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NDI DEPLORES EXPULSION OF INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVERS FROM MOLDOVA

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Democratic Institute (NDI) today deplored the actions by Moldovan authorities that led to the cancellation by the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO) of a mission to observe the July 29 parliamentary elections. ENEMO, a partner organization of NDI, called off its mission following a string of unwarranted arrests of ENEMO leaders and continued harassment of its observers.

ENEMO, a coalition of 18 leading election monitoring organizations representing 17 countries of the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe, had been invited to send election observers by the Moldovan government. The organization, which is highly regarded in the region for its professionalism and election expertise, received funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development to carry out its observation mission. Since 2004, ENEMO has conducted multiple international election observation missions to Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Albania.

ENEMO member organizations are the leading election monitoring groups in their respective countries. ENEMO members have observed more than 200 elections, monitored more than 100 polls abroad and trained over 200,000 election monitors.

“This type of action against an international observer mission is deplorable,” said Kenneth Wollack, president of NDI, which provided logistical support to the ENEMO mission. “The aggressive actions by Moldovan authorities against this respected organization were unprecedented and demonstrated a disregard for international commitments as well as norms for democratic elections.”

Wollack noted that Moldova is a participating state in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and that its actions against the ENEMO delegation were a violation of the letter and spirit of the OSCE’s Copenhagen document, which calls on participating states to invite observers.

In a written statement on election day, ENEMO Mission Head Sergey Tkachenko said that conditions on the ground, which included his own arrest by immigration police as well as the deportation of fellow core team member Edil Baisalov, made it impossible for ENEMO to guarantee the safety of its observers and carry out its monitoring effort.

ENEMO had submitted the names of 140 experienced election observers for accreditation to Moldova's Central Election Commission. But after much delay, only 53 observers received accreditation and many who had received invitations were denied entry. Tkachenko was among those denied accreditation.

On July 27 and 28 Moldovan authorities began targeting ENEMO observers, preventing delegations from entering the country, forcibly entering hotel rooms and arresting and deporting observers who had already passed through customs.

ENEMO is one of the signatories of the [Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers](#), which was launched in October 2005 at the United Nations. NDI was one of the initiators of the declaration. It is now endorsed by 32 intergovernmental and international nongovernmental organizations, which are engaged in improving standards for nonpartisan international election observation.

The full statement by ENEMO is available at [NDI.org](#).

The National Democratic Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. More information is available at [www.ndi.org](#).

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