



Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova

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Press-Release

MOLDOVAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS PROTESTS FOR LOCAL AND NATIONAL DEMOCRACY AND FOR FINANCIAL DECENTRALIZATION

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On October 11, 2013 in Chisinau took place a preliminary Action in support of the key major act so far for democratization of Moldovan society – new modifications in local finance legislation. Legislative amendments related to financial decentralization reform are having two key dimensions – radical **democratization of Moldovan society by breaking the top-down power vertical in public administration and essential improvement of public services. Unfortunately the first dimension is finding some serious opposition on behalf of Moldovan politicians, who initially making all-embrasive international commitments towards decentralization reform and spending millions of EURO of donors funds, all of a sudden did realize that democratization of the country is not entirely in their interests and might penalize them during national elections in 2014.** Being reluctant to implement this legislation from 2014 they are eager to maintain power vertical in the country as well as political, administrative and financial control over local governments especially during election campaigns. To this end they invent various false pretexts and dubious justifications in order to postpone implementation of this legislation. One deplorable recipe invented by poor advisors of our politicians is a simple buying of mayors allocating some significant public funds for local investments in order to buy mayors' consent for postponement of law implementation corrupting both central and local public administrations with the public resources – resources, which do not belong to politicians and which normally should not buy electoral campaigns. Another absolutely departed from reality argument is would be the position of IMF. This is already a pure mendacity since not only IMF having no any mandate in re-distribution of public funds (only growing public funds or even growing share of public funds in GDP represents a certain concern for IMF), but also efficiency raising of public spending and of public institutions with the same resources is a core IMF value. Another laughable argument is elimination of mayoralities in some 300 or thereabout communities. This is so far from any reality that there is nothing to argue about, moreover that the new legislation not only completely compensate losses for 2 years, not only it is giving serious possibilities to raise local revenues but above all it envisages a very solid equilibration fund for less affluent communities. This Law in fact is the only chance to save now disappearing Moldovan villages.

Such disastrous and primitive attempts of explicit political manipulations have even further motivated 300 mayors to take part in the local democracy and local government support demonstration to say decisive "NO" to the degradation of public administration system and decisive "YES" to local and national democracy in Moldova. This is moreover impressive in view of the fact of enormous political pressures on behalf of political parties who utilizing dubious political machinery under the different pretexts either created extreme impediments for mayors or have categorically prohibited to mayors to come to the demonstration. However, regardless of this fact or may be even due to this fact the demonstration gathered more participants than was initially expected.

Meeting and demonstration have started at the Governmental building where basically all participants have had a chance to share with their colleagues and with the population at-large (through mass media extensively present at the event) their thoughts. In fact, **worthwhile special thanks media presence and media coverage of this event, which regardless of the political pressures exercised upon media on this subject and regardless of other events of interest for media, still spend the entire day with the protesting mayors.** Afterwards peaceful demonstration moved to parliament where the meeting continued. Needless to say that demonstration was totally apolitical since CALM members embrace representatives of all political parties both of ruling coalition and from political opposition and right from the start CALM publically distanced from any other actions or movements currently taking place in Moldova.

This was the first and even preliminary action organized by local governments. ***At the meeting was decided to give politicians some time (1 week) and if local finance reform will not be approved by the Parliament and local governments' aspirations will not be heard - to continue actions in a week or so, but in a rather extended format inviting also the people to support local governments claims and addressing directly to population because at the end of the day the local finance legislation being in essence truly and genuinely about the radical democratization of society - first of all is in the interests of the people of Moldova***

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