

NATIONAL SEMINAR IN CHISINAU - JUNE 2001

WOMEN IN MOLDOVAN POLITICS

by Charles Lasham

In response to a recognized lack of women as political figures in Moldova, IFES organized a national conference on the Participation of Women in the Moldovan Politics in conjunction with the American Bar Association and the Central and East European Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI). The conference drew more than 90 representatives of political parties, NGOs, the media, international institutions, and deputies in the Parliament of Moldova.

Silvia Saca of the United Nations Development Programme moderated the conference and Deputy Victoria Novic gave an opening address on behalf of the Speaker of the Moldovan Parliament. Speakers included Ana Bejan, a former Deputy and current Prefect of Soroca county in Moldova, and Berit Lindeman, a Norwegian member of the ODHIR who co-authored the section of the report on women in Moldvan politics. Bejan spoke on women's participation in Moldova's political history using her own Parliamentary experience as a springboard while Lindeman spoke on "Comparative Legal Provisions from Around the World—Successes and Failures." Five breakout workshops, each with a facilitator, carried the initial discussions a step further and examined the reasons behind the lack of women in the political spectrum.

The Conference resulted in a written Resolution that identifies next-steps in bolstering women's participation in politics in Moldova. Some of the recommendations of the resolution are:

- To adjust the legal framework to the international standards in the field
- To develop state programs aimed to promote women to decision making positions in politics, economy and social sphere
- To adopt educational programs aimed to nurture personal dignity and to overcome traditional mentality on the role of women in society; to encourage women solidarity in economic, social and political life

The complete text of the Resolution can be found at <http://www.ifes.md/ifes/activities>.

IFES provided on-site technical assistance to Moldovan electoral institutions from 1994 until July of this year. In August, IFES removed its ex-pat presence and handed over operations to its domestic staff. As the Association for Participatory Democracy, the staff will carry on IFES' mission of supporting the further development of democratic institutions in Moldova.

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