



Statement on Russian Election Interference in Moldova

The IDU strongly condemns the Russian regime's interference in Moldova's democratic process. On October 22nd, 2024, Moldova will hold its Presidential Election along with a referendum on enshrining the country's objective to join the European Union into its Constitution.

As Moldovans prepare to head to the polls, Russia and its oligarchs continue to deliberately meddle in a free and open election to undermine Moldova's sovereignty and delegitimize its democratic process. Long before Putin's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Russian forces illegally occupied the Transnistria region of Moldova. Since that time, the Russian Federation has increased its disinformation campaign in Moldova through the spreading of propaganda regarding the war in Ukraine and the drumming up of anti-Western sentiments. For years, pro-Kremlin oligarchs have financed proxies in Moldova to coerce and manipulate voters into electing Russian-friendly and Eurosceptic politicians. During this year's campaign, it has never been clearer that foreign election interference is a critical issue that must be addressed to defend Moldova's democratic institutions.

As the election draws near, Russia is mobilizing multiple malicious actors and resources to guarantee electoral success for pro-Kremlin parties and a defeat for the pro-European cause in the referendum. Moldovan authorities have reported numerous instances of criminal activity during the campaign, such as voter fraud schemes, cyberattacks, and information warfare. On October 3rd, 2024, Moldovan security services discovered a covert vote buying operation involving \$15 million being transferred to over 100,000 Moldovan voters. Other instances include evidence of sedition, fraud, and money laundering of illicit funds to pro-Russian political parties and groups within Moldova. Local news outlets are being paid to spread propaganda promoted by Russian state media. Many of these election interference tactics are financed by both Russian and Moldovan oligarchs, such as Ilan Șor. Therefore, it is imperative that the international community stands in solidarity with Moldova's democratic forces.

The IDU supports Moldova in its fight to ensure that its elections are free, fair, and independent, a cornerstone of all democratic societies. Together with our Moldovan member, the Action and Solidarity Party (PAS), we remain steadfast in our commitment to promote freedom, democracy, and the rule of law. We thank Moldovan President Maia Sandu and PAS for their courageous efforts to defend the country's European and democratic future, and we wish them the best of luck in Sunday's vote.