

Moldova Rocked By Anti-Government Protests

January 21, 2016



About 5,000 people have attended a protest in the Moldovan capital Chisinau against the appointment of pro-European Prime Minister Pavel Filip, RIA Novosti reported Thursday, citing an unidentified police source.

The protesters, representing the Moldovan opposition, gathered in front of the parliament building and called for early elections. The building was surrounded by police.

On Wednesday, more than 1,000 people clashed with police and broke into the parliament building after the new government headed by a member of Moldova's ruling Democratic Party was appointed. Fifteen people were injured during the clashes, including nine police officers, RIA Novosti reported.

The storming of the parliament comes after a series of protests against the Democratic party, accused of corruption by protesters. They believe Filip to be the protege of Vladimir Plahotniuc, one of Moldova's most powerful businessmen.

The new government was elected after the previous one was dismissed in October amid a

corruption scandal that saw \$1 billion disappear from the country's budget.

Russia on Thursday called on Western countries to show moderation amid the protests in Moldova, the TASS news agency reported.

“We hope that the conflict will be solved by democratic means,” Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova was quoted by TASS as saying. Russia is interested in “the development of ties with stable and friendly Moldova,” she added.

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