

ROMANIA: PM criticizes CVM reports during debate in European Parliament plenary session

By Irina Marica

Romania Insider (03.10.2018) – <https://bit.ly/20GBXru> – Romanian prime minister Viorica Dancila criticized the European Commission's Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM) reports during her speech at the debate in the European Parliament plenary session on Wednesday, October 3, which focused on the latest reform of Romania's judicial system.

Dancila urged the European Commission to explain why the CVM reports didn't say anything about the protocols between the intelligence services and the justice institutions, and the human rights violations in Romania. She said that "millions of Romanians" were monitored by the secret services based on these protocols, "in the name of the anti-corruption fight."

"Dear MEPs, on behalf of Romania, I thank you for the invitation. I want to say from the beginning that I didn't come here to give explanations. I came because I appreciate and respect you. But I demand the same appreciation and respect for the Romanian people I represent," Dancila began her speech.

"I start with an essential question: For whom do we want to build a viable justice system in Romania? For the CVM? For the

magistrates? For politicians? Obviously not! We need to make a fair justice for the citizens!”

Dancila then said that it is only fair to ask how the CVM defended the citizens’ rights, as these reports failed to talk about “the secret protocols between the intelligence services and the justice institutions.” She also talked about court rulings that showed how evidence has been falsified or how witnesses had been blackmailed to testify.

“Nothing about these things in the CVM reports. This means that this mechanism has missed its purpose for which it was created. And I officially demand to be told who wrote the CVM reports, who provided the data and omitted, unintentionally or in bad faith, these unthinkable realities in the European Union,” Viorica Dancila said.

The PM also added that the new justice laws in Romania, which have been repeatedly criticized, give judges their independence back, as political decision-makers no longer intervene in appointing and revoking judges.

“Today, I informed you all about the abuses in Romania. From now on, these things can no longer be ignored.”

The Romanian prime minister also referred to the August 10 anti-government protest in Romania and the controversial brutal intervention of the gendarmes, saying that the Gendarmerie’s intervention happened at an unauthorized meeting and targeted violent protesters who tried to occupy the

government building. She believes it's not fair to accuse the Romanian Gendarmerie for its intervention, as similar events also happened in Brussels, France, Spain, Germany or the UK.

"In the end, I ask you this: Do not forbid Romania what is allowed in other states of the Union and don't let things that are unacceptable in other Member States happen in Romania! We want to be your partner, but we want you to be your equal partner," Dancila said at the end of her speech.

Frans Timmermans, the first vice-president of the European Commission, also talked at the debate. He said that the EU executive is following the latest developments in Romania with concern and reiterated that the independence of the judiciary and its ability to fight corruption are essential for a strong Romania in the EU, local Digi24 reported. He also said that, until now, the Romanian Parliament didn't respond to the recommendations of the European bodies. Moreover, he urged the Romanian authorities to initiate an investigation into the protocols of intelligence services with the institutions of justice.

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