



Plenary sitting

B9-0408/2023

2.10.2023

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statements by the Council and the Commission

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

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

Pedro Marques, Tonino Picula, Thijs Reuten
on behalf of the S&D Group

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

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Moldova, in particular those of 19 April 2023 on the challenges facing the Republic of Moldova¹, of 23 June 2022 on the candidate status of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia², and of 5 May 2022 on the state of play of EU-Moldova cooperation³,
 - 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 Commission's analytical reports of 2 February 2023 on Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia's alignment with the EU *acquis*,
 - having regard to the European Council conclusions of 23-24 June 2022 on the membership applications of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia,
 - having regard to the Commission staff working document of 7 February 2023 entitled 'Association Implementation Report on the Republic of Moldova' (SWD(2023)0041),
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Republic of Moldova is a close and valued partner of the EU; whereas, through the Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (AA/DCFTA), in force since 2016, the EU and the Republic of Moldova have committed to promoting political association and achieving economic integration;
- B. whereas the country's application for EU membership in March 2022 demonstrates the unwavering ambition of the current political leadership and the strong demand of Moldovan society not only to carry out a comprehensive agenda of political, economic and social reforms, but also to firmly anchor the country among the European family and to make its own contribution to the process of European integration;
- C. whereas the European Council's extraordinarily swift decision to grant candidate status to the Republic of Moldova, on the understanding that nine steps are taken, demonstrates the EU's solidarity with the Republic of Moldova and its people in the context of the Russian war of aggression against neighbouring Ukraine and the strong political will to support the country on its European path;
- D. whereas EU accession remains a merit-based process that requires fulfilment of the EU membership criteria;
- E. whereas the Commission will assess the implementation of the nine steps, indicated to

¹ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0112.

² OJ C 32, 27.1.2023, p. 2.

³ OJ C 465, 6.12.2022, p. 151.

the Republic of Moldova in its opinion on the country's application for EU membership, as part of the so-called enlargement package of reports to be presented in autumn and ahead of the European Council meeting of 14-15 December 2023; whereas, in its oral update requested by EU Member States and presented to the Council in June 2023, the Commission assessed that Moldova had complete three out of nine steps;

1. Welcomes the strong ambition demonstrated by the political leadership, state institutions and civil society of the Republic of Moldova to advance as swiftly as possible democratic and EU accession-related reforms, the completion of which will allow the country to join the EU;
2. Notes the interim assessment, the so-called oral update, delivered by the Commission in June 2023 to the Council on the Republic of Moldova's progress on some of the priorities identified by the European Council; notes, with satisfaction, that, according to the Commission, the Republic of Moldova has completed three out of the nine priorities, 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;
3. Calls on the Government, Parliament and President of Moldova, in close cooperation with all state institutions and in consultation with civil society, to continue the work on judicial reform, on de-oligarchisation and on public finance management reform and to concentrate efforts on and substantially advance the fight against corruption and organised crime, as well as public administration reform; calls, furthermore, on the Moldovan authorities to continue their work towards the full and effective implementation of the AA/DCFTA 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;
4. 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;
5. Underlines the importance of advancing 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 those living outside the cities, and to provide the younger generations with attractive prospects for life and work in the country;
6. 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;

7. Underlines that accession to the EU must take place in accordance with Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, based on respect for the relevant procedures and conditional on the fulfilment of the established criteria, in particular the so-called Copenhagen criteria for EU membership, and that it remains a merit-based process that requires the adoption and implementation of relevant reforms, in particular in the areas of democracy, the rule of law, human rights, a market economy and the implementation of the EU *acquis*;
8. Emphasises its expectation that the Commission, as part of its annual enlargement package to be presented in autumn, will provide an objective assessment of the implementation of EU accession-related reforms, the general preparedness for EU membership and remaining challenges on the path to EU membership for the Republic of Moldova as well as for all other candidate and potential candidate countries;
9. Expresses its hope that the Republic of Moldova will continue, with determination, the reforms that are necessary to fulfil the European ambitions of its people, advance on the path to EU accession and meet the criteria for EU membership as soon as possible and that its efforts and achievements will be duly recognised;
10. Calls on the European Council, when evaluating the progress made individually by the candidate countries for EU accession and deciding on further steps, to take into account the background of Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine, which has had significant consequences for Ukraine's immediate neighbouring countries such as the Republic of Moldova, as well as for the stability, security and prosperity of the entire European continent and therefore requires a long-term political vision and bold decisions that reflect the strategic importance of European unity and, therefore, EU enlargement; calls, therefore, on the Council to agree to start accession negotiations as soon as the candidate countries have sufficiently implemented the indicated priorities; calls, furthermore, on the Commission to continue its active and concrete support to Moldova in this next phase of its path to EU accession;
11. 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 and stability of the political, economic and social situation in the Republic of Moldova; 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 (CFSP), which testifies to the country's willingness and preparedness to contribute to the CFSP and positively distinguishes it from certain other candidate countries;

12. Insists on the need for the Council and the Commission to continue supporting the efforts of the Moldovan authorities to maintain macro-economic stability, guarantee energy security while ensuring energy affordability, in particular for the most vulnerable, combat attempts at foreign interference and disinformation, and carry through their ambitious reforms in the areas of democracy, the rule of law and human rights;
13. 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.