of Moldova's European future; urges all Platform partners to ensure the timely disbursement of their pledges and to swiftly increase funding in the event of a change to Moldova's needs;
14. Welcomes the cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and the EU on combating hybrid threats and calls on the Commission 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 risks;
15. Commends the Moldovan authorities' recent action against Russian propaganda, including the temporary ban on several Russian disinformation websites under the imposed state of emergency and the ban on pro-Russian military symbols; calls on the Commission and the Moldovan authorities to increase their outreach to the population of the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova;
16. Urges the Commission, the European External Action Service and the Member States to assist Moldova with its cybersecurity and strategic communications in order to improve its resilience to possible Russian attacks, and to support the work of journalists and civil society organisations seeking to counter disinformation; calls on the Commission and the Member States to take further measures against foreign interference and disinformation and to support Moldova in this regard;
17. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to support the Republic of Moldova in ensuring its energy independence, connectivity, diversification and efficiency, as well as accelerating the development of renewable energy sources; calls on the Moldovan authorities to maintain the country's commitments as a member of the Energy Community to implementing the EU's Third Energy Package, in particular the unbundling of gas and electricity transmission and distribution; underlines the fact that the current crisis offers an opportunity to end economic and energy dependence on Russia, a shift that should be supported by the EU and the Member States;
18. Welcomes the conclusions of the European Council of 24-25 March 2022; calls on the

Member States to jointly purchase natural gas, liquefied natural gas and hydrogen through a common platform that is also accessible to the Western Balkan states and the three associated Eastern Partnership countries; reiterates, in this context, its call for an immediate embargo on Russian gas; calls on the Moldovan authorities and the Commission to work together to produce a clear assessment of Moldova's gas storage needs for the forthcoming period;

19. Welcomes the intensification of EU-Moldova relations over the past year, in line with the new strategic phase in these relations that was ushered in by the European Council's decision in June 2022 to grant EU candidate status to the Republic of Moldova; encourages EU and Member State leaders to continue to invest in political dialogue with the Republic of Moldova;
20. Calls for the EU to continue to support the reconstruction and modernisation of the railway infrastructure in the Republic of Moldova, as well as the port of Giurgiulești, as part of the solution to regional and global food security problems and as a way of bolstering the economies of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine;
21. Calls 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 EU single market programme, the digital Europe programme, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, the European Environment Agency, the Connecting Europe Facility and the European Defence Agency;
22. Stresses the importance of providing Moldova with access to EU pre-accession financial instruments as early as possible; calls on the Commission to present a proposal to revise the IPA III Regulation<sup>5</sup> accordingly as soon as feasible, including a proposal to sufficiently increase the overall IPA III budget;
23. Welcomes the European Council's recent call on the Commission to present a support package for Moldova before summer 2023; calls on the Commission to determine and provide an ambitious support package for the Republic of Moldova;
24. Welcomes the temporary liberalisation measures to support the Republic of Moldova's economy by granting annual duty-free tariff-rate quotas to overcome the loss of its export markets in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine;
25. Calls for the EU and the Member States to adopt personal sanctions against the pro-Russian oligarchs Ilan Șor and Vladimir Plahotniuc;
26. Calls on the Commission to support Moldova's efforts to modernise its payment system in order to fulfil all the conditions for integration into the Single Euro Payments Area as swiftly as possible;
27. Calls for the EU institutions and the Member States to ensure the implementation of short- and long-term solutions to reduce and subsequently abolish roaming charges between Moldova and the EU in order to extend the 'roam like at home' scheme to the

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<sup>5</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/1529 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 September 2021 establishing the Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance (IPA III). OJ L 330, 20.9.2021, p. 1.

Republic of Moldova;

28. Welcomes the steps already taken by the Moldovan Government to strengthen capacity for the implementation of EU integration priorities and calls on the Commission to provide more robust support in this area;
29. Underlines the fact that, similarly to Ukraine, the concrete prospect of joining the EU is an essential beacon of hope that will maintain the morale of the Moldovan population during this period of extreme insecurity and material hardship;
30. Supports Moldova's efforts to continue on its pro-EU path, having been granted EU candidate status in June 2022, and to move closer to Euro-Atlantic standards and institutions;
31. 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 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the UN and the Council of Europe.