



Resolution **of 2022 Media Forum of the Republic of Moldova** *(Chisinau, 22-23 November 2022)*

The participants in the 2022 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 media freedom 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:

- An intensification of foreign interference in the domestic media information space due to the war of aggression unleashed by Russia against Ukraine, which has been leading to an antagonization of society, including the journalistic community;
- Vulnerability of information security and lack of real and effective mechanisms to prevent and counter threats posed by information and hybrid warfare;
- Ineffectiveness of actions to block/interdict broadcasting of propagandistic news and information-analytical programs on Russian TV channels in the territory of the Gagauz autonomy, as the autonomy, through TV channels relayed by cable companies, continues to be covered with programs that encourage war and aggression and incite hatred;
- Some improvement in the process of improving media legislation, including in the electoral field, but not enough to develop the field;
- A continuing lack of a systemic approach and comprehensive public policies to ensure that the media effectively carry out their mission to serve the public interest;
- Poor communication between the authorities and the media, which ultimately undermines joint efforts to manage and overcome crises;
- A reasonable concern about possible anti-competitive practices in the media and advertising markets due to continuing ownership concentration processes;
- A continuing worsening of print media situation due to rising newsprint prices and tariffs for distribution services;
- Some improvement in the work of the Audiovisual Council in the direct exercise of its statutory powers, and completion/adjustment of secondary broadcast legislation, which should be boosted and deepened.

The Media Forum requests the Moldovan authorities to:

- Amend/complete the legislation and give the Ministry of Culture or another ministry concrete responsibilities in the development, consultation and implementation of public media policies;

- Ensure the implementation of the provisions of the National Media Development Concept of the Republic of Moldova, including urgent approval of the National Media Development Program for 2022-2025 which has been drafted by a joint working group of media experts and representatives of public institutions, supplementing the Program with provisions that would help quality media to cope with the financial, human resources and other challenges that have arisen or have been exacerbated by the pandemic and war crises;
- Consider as a priority for 2023 the amendment, adjustment or completion of national legislation that would:
 - a) ensure efficient and timely access to information, transparency of public institutions at all levels and exclude obstruction of media access to information of public interest, including by sanctioning those who illegally block access to information;
 - b) investigate and sanction all cases of physical attacks, intimidation and online harassment or other attacks on journalists;
 - c) prevent and counteract anti-competitive practices in the media and advertising markets;
 - d) develop and implement rapid response mechanisms that would limit or counter the penetration into the national information space of propaganda media from countries recognised as aggressors by the European and international community;
 - e) identify and implement ways to stimulate local producers of public interest media content and support the development of independent media;
- Improve communication with media outlets/journalists to ensure accurate reporting, especially in the context of the crises facing our country;
- Work to ensure free access for journalists to the Transnistrian region and ask for the involvement of development partners in this regard;
- The Audiovisual Council to maintain and increase its efforts to effectively implement the provisions of broadcast legislation;
- The Supervisory and Development Council of the national public media service provider to organize its activities in such a way as to be able to prove to the public the necessity and usefulness of its work for the announced and expected reforms of "Teleradio-Moldova" Company;
- Training institutions to complete/adapt their training programs for media specialists, orienting them to the concrete demands of the media market.

The Media Forum urges journalists and media outlets to:

- Maintain the effort to hold the authorities accountable in their actions to ensure the systemic development of the country's media;
- Strengthen their professional capacities to adequately respond to the challenges of local, regional and global crises;
- Identify and exploit new opportunities for economic sustainability;
- Ensure respect for copyright, report unauthorised copying of journalistic content and discourage parasitism on the work of others;
- Ensure and promote transparency of its activities, including transparency of owners, ownership and funding sources;
- Not underestimate in any way the importance of ethical principles and rules of conduct in their daily work, including during crisis.

**23 November 2022,
Chisinau**