

To the attention of Prime-minister of the Republic of Moldova, Mr. Pavel Filip

Copy: Members of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova

Copy: Development partners

DECLARATION OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY
REGARDING MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENT

Civic Forum on monitoring the implementation of the Association Agreement was held on the 22nd of February 2017 and was focused on several topics: environmental protection, energy security and justice. Representatives of the Government, of the civil society, development partners and independent experts attended the event.

As a result of the discussions and conclusions of the Civic Forum, civil society organizations decided to declare the following:

CONSIDERING the importance of environmental protection as a priority field in sustainable development of the Republic of Moldova, in concordance with economic and social development,

UNDERSTANDING the complexity of harmonization of the national legislation to the EU Directives in the field of environment and climate changes, stipulated in the Association Agreement signed between the Republic of Moldova and EU and in the Action Plans for the implementation of the Association Agreement,

BEING CONVINCED that the implementation of the Association Agreement signed between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union will contribute to the improvement of legislative and regulatory framework in the field of environment and climate changes and that, if implemented, the Association Agreement will reduce degradation and will increase the quality of the environment in Moldova, offering opportunities for investments in national economy and improving the population's life quality,

TAKING A POSITION on the Government report on the implementation of the Association Agreement and the alternative report presented by the civil society organizations,

FOLLOWING the reorganization process of the Government and underlining the high importance of good governance in the field of environment and climate change in this difficult period of time,

Civil Society Organizations of the National Platform of Civil Society Forum of Eastern Partnership declare following:

REITERATE the importance of the implementation of chapters in the field of environment and climate changes from the Association Agreement, with a clearance of outstanding and creation of a solid base for practical implementation of provisions of transposed Directives. Only in the condition of maintaining an independent, strong and reformed Ministry of Environment, without merging it with other sectoral ministries, excluding the conflicts of interests between environmental protection and economic activities, according to best European practices, positive changes of environmental components (water quality, rehabilitation and maintaining water bodies' volume, reducing air pollution, waste accumulation prevention and recycling, soil conservation) could be kept.

ADVOCATE for declaring environmental protection as one of the national priorities of development in the National Agenda 2030, maintaining the Ministry of Environment, capable of promotion of the priorities from the Association Agreement, also for promotion of the Environmental Impact

Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment, for institutional environmental reform and for creation of Environmental Protection Agency,

EXPRESS our concern over the inadequate involvement of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova in modification and delaying of the adoption of legislative acts, harmonized with EU Directives. approved during the process of coordination between the ministries, as a result of public consultations, taking into account international expertise and with the notice of the Center for Harmonization of Legislation (for example: Law of waste - removing provisions related to asbestos and co-incineration of waste, Law of chemical substances – first reading failed because of group interests).

CONSIDER necessary practical implementation of the provisions of the Association Agreement at the local level, resulted from legislative acts and approved strategic documents, with necessary financial resource allocation, clear indicators for monitoring and public reports, in order to improve environmental quality in the country.

CONFIRM the high level of interest and goodwill of involvement of the civil society in the promotion of the European values and realization of practical measures for the implementation of the Association Agreement for the benefit of the whole society.

EXPRESS our conviction and support for the Ministry of Environment to be included in the new structure of the Government of the Republic of Moldova as a solid institution, aiming to protect the environment. It is unacceptable and incompatible to merge the environmental ministry with economic ministries, such as agricultural ministry, which aim is using and exploitation of natural resources, and is not coherent with the aim of ensuring rational consumption of natural resources. It is acceptable to merge the Ministry of Environment with related areas such as regional development (component of water supply and waste).

UNDERLINE that, in our opinion, these two fields – environment and agriculture – are incompatible to be governed by the same institution, being in a conflict of interest and will have negative repercussions on the implementation of the Association Agreement signed between Moldova and the European Union.

Environmental performance Review conducted by the United Nations Environment Programme (2014) shows that Moldova has not advanced very far in the chapter of increasing environmental quality in the country.

To record progress and achieve the reform of the sector so long-awaited and discussed for years and realization of the provisions of the Association Agreement, it is necessary that the Ministry of Environment becomes a solid institution, headed by a Minister who advocate for the improvement of the environment and not for irresponsible exploitation of natural resources to obtain short-term benefits, leaving no future for Republic of Moldova citizens.

Environment, together with the economy and social protection is one of the components of sustainable development. It is the vital element that counterbalances in a responsible way economic decisions, in favor of society, for a long term. Natural resources such as water, air, forests, soils, birds, animals, etc. are vital for the existence of the society. For this reason, the components of the environment must be protected and exploited rationally and intelligently. This reasoning is the basis for the existence of an independent Central Environmental Authority, which would elaborate environmental policies that would ensure sustainable development of Moldova.

We want to emphasize that currently, the Ministry of Environment is the author of 50 organic laws and about 100 governmental decisions. The Republic of Moldova undertook to approximate national legislation with EU laws in environmental protection and climate change, according to the Association Agreement, which contains 32 directives and 9 regulations from about 500 directives, regulations and decisions of the European Union. They cover most of the EU legislation and policy in the field of environment, including environmental governance, air and water quality protection, waste management, industrial pollution and industrial accidents, biodiversity protection, chemical substances and climate change. Legislation and policies on environmental protection are complex, requiring a responsible and a comprehensive approach, the environmental quality having a direct impact on the health and living standards of the population and creating preconditions for investment and economic development. Ministry of Environment needs support not only for the

approximation of the national legislation, but also for the implementation of the legislation in the field. Ministry of Agriculture has demonstrated many times the desire to abuse from using water resources, including groundwater, which is the state's water reserve to supply the population with drinking water, delaying the improvement of chemicals management, in land processing in riparian buffer zones etc.

Following the above, we propose that the new structure of the Government should contain the Ministry of Environment as a separate ministry or a ministry which could join Ministry of Regional Development (component of water supply, sewerage, and waste).

The signatories:

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9. VICTOR CIMPOIES, Public Association „Cutezătorul”
10. LILIA CURCHI, Association of Ecological Journalists and Ecological Tourism from Moldova
11. IOANA BOBÂNĂ, Women association for environmental protection and sustainable Development
12. LIDIA JUBEA, Public Association “Center for youth SPECTRU”
13. ALEX NISTIRIUC, Public Association „Media - Group MERIDIAN”
14. VEACESLAV TUTUNARU, Public Association „Media - Group MERIDIAN”
15. GABRIEL MĂRGINEANU, Employers Association from Tourism industry from Moldova
16. ALEXEI ANDREEV, Ecological Society BIOTICA
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32. MARIANA ȘEREMET, Public Association „Garden of Moldova”
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