Combating high-level corruption and financial fraud to be carried out more rapidly and efficiently

Cases of corruption, financial crime and organized crime will be investigated more rapidly and efficiently. The Government has approved a draft law that more precisely defines the competences of the General Prosecutor's Office, the Anticorruption Prosecutor's Office, the Prosecutor's Office for Combating Organized Crime and Special Cases, the National Anticorruption Center, as well as the criminal investigation bodies within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Tax Service and the Customs Service.

At present, the competences of investigative bodies can overlap, and some case files end up being transferred from one institution to another. At the same time, specialized resources can be involved in smaller cases instead of being focused on high-level corruption and large-scale fraud. This can lead to delays and to slower investigation of important cases.

To avoid these bottlenecks, the draft law proposes a clear delimitation of competences. Thus, the National Anticorruption Center (CNA) will have an extended role in investigating large-scale financial fraud, including cases of money laundering, fraud involving public funds and serious economic offences. The CNA will also become the main institution responsible for investigating any fraud targeting funds coming from abroad – fraud that affects external funds and resources from the budget of the European Union. The Republic of Moldova must protect and ensure the correct and transparent use of funds coming from external sources, including European funds.

The Anticorruption Prosecutor's Office (PA) will focus on high-level corruption cases involving high-ranking officials. These include the president, the prime minister, members of parliament, ministers, judges, prosecutors, the leadership of the CNA and of the Intelligence and Security Service. At the same time, the PA will lead the criminal investigations in all cases handled by the CNA.

The Prosecutor's Office for Combating Organized Crime and Special Cases (PCCOCS) will focus on organized crime, terrorism and cases with a high degree of complexity. In economic-financial and customs-related cases, criminal investigation may be carried out by the State Tax Service and the Customs Service under the leadership of the PCCOCS, since these institutions have the data, tools and expertise required.

Judges’ decisions on preventive measures may also be challenged by the parties at any stage of the trial, thus preventing the unjustified release of suspects on the grounds of procedural flaws.

For complex or large-scale cases, the draft law allows the creation of joint investigation teams consisting of prosecutors and officers from different institutions. In this way, important cases will be investigated in a coordinated manner, with the necessary expertise and without delays caused by the transfer of case files between authorities.