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Romania, Moldova Sign Border Treaty

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BUCHAREST, Romania — Romania and Moldova signed a border treaty Monday, almost two decades after Moldova declared independence from the Soviet Union.

Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Baconschi and Moldovan Prime Minister Vlad Filat emphasized the good cooperation between the neighbors, which has resulted in a number of new agreements being adopted in the past year since a pro-European alliance came to power. Romania supports Moldova's current government.

Monday's signing took place ahead of a general election in Moldova on Nov. 28 in which the pro-European parties face the Communists who favor closer ties to Moscow.

Romanian President Traian Basescu said last month that the treaty would disprove claims by Moldovan Communists that Romania has territorial claims on Moldova.

This was echoed by Baconschi, who said that by signing the document "we also discourage the obsessive affirmations" of some Moldovan politicians who believe Romania has claims on Moldova.

The treaty deals with technical issues such as the marking of the border, usage of water, railways and roads, fishing, hunting and breaches of the border regime.

Moldova was part of Romania until 1940 when it was annexed by the Soviet Union. Some four-fifths of Moldova's 4.1 million population is of Romanian descent. Russian influence also remains strong in the country.

Romania has been lobbying hard for closer ties between Moldova and the European Union, of which Romania is a member.

Baconschi said Romania hopes that the border with Moldova will eventually become an internal border within the European Union.

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