



Resolution of the 2020 Media Forum of the Republic of Moldova

(Chişinău, 24-25 November 2020)

The participants in the 2020 Media Forum approve the following resolution:

1. Reiterating the firm conviction that the democratic development of the Republic of Moldova is impossible without fully respecting the principles of freedom of press and freedom of speech, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, and other documents and international conventions to which our country is a party,
2. Reconfirming the commitment of the journalist community and line associations to contribute to building in the country an environment that is favourable to the development of the media on democratic principles and based on loyal competition,
3. Realizing that journalists and media outlets must effectively exert their mission of democracy watchdogs, convey different opinions in issues of major public interest, for an accurate coverage of reality and honest informing of the public, and that a democratic governance must secure conditions for media functioning in the public interest,

The Media Forum finds:

- A dramatic worsening of the situation in which most media outlets operate, generated by the poor management of the pandemic crisis by the authorities, in general, and of the media field, in particular;
- A lack of effective communication between the authorities and the journalistic environment in times of crisis, as well as a frequent restriction of access to public interest information concerning the crisis management;
- A total lack of concern among the authorities about the way and the conditions in which journalists perform their social mission during exceptional circumstances and a public health emergency;
- A stagnation in improving the legal framework on media activities, including election legislation, which has led to a perpetuation of condemnable practices of partisan behaviour by influential media outlets in the presidential elections of November 2020;
- A lack of a systemic approach in media development policies despite the presence of a sufficient legal framework for this purpose;
- Old and obsolete practices in the work of the Broadcast Council and of the Supervisory Board of the national public media service provider provided there is new legislation in the field.

The Media Forum requests the authorities:

- To develop, adopt and implement in good faith sufficient and effective media policies deriving from Law no. 67 of 26 July 2018 on Approving the National Concept of Media Development in the Republic of Moldova;
- To ensure the functionality of the entity designated as responsible for making and implementing the public policies on developing the entire national media system;

- To reactivate the Working Group for Media Law Improvement, to abandon the partisan approach, and to promote in good faith the draft laws prepared thereby;
- To create and ensure the functionality of an efficient mechanism of communication with the media during the pandemic crisis, for a prompt and adequate public informing;
- To develop and implement actions for the economic recovery of the media severely affected by the pandemic crisis;
- The Broadcast Council, in its daily work, to implement the legislation in force and the good international practices in the field, abandoning any political tutelage and serving only the public interest;
- The Broadcast Council to insist on broadcast media service providers fulfilling their obligation to provide and make public the data on their funding sources, or otherwise, to impose the related sanctions;
- To take action to prevent the disappearance of local/regional broadcast media service providers during transition to digital ground television;
- To take measures that would ensure the unrestricted access of journalists throughout the country, especially to the eastern districts, in order to exercise their profession.

The Media Forum urges journalists and media outlets:

- To advocate for real and effective media policies, participate in their making and closely monitor their implementation;
- To show solidarity in all cases of restriction of the freedom to perform their mission, regardless of who places such restrictions;
- To further develop their professional capacities in crisis conditions, including by ensuring a remote rhythmic activity;
- To capitalize on new opportunities for economic activities in order to strengthen their editorial independence and institutional autonomy;
- To research their audience closely in order to respond accurately and competently to its expectations and information needs;
- Along with the efforts to ensure an offer of quality media products, to identify and enhance new methods of self-financing (paywall, membership, donations, etc.);
- To ensure and promote the transparency of their funding sources, catalysts of credibility;
- To follow and promote the deontological norms and professional standards.

**25 November 2020,
Chisinau**