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Joint Statement by EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, and Commissioner Stefan Füle on recent developments in the Republic of Moldova

Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, and Štefan Füle, EU Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, made today the following statement:

"We have learned with strong concern of the adoption of an amendment to the Law on the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Moldova, allowing removal of judges from the Constitutional Court if they do not have the "trust" of parliament. This law, as well as a number of other important laws, touching upon fundamental issues for the functioning of Moldova's democracy, have been adopted with extreme haste, and without proper consultation with Moldovan society, or appropriate regard to European standards on constitutional reform, in particular those of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe. In this regard, we fully share the concerns expressed by the President of the Venice Commission in the statement he issued today.
We understand that these laws, in addition to the measures affecting the Constitutional Court judges, include measures on the electoral law, the threshold required for parties to enter parliament, the powers of the Acting Prime Minister to dismiss Ministers and Heads of Institutions and a change in status of the National Anti-Corruption Centre. This follows a worrying new pattern of decision-making in Moldova, reflected also in other recent legislative moves, where the institutions of the state have been used in the interest of a few. We reiterate our concern that these measures, carried out without proper preparation and consultation, could constitute a threat to the independence of key national institutions, and an obstacle to Moldova's further democratic development and stable rule of law.

We urge Moldova's political leaders not to lose sight of the long-term impact of their decisions, including on the achievement of Moldova's aspirations."