

Press Release

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Statement of the PACE pre-electoral mission to Moldova

Strasbourg, 27.10.2010 – A pre-electoral delegation from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) today ended a visit to Chişinău to evaluate the election campaign on the eve of the 28 November 2010 parliamentary elections in Moldova. The delegation held meetings with the Acting President of Moldova and Speaker of the Parliament, the leaders of the main political parties participating in the elections, the Chair and members of the Central Election Commission (CEC), the President of the Constitutional Court and the Chairman of the Audiovisual Co-ordinating Council, as well as representatives of the international community, NGOs and the media.

The pre-election delegation noted with satisfaction the confidence of political stakeholders in the transparent functioning of the Central Election Commission. The delegation also highlighted the improvement in media coverage of the election campaign, including by public broadcasters which in the past had shown a tendency to give predominantly favourable coverage to the ruling parties, regardless of their political tendency – a phenomenon which has been continually criticised by the Parliamentary Assembly. However, the delegation stressed that private TV channels, whatever their sympathy, should be balanced in their coverage to avoid becoming a platform for propaganda.

The pre-election delegation stressed that a number of concerns have subsisted throughout this election campaign. The delegation was informed about recurrent problems concerning the quality of the voters' lists, and therefore urges the CEC, as well as local authorities, to take all the necessary steps between now and 28 November to improve the quality of these lists. The delegation also expressed its concern over information it received regarding a lack of transparency in the financing of the election campaign. Transparency is essential to guarantee the fairness of the conduct of the elections and to reinforce citizens' confidence in the democratic election process.

A number of interlocutors expressed concern about the risk of misuse of administrative resources by the authorities, and a rise in tension in the run-up to the elections. In this regard, the delegation strongly condemns any attempt by local authorities, whatever their political affiliation, to use administrative resources for the election campaign. The delegation calls on the political stakeholders of Moldova to abstain from any aggressive rhetoric as well as attempts to put pressure on political opponents, or any other actions contrary to the principles of the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters of the Council of Europe's Venice Commission.

The delegation stressed that democratic elections are not limited only to voting day. The authorities of the country and all political stakeholders have the heavy responsibility of ensuring the necessary conditions for the free expression of the will of all the citizens of the Republic of Moldova.

The pre-election delegation recalls that since the parliamentary elections on 5 April 2009, Moldova has entered a spiral of political and institutional crisis. In this regard, the delegation stresses the crucial importance of the early parliamentary elections on 28 November 2010, the results of which should allow, at last, the formation of functional state institutions in conformity with the Constitution and permit the state authorities to concentrate their efforts on resolving the urgent problems of the citizens. After the elections, the leaders of the main political parties should immediately enter into a

The Parliamentary Assembly brings together 318 members from the national parliaments of the 47 member states.

President: Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (Turkey, EDG) – Secretary General of the Assembly: Mateo Sorinas.

Political groups: EPP/CD (Group of the European People's Party); SOC (Socialist Group); EDG (European Democrat Group); ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe); UEL (Group of the Unified European Left).

constructive, responsible dialogue in order to achieve the broadest possible consensus to resolve the crisis.

This delegation is convinced that the active participation of citizens in the elections, and continuous trust in the democratic process, despite current lassitude, could help to end the political crisis.

The pre-electoral delegation has been assured by the authorities of Moldova, as well as by the Central Electoral Commission, that all measures will be taken to eradicate the problems identified in order to guarantee the democratic character of these elections.

The Parliamentary Assembly will send a 30-member delegation to observe the elections on 28 November 2010.

Members of the delegation:

Indrek Saar (Estonia, SOC), head of the delegation

Andres Herkel (Estonia, EPP/CD), member

Jørgen Poulsen (Denmark, ALDE), member