

12 December 2018

Resolution of the 10th Annual Assembly of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum on the situation in the Republic of Moldova

The 10th Annual Assembly of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) reiterates its support for member organisations of the EaP CSF Moldovan National Platform, which are working to defend democratic values and the rule of law, including free and fair elections. At the same time, the Assembly expresses its concern on the subject of democracy backsliding and worsening environment for civil society in the Republic of Moldova.

We regret to see a rupture in political conditions, negatively affecting democratic standards in Moldova. The changes to the electoral system reflect this trend and were adopted, despite the negative assessment coming from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE-ODIHR) and the Council of Europe (CoE) Venice Commission. In our view, these changes jeopardise the multi-party system in the Republic of Moldova and concentrate the power in the hands of groups with clear vested interests.

The politically controlled judiciary is used as a tool against the public interest. We are alarmed that after the [invalidation of the mayoral elections in Chisinau](#) potentially any elections can be invalidated by the means of ill-motivated court decisions, thus discarding and nullifying citizens' choice. We are particularly concerned that the party competition and electoral results could be altered by an abusive interpretation of the legal provisions on party financing and on foreign support for candidates.

We regret that the adoption process of the draft law on non-profit organisations was suspended. There is also real threat of legislation limiting foreign funding to civil society organisations (CSOs) being adopted. We express our concern about the growing number of reported cases involving pressure and intimidation against CSOs, as well as media representatives.

A very recent example of the attacks on CSOs is reflected in the [declaration of the ruling Democratic Party of Moldova](#) of 7 December 2018, which states that:

“A number of public associations are becoming more and more involved in illegal campaigns of political promotion of potential electoral contestants, and the worst is that they are financed from external sources, which is categorically prohibited by law. We are dealing with problematic financing of electoral actions. All these illegal actions are to be documented and transmitted to the competent institutions”.

We suspect that it is connected to the international conference on “Joining Efforts against Impunity and Political Corruption”, organised by Transparency International-Moldova on 4 December 2018.

We call on the Moldovan authorities to ensure that candidates in parliamentary and local elections in 2019 have equal opportunities to stand in the elections.



We urge Moldovan authorities to ensure an appropriate number of polling stations, both in the country and abroad, and ask the international community to apply conditional financing – depending on qualitative results in ensuring democracy in the Republic of Moldova.

We demand Moldovan authorities to stop threatening CSOs that promote democracy, transparency and accountability.

We demand European institutions to closely monitor the situation in Moldova.