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Moldova: no consensus on a solution to the problem of electing a president

On 16 February, the leadership of the ruling coalition in Moldova, the Alliance for European Integration (AIE), proved unable to achieve a consensus on strategies to overcome the two-year-long political impasse linked to the parliament's failure to elect a president. For now, each party in the coalition will pursue its own policy in this matter. This means that there is little chance of a new president being elected any time soon.

The Constitutional Court's decision on 8 February released the coalition from having to elect the president in the immediate future, and thus gave it the ability to develop a long-term strategy to escape the political impasse. The Court refused to rule on whether the constitutional requirement for the president to be elected within two months of the office being vacated applies in the present case, and has thus passed the responsibility to adjust this requirement on to the Parliament. The coalition is currently considering several ways of escaping this impasse. The most promising is the organisation of another referendum to alter the process for electing the president, which could take place together with the local government elections in June this year. However, the coalition parties cannot reach an agreement on how to choose the head of state: the Liberal Democratic Party of the popular Prime Minister, Vladimir Filat, wants general elections, whereas the other coalition members want the decision made by a simple parliamentary majority. If one of these variants is successfully introduced, the coalition could hold presidential elections in autumn, thus avoiding what would be the fourth consecutive premature dissolution of parliament. <wrod>