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1. **The Republic of Moldova runs the risk of becoming a “mission impossible” for the EU. Info-Prim Neo. 05.08.2009.**

*Commentary by Victor Chirila, Executive Director ad-interim of the Foreign Policy Association of Moldova.*

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of July, after eight years governed by the Party of Communists (PCRM), the majority of Moldovan citizens decided to get rid of nostalgic chimeras of the past and chose a European future with all its inherent uncertainties. More than that, they opted for a younger political class, professionally well prepared and with political experience. For the new generation of politicians, “Moldova – a democratic, prosperous and European country” is a belief proved by deeds, not only by empty words and slogans.

Accordingly, after the vote on July the 29<sup>th</sup>, the young generation of politicians, representing different parties, will have to demonstrate that it is capable of providing a democratic, professional, united, stable, coherent and transparent government. If it succeeds in forming such a coalition government, it will, in fact, pass its first major political maturity test.

Success of the future coalition will depend most of all on the political will and the good spirit of the comprising parties, but not least, also on the support of the external partners. From this point, developing cooperative, stable and predictable relations with the Russian Federation is a necessity, while deepening of partnership with the European Union is mandatory.



Otherwise, through their vote on July the 29<sup>th</sup>, Moldovan citizens banked their future on European integration of the Republic of Moldova. Consequently, without exaggeration, success or failure of this venture will be crucial for the fate of this new generation of politicians, for our country, as well as for the credibility of the EU as a regional actor. Because, it is certain that either success or failure of this endeavor will be equally put on the record of the political class in Chisinau, but also on the EU. In fact, the vote from July the 29<sup>th</sup> created a mutual dependency among the success of the new generation of politicians and the success of the eastern policies of the EU, structured in the form of Eastern Partnership. In the case of a pro-European government coalition formed in Chisinau, the Republic of Moldova will have good chances to become a success story within the Eastern Partnership. But, in order to fulfill this aspiration, not only Chisinau, but also Bruxelles will have to demonstrate flexibility, political will and non-conformist/innovative thinking on subjects like the European perspective, liberalization of visa regime or trade liberalization etc.

Meanwhile, it is extremely important that potential components of the future government coalition are not treated anymore like some chaotic, incoherent, radical, selfish parties, and thus incapable of forming a stable coalition. To the opposite, treating them as a possible alternative to the government will increase their credibility in front of their opponents, particularly in front of ordinary citizens.

Also, if the EU wants to maximize the impact of the Eastern Partnership, then Bruxelles should gradually eliminate certain structural hindrances of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). First of all, EU has to become not only visible in Moldova, but also perceivable and equally respected by both the Moldovan citizens and politicians.

Thanks to ENP, during the last years, EU has become an omnipresent actor in the internal life of our country. When we talk about modernization of the economy – diversification of trade, harmonization of legislation with European standards, assuring energy security, solving the transnistrian conflict etc. as a whole EU is perceived as an essential partner. Thus, despite its immediate vicinity, its growing economic and financial presence, its political presence has been constantly ignored by the government in Chisinau. For instance, during the last two years, the EU representatives of various ranks have warned the official Chisinau that the implementation of the Action Plan with EU leaves much to be desired in a whole range of issues like: freedom of mass media, independent judiciary, respect for human rights, and fight against corruption. Every time though Moldovan politicians pretended not to hear, ignoring, disrespecting, and concealing recommendations and observations coming from different EU capitals.

Lack of a strict conditionality between the progresses in the field of reforms taken on in the Action Plan and the benefits is one of the main causes why EU does not succeed in capitalizing to an adequate extent its real status/political influence. In order to correct this deficiency, the next legal framework that the UE is going to negotiate with our country will have to make more efficient the conditionality system present



in ENP and in its eastern dimension – Eastern Partnership. This is not a caprice, it has to be done despite what party or parties are in power in the Republic of Moldova in the next years. Thus, EU will have real leverage in order to guide and stimulate the path of reforms in the Republic of Moldova.

Still, making the conditionality more efficient, in terms of benefits for progress counted in tangible reforms, will be extremely difficult to achieve without a clear perspective from the EU in areas such as visa regime liberalization or establishing a deep and comprehensive free trade area with the EU.

Offering a clear perspective in time in the aforementioned fields, but strictly conditioned by the qualitative fulfillment of the solicited measures and reforms, EU would succeed, on the one hand, in empowering the mechanism of reform implementation by the Moldovan authorities, and on the other hand, in motivating Moldovan citizens to monitor the actions of the government intended to fulfill the conditions fixed by the EU. By doing so, Bruxelles would help the ordinary citizens to better perceive the benefits offered by the EU and at the same time to become more aware of the importance of their own contribution to bringing to fruition those benefits.

Of course we are conscious of the reticence coming from the EU member states in regards of visa regime liberalization with the Eastern European countries, including the Republic of Moldova. We are also aware of the reasons that are behind these expectative positions. The question is whether the EU also knows what is at stake in our country at the moment. It still remains to be seen...

## 2. The way in which the 29<sup>th</sup> of July Parliamentary Elections could influence the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Moldova: Experts' View

*\*Transcript of a radio broadcast, from 2<sup>nd</sup> of August, produces by the Foreign Policy Association (APE) in collaboration with Imedia News and Analysis Agency and with the assistance of the German Foundation Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES). The broadcast is aired on Radio Vocea Basarabiei every Sunday at 16.30.*

### The main Topics of the Program:

- 1) *The influence of the election's outcome on relations with Romania;*
- 2) *The influence of the election's outcome on relations with the EU;*
- 3) *The influence of the election's outcome on relations with the United States;*
- 4) *The influence of the election's outcome on relations with Russia.*

**Corneliu RUSNAC, Imedia:** Good day, dear listeners. I am Corneliu Rusnac and as usual I invite you at this hour to a broadcast of discussions on topics of foreign policy, produced with the support of the „Foreign Policy Association” and financed by „Friedrich Ebert” Foundation.

Today, obviously, we are going to discuss the 29<sup>th</sup> of July parliamentary elections, or more exactly about how the outcome of this election could influence the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova in the immediate future.



We have invited in the studio Mr. Vlad Lupan, independent expert and Mr. Igor Munteanu, Executive Director of the Institute for Development and Social Initiatives „IDIS - Viitorul”.

Thus, the first question relates to how the outcome of the election will influence the relations with our neighbors, first of all with Romania, with which our relations are as bad as possible. Mr. Munteanu, please?

### **1) The influence of the election's outcome on relations with Romania**

**Igor MUNTEANU, Executive Director of the Institute for Development and Social Initiatives „IDIS - Viitorul”:** Very many people expect from this election a qualitative improvement of the message the Republic of Moldova has for its foreign partners and I want to say that in 2009 we have witnessed a strong deterioration of relations with our neighbors, and as well, we have observed the vacillation to which foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova has come, and this vacillation is related to the dubious quality of some initiatives that have started from attacks made at the beginning of the electoral campaign on our relations with Bucharest on the one hand, and on the other hand the skepticism expressed by the head of our state in what regards the new policy of the European Union, the Eastern Partnership and all these things have been done on a tone of resentment, on a mood of looking for serious external enemies with whom it would be worth fighting.

I think that the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova needs a reset, just like Americans say about their relations with Russia, a reprogramming of the basic priorities, and even though we name European integration the central topic of both internal and external policies in the Republic of Moldova, this relation needs to be reconsidered in functional terms. And I am going to touch upon some very important things. This relation with the European Union has to be looked at not only in terms of assistance, “you give us money and we do whatever we want internally”. This relation does not have to be viewed as an obligation to send formal reports, which have nothing to do with the realities of internal politics. And finally, the face of the Republic of Moldova, which is being represented by its diplomacy and also political class as a whole, they should not look like bloated diplomats' faces, which have nothing to do neither with diplomacy carriers nor with the artists who represent an attractive and credible image of our country.

It has to be totally reviewed and only in this context will the change promised by the liberal and democratic parties get a shape and be accepted. Even the, not at all unimportant, fact that the majority of parties that are now in the process of negotiating an alternative to this government have many diplomats, both inside and outside these parties, diplomats who had been cast out of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This means that extremely grave things have happened inside the ministry and it needs to be reset.

**Corneliu RUSNAC, Imedia:** Mr. Lupan?

**Vlad LUPAN, independent expert:** The moment when a new government is elected is important. It is also important if the government is approved. And then immediately we are going to see the differences between the previous government and the current one in terms of foreign policy. Where are we going to see these differences? It will be first and foremost in the relations with the neighbors. Why? Let us remember who really did and what



did the Communist Party? In order to receive the endorsement for the elections on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April and 29<sup>th</sup> of July it agreed to prove to the Russian Federation, and demonstrated Russian Federation that it has very poor relations with Romania, because Russia perceives Romania as the country which would like to take the Republic of Moldova under its control, which is obviously a non sense by definition.

A rapprochement between these two states is a normal historic rapprochement. But Russia instead, perceives its rapprochement with Belorussia as normal, whereas the rapprochement of the Republic of Moldova with Romania as an abnormal one. This is a policy that does not take into account the normality. It is a policy that only takes into consideration the interests of the Russia Federation. Who was promoting the interests of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Moldova? It was the Party of Communists. Once out of power, in case a new government is approved, in case a new parliamentary majority is formed, first of all democratic, secondly, in the case a new government is approved, but his depends also on the approval of this government by the President of the Republic of Moldova, in other words by Vladimir Voronin, only in case these two things happen we are going to see a substantial change in the foreign policy relations with our neighbors.

Firstly, we have in mind Romania, but also the Ukraine. Ukraine has postponed several consecutive visits of the President Iushchenko to the Republic of Moldova for the reasons that become quite clear in the context of the year 2009, an election year. We understand that he did not what to offer openly his support to the communist regime of the Republic of Moldova. In these circumstances we can see that Ukraine is sending relatively positive messages to the democratic forces. We need to capitalize on this situation. We need to use this situation to our advantage. These two countries might be very useful for Moldova. One in a very large scale and the other one in terms of mutual support in the context of European integration, because the Republic of Moldova should be interested to have good relation with the Ukraine in the prospect of future European integration. It does not matter if the Republic of Moldova goes first on its way towards the European integration and it will go faster from now on, it is also important that the Ukraine goes along the same path, because there is no competition in this case, there is a necessity in terms of national interest and in terms of geopolitical interest of the Republic of Moldova. Not only large countries have geopolitical interest, but also the Republic of Moldova, a small country, needs to understand that it has its own geopolitical interests and it should know how to use them to a maximum degree even being a small country.

## 2) The influence of the election's outcome on relations with the EU

**Corneliu RUSNAC:** How could the relations with the European Union evolve after these elections? Mr. Munteanu?

**Igor MUNTEANU:** The European Union has clearly signaled that its decisions regarding the advancement of the political dialog depend on the fairness of the election process as well as on the vision of the political class on the Republic of Moldova. I think that the EU did a good thing by having taken a break for meditation, for reflection in order to see until where does democracy go in the Republic of Moldova. We have seen until where it goes both in April and in July when all the administrative resources, all that is wicked in the state machinery has exploded in the minds of the people, has exploded in the hands of the policemen who have trained in activities that





consolidated this authoritarian regime. Thank God that these elections have brought some positive results as well. We strongly hope that these results will bring to power a responsible, transparent and credible government for our western partners. From the moment there is a legitimate interlocutor in Chisinau, in that very second the European Union will be available to renew the fundamental discussions on this document that has to keep up the initiative and the logic of the Action Plan, to give an association prospective and at the same time to trace the basic priorities along which the EU – Moldova cooperation is going to take place.

I want to mention that there are 210mln Euros in assistance for the Republic of Moldova from 2007-2010. In 2007, once the European Assistance Instrument was in place, 40mln have been delivered, transferred. Last year, in 2008 there has been a transfer of 71mln; half of that money goes budgetary support. Why? Because it is easier to transfer and at the same time there are no sufficient reasonable projects for the European Union to finance. Respectively, the new government should be very creative in order to encourage the westerners, namely the EU, for them to understand that there is a lot of sense to support new institutions and new local initiatives. At this time, the Republic of Moldova has been announced as the country that aspires to the most investments and economic support per capita. But this did not produce a substantial increase in the quality of the decision making process. Why? Because there was no political will. And I think that only now, in this new segment of political opportunities, the significance of diplomacy increases, not reflection or defensive diplomacy, but persuasive diplomacy. Diplomacy can persuade, but only when thin in domestic politics go well and there is sufficient credibility and public trust towards the government.

**Corneliu RUSNAC:** Mr. Lupan?

**Vlad LUPAN:** The Republic of Moldova for a long time has been a country where there has persisted a reactive and not proactive attitude towards the process of European integration. We were reacting to some events, but we have never made a step forward first in order to do something. Usually, all kinds of international or national situations influenced the movement of the Republic of Moldova, so that it remained like a tail behind the train that was going ahead. I do not want to say, I do not want to make comparisons. Still, we were lagging behind. What is important for the Republic of Moldova is that a small country can go in front of the train, because it is more mobile. For the Republic of Moldova its relationship with the European Union can be an indeed mobile relation, a fast relation, a good one in case there is a government that goes along a different path than the one in power until now.

So far the Party of Communists was adopting laws to blind the population and the EU first of all, than they were not implementing those pieces of legislation. What is important the Republic of Moldova from now on, in case of a democratic government that we hope will come soon, is to begin implementing the *aqui communautaire* and the Copenhagen Criteria that lay at the basis of the EU. These are very simple. These are spheres that we all know very well: rule of law, market economy, not controlled by one family or a clan, but based on the rule of law, based on an independent judiciary, business that would function in the framework of predictable rules, not to be afraid of tomorrow from the legal point of view and not from the economic one, because many things can happen in the economy. Thus, these are the things that the Republic of Moldova should fulfill, and all these are part of the platforms of all democratic parties that might come to power soon. In such circumstances we first think of the



platform, we see the message of the party and we look at the quality of the people that are members of these parties and we notice that there is a whole group of people who are ready, capable and willing an European integration because it is in their interest to have a predictable and European situation in the Republic of Moldova, rather than one of an Eurasian type promoted by the Russian Federation and implemented by the power vertical from Chisinau.

**Igor MUNTEANU:** The image of the Republic of Moldova is of a fragmented, poor and hopeless country. This is the image from all the reports that go around the world. I think that the Republic of Moldova has the duty to change this image. How? It should be a hardworking student in Neighborhood Policies of the EU, Eastern Partnership, and at the same time in producing positive practices with which the EU can be proud of. It is extremely important for the EU as well, when it promotes with so much difficulty certain expensive policies for the European budget crisis, to have the possibility to say: "We have invested in this country, this country has learned the lesson and consequently the things have changed".

I think that even a small country can develop such platforms, to successfully align itself in some spheres where it can achieve some accomplishments. I consider that this is the obligation of the new government, promoting people to key position to clean the public service of ephemeral elements, elements that have stuck during the ideological domination of a single party, bringing in new people selected based on the principles of meritocracy, and at the same time bringing the EU to identify things that can be offered or can be demonstrated to other countries as positive practices. EU desperately needs to show the success of the Neighborhood Policy and I think that the Republic of Moldova, by the natural configuration of the political forces that occurred after the 29<sup>th</sup> of July, has all the chances to orient itself towards such an approach.

### 3) The influence of the election's outcome on relations with the United States

**Corneliu RUSNAC:** Let us talk about the relations with the United States of America. What should we expect from these relations after the elections from the 29<sup>th</sup> of July?

**Vlad LUPAN:** I think that we should understand that the expression that Igor mentioned, "reset" comes, in fact, from the USA, thus, a reset of relations is a very commonly used expression of the Obama administration. I support a reset only when it is worth it, thus, when you want to start from scratch, from a tabula rasa, from a new page. We have seen that during the last meetings between Obama and Medvedev this reset has been used, restart of the system from zero, but the messages of the American President were to some extent ambiguous, and this worried some European analysts, more than that I let myself write a small remark suggesting the President Obama "to reset the reset button", because there was some apprehension regarding the US-Russia relations. Such a relation is important for the Republic of Moldova, the development of this relation to be more precise. Ultimately, we have seen that there was a visit by Vice-president Biden to Georgia and the Ukraine, both states were meant to be part of the visit, yet we have seen that the message was rather different. In a way this visit brought calmness and at the same time could soothe a new government in the Republic of Moldova, in the sense that the US understands very well what happens in this area and who the actor causing trouble in the respective area is. Now the new government should use this moment, understanding that the Obama administration still wants to normalize its



relations with the Russian Federation as much as possible, but at the same time to support the countries that want a democratic development.

In the circumstances when, finally, it appears that there is a will to establish a new democratic government in the Republic of Moldova, there is an opportunity to establish new relations, it is also an opportunity for the Obama administration because it is a moment that they perceive in a positive manner. They have also felt the same thing when Obama won the election, despite the fact that we of course can not compare, but still it is a moment when the Obama administration could, I believe, understand that the events in the Republic of Moldova deserve to be truly supported, and the democratic government from the Republic of Moldova should comprehend that one of our future strategic partners is exactly the United States. Not only could a European integration assist the Republic of Moldova but also a special relation with the United States.

Let us remember. The Marshal Plan brought Europe to this level. We now want to become members of the EU. This has taken place with the help of the United States. We should understand who the actor was and who the central actor remains for the future of the European continent. They can assist us and we can benefit from such a support. It is situation that should be used by all means.

**Corneliu RUSNAC:** Mr. Munteanu?

**Igor MUNTEANU:** Vlad is right, meaning that you should never start a relationship from scratch or try to review one with such an important partner as the United States, because this will never happen. You can not reset this relationship totally. I have to mention that the relation with the United States is not in fact at level zero. In some area there has been good cooperation: relations among the military (North Carolina - National Army), in some spheres the relationship has produced interesting results, the participation of some military personnel in schools and colleges abroad, in the United States, the military center in Germany. We have always had the impression that these relations are one step forward two steps backwards. Because, for instance, when the assistance of the United States was extremely important and was already yielding structural results, the authorities were afraid and were making two steps backwards. This is what happened with the IPAP, as well as with the Millennium Challenge Account. Surely, they have been tempted by the color of money, strategic investments, but they were immediately afraid that this assistance could change the specific of the institutions which they control and which they enjoy controlling. Obviously, in this moment of political system breakdown, when new elite comes up with new obligations in from of the electorate and in from of the populations viewed not only as an electorate.

I think that we should reset the cooperation in very important domains and these spheres I would connect to the economic development, increase of assistance quality and economic counseling, in some areas that need to be refreshed and rethought. On the other hand, it is the security sector, which is in a deep and desperate trouble. Because as long as we do not move towards a reconsideration and reconfiguration of this space, the citizen is not protected, the situation of political crisis can deepen, because we should not take the change of government as a mechanical change of politicians. It has to bring profound transformation within all the basic institutions which sustain a state, and as long as we follow the Moscow time, consume food bought at a European price, and try to fit the clothing style to those of other continents, I think there is an inconsistency and a total lack of cohesion, which





is a result of the unbalance in the political sphere. I think that the Republic of Moldova, in its relations with the United States, should clearly fix several priorities: economic development, revitalization or total reform of the security system, which leads to credibility, cooperation, interaction and democratic stability, and not the stability that we had until recently.

**Vlad LUPAN:** Let us remember that before the 7<sup>th</sup> of April a part of the civil society was constantly repeating that there is a need for reform in the security sector. Everybody was asking themselves: “what could all this mean?” mentioning that “security means intelligence and security system”. No, I said, I repeated a number of times. Security system comprises all the institutions which are part of the system that assures justice and rule of law in the Republic of Moldova. This means: judiciary, justice system, prosecutor’s office; independent mass media is a very important element of the security sector...

**Igor MUNTEANU:** Informational space...

**Vlad LUPAN:** Informational space, exactly, but also freedom of mass media, providing correct information. It for sure means subjects that relate to the respect of human rights, because respect has to be equal in the army as well as in the society. It can not be one way in some places and in others differently. Evidently, it regards the army of the Republic of Moldova which needs to be reformed. There is also a need for reform in the intelligence service; as well as in other institutions which do not for the European criteria.

In fact, the reform of the security sector means just this: reform of all militarized or demilitarized institutions, but which are called here power structures, adding justice, mass media, and so on, mass media system, and population information system in a way that would correspond first of all to the European norms. Thus, on the one hand it is an effort to bring the Republic of Moldova closer to the European integration, and the other hand I was mentioning the need for reform of the security sector, everyone was thinking of something else, ultimately on April the 7<sup>th</sup>, after they had been beaten, they understood what happened to the security sector reform and why it is needed. Well, in the relations with the United States, as I talked in a private discussion with an American representative abroad, thus not an American diplomat from Moldova, but one who had some decision making power, about the possibility of US assistance in implementing such a reform. He told me very simply: “honorable representatives of the Republic of Moldova, for us your reform is economically cheap, you just need the will to undertake it”. Thus, imagine what can happen with a government that would want to implement a reform and one that would immediately receive the whole financial support from abroad, they would not have to spend, well spend a little, but spend almost nothing for such a thing; when someone tells you “I am laying on money and am willing to give it to you, but please implement that reform already”. This is indeed one of our priorities in our relations with the United States, even though it is not the only one and we should understand very well that it is not the only one and there should not be just one subject in this sense.

**Igor MUNTEANU:** The specific emphasis that Vlad made upon the security sector reform apparently has no link to foreign policy, because people say: “Foreign policy is handled by diplomats”. Modern political science though sees a direct correlation, because as long as a country does not provide for a good order of functioning of its power



structures, which assure the protection of the individual, create blocks against administrative abuse or exploitation by some uncontrolled by public interest oligarchies, countries become and remain vulnerable.

#### **4) The influence of the election's outcome on relations with Russia**

**Corneliu RUSNAC:** Let us now talk about the relations with Russia. What is the prospective of these relations in the light of the elections from 29<sup>th</sup> of July? Mr. Munteanu?

**Igor MUNTEANU:** We have an important problem with Russia, which we should not neglect and when we say that we have a strategic partnership with Russia we admit a huge lie, a tremendous mistake. You can not have a strategic partnership with a country that conquers your territory, just as you can not have a strategic relationship with some one who blocks your exports. I think that interlocutors from Chisinau have never been credible for Moscow, and our relations have been treated circumstantially, depending upon the attitudes created at the moment. In our relations with Russia, us, the Republic of Moldova should never negotiate on our own. This is a historic lesson, which we should have learned faster. Secondly, we have to take care of articulating our national interest regardless with whom we talk. As long as we make two steps backwards and say: "yes, if this is not against the Russian Federation's position", in this case we should uphold exactly what our national interest states, so long we will not be trustworthy because nobody like to deal with crooks, people who have no respect for their own identity. And I think that this is the main problem which both internal and external policies of the Republic of Moldova have been confronted with.

**Corneliu RUSNAC:** Mr. Lupan?

**Vlad LUPAN:** In a nutshell. Indeed, from now on, in case of a democratic government, we can describe our relations with the Russian Federation as follows: relations between two partners who respect each other, because we need to respect one another, it is common for an European state, but one that should not concede from its national interests. To put it differently, we should understand the following, we can not expect the Russian Federation to solve the transnistrean conflict because we have a communist government, and we can not also imagine that this is going to happen if we have a democratic government. It is a non sense. The Russian Federation has its interests, it thinks like this. This is the way it thinks, and we should understand that it will by no means solve the transnistrean conflict for us and will never want to solve it in an adequate manner. Thus, we need to diminish the importance of this subject for the Republic of Moldova, to adhere foremost to our national interests, thus the conflict should be resolved along the model that is desirable for us or not, or simply not at all. And then we should move ahead in the direction of European integration, because this is the main guarantee from other interferences from abroad, including the ones from Kremlin. It is basically an axiom: democratization of a society means one thing – its stability. But we have heard about stability from the communists. Yes, stability, in the sense that Moldovan citizens are steadily leaving the country and are constantly sending money home. This is not stability, this is, as one of our colleagues has put it, "graveyard stability". We want a different kind of stability. Stability in the development of the Republic of Moldova and this is...

**Igor MUNTEANU:** A steady development...



**Vlad LUPAN:** A steady development, exactly. Thus, this is possible only in case the relation with the Russian Federation is a normal one, and we should not dramatize that “look, tomorrow transnistrea will be recognized”. Well, so what if it is recognized by the Russian Federation? Will anything change; will the Republic of Moldova go to the moon or transnistrea? Absolutely nothing is going to happen; the Russian Federation does not risk repeating the events from Georgia-Ossetia, not even the recognition of these regions. Simply, the current status quo is in their favor, this is how the situation looks like. And they can change it, to add, to subtract, to declare something, but ultimately they are not interested in the worsening of the situation in the Republic of Moldova to a very problematical condition, because in that case everybody will point the finger at them and will in fact help the Republic of Moldova. Well, given that Moldova is no longer a neighbor of the Russian Federation; the Kremlin should understand that the Republic of Moldova in this case will be a definitive loss.

**Igor MUNTEANU:** A single element. I think that one more lesson that we have learnt during the last years is that we have to get rid of utopist thinking. We should forget about the utopia when we were waiting for gifts, presents from the Russian Federation, when Vladimir Voronin will be listened to by the most powerful of the day, and as a consequence the transnistrean problem will be resolved. We should as well forget that the Republic of Moldova must be assisted, because the big ones have to assist the small ones. It is no definition and no absolute commandment that would have anything to do with the political and geopolitical realities in which we are living.

**Corneliu RUSNAC:** And now, very shortly about the quality of diplomacy in the Republic of Moldova. How can it be evaluated, how can the quality of Moldovan diplomacy be assessed, and what needs to be changed? Mr. Lupan, please?

**Vlad LUPAN:** The quality of diplomacy can be evaluated in a very simple way. We have just discussed before this radio show about the fact that this quality is everywhere except for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the civil society in particular. Even citizens from the civil society, who have not worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are better diplomats than many of those who remained in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There are several people left in the Ministry who are worth the attention of the future government. We support these people from the professionalism point of view, us being the people from the civil society, but I think that the quality of diplomacy really needs to be evaluated, reevaluated based exactly on the criteria mentioned by Mr. Munteanu, meaning based on meritocracy.

A criterion very much discussed in every handbook of political science on the topic of democratization. Meritocracy is the very element that determines and differentiates a democratic government from a non-democratic one. So if we want professionalism, meritocracy means professionalism. You deserve it because you are good. If we want to have a good diplomacy then a serious structural reform of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be needed, in order to see how many of its elements can keep on their activity in the Ministry and to reform it in the sense that it should indeed become a linkage between the European Union and the other governmental structures and not only governmental from the Republic of Moldova for a real implementation of European reforms. Not those that go through the Parliament are adopted and then are never implemented.



**Corneliu RUSNAC:** Mr. Munteanu?

**Igor MUNTEANU:** Shortly. Moldovan diplomacy at this time is quite sterile, deprived of innovative ideas and extremely politicized. We have also seen this in the period when orders were coming from the Ministry to Embassies in order to reflect the event from Chisinau in a certain manner; we have also seen this in the context of some fundamental initiatives, strategically important launched by the EU and the reaction of the diplomats was totally impotent and I think that this reflects what is going on in the public service in general. I think that the government, the future one, the new one, has the moral obligation to disperse its resources so that it reaches a cardinal, fundamental reform of the public sector. Talking about this, it is obvious that those who need to readjust the diplomatic service must cast out from those warm places all those ambassadors who have been placed there only according to superficial, political criteria and to give a new sense to the quality of a diplomat of the Republic of Moldova.

**Corneliu RUSNAC:** Mr. Munteanu, Mr. Lupan, I thank you very much for your presence at this radio show. Dear listeners, I, Corneliu Rusnac, remind you that you have been listening to discussion on topics of foreign policy, produced with the support of the „Foreign Policy Association” and financed by „Friedrich Ebert” Foundation.

Here is where I say goodbye to you and I will be waiting you next week with a new program. See you soon.