

**Moldovan-American Convention
February 25, 2014 – Washington, DC**

Brief information on the Speakers
(in the order of their presentation)

Igor Munteanu is the Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova in the US and Mexico since September 2010. His professional career started with the position of Policy Advisor to the 1st President of Moldova (1992-1994). He established one of the most dynamic think tanks in Moldova, IDIS Viitorul and worked extensively as Free-lance commentator to the RFERL (Radio Free Europe). Affiliated with Institutional Committee of the Council of Europe (in Strasbourg) he acquired outstanding experience in regional governance and European Administration. He is author and contributor to several books and publications in Moldova, as well as abroad. He earned his MA in 1992 in Political Analysis at the SNSPA (National School of Political Sciences and Administration) in Romania and a PhD in Public Law at ULIM (International University of Moldova) in 2012.

Igor Corman is the President of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova since May 2013. He was elected as a Member of the Parliament from the Democratic Party, in 2009. As the Speaker of the Parliament, he holds the diplomatic rank of Ambassador. He has been awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany where he served as ambassador (2004-2009), and the Republic of Moldova's Civil Merit medal. Dr. Corman earned his PhD. in History in 1996.

Elaine F. Marshall became in 1996 the first women ever elected to a statewide, executive branch office in North Carolina. Secretary Marshall is now serving in her fifth term in office. Her career has also included being a State Senator, teacher in the public school and community college systems, a business owner, and a private practice attorney. In 2012, Secretary Marshall received the Government of Moldova's highest distinction, the Order of Honor, for her "outstanding contribution in the framework of bilateral cooperation." She serves as Co-Chair of the NC-Moldova Partnership for Peace and recently received an Honorary Doctorate Degree from the Republic of Moldova State University of Medicine.

Asif Chaudhry is currently working as the Foreign Policy Advisor to the Chief of U.S. Navy at the Pentagon. Between 2008-2011, he was the U.S. Ambassador to Moldova, leading the U.S. Embassy during a critical time in Moldova's history. Besides aggressively supporting Moldova's democratic institutions and the country's European aspirations, he helped introduce a number of major reform and development programs in Moldova, including the Millennium Challenge Corporation's (MCC) \$260 million infrastructure and agriculture development programs. Ambassador Chaudhry has previously held key positions as U.S. Diplomat in Eastern Europe and the Middle East including assignments as Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, Russia and as Minister Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, Egypt.

Mark A. Meyer is the founder and President of the Romanian-American Chamber of Commerce (1990) and the Moldovan-American Chamber of Commerce (1993). In recognition of his contributions to the business relations and cultural understanding between these respective nations and the United States, he was awarded Romania's National Order of Merit in the rank of Commander in 2004, and Moldova's highest civilian decoration, the Medal of Civic Merit, in 2006. He is a practicing attorney and an adjunct professor of law at St. John's University Law School among other positions.

Valeriu Ghiletchi is a member of the Parliament of Moldova and the Secretary of the Committee of Foreign Affairs and European Integration. Since 2010, he has been a member of the Moldovan delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). In 2012 he was elected the First Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development and, in 2014, he was elected the Chairperson. As a member of the PACE, he was the rapporteur on *Fighting “child sex tourism”* (resolution 1926 adopted by the Assembly on 23 April 2013), and member of the Parliamentary Network of Contact Parliamentarians to stop sexual violence against children. He has a master degree in engineering from “A. Popov” Institute in Odessa (Ukraine) and a Bachelor of Divinity Degree from “Babes-Bolyai” University in Cluj (Romania).

Michael Scanlan is the Director of the Office for Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus at the US Department of State. Since beginning his diplomatic career in 1991, he held different positions at the U.S. Embassies in UK, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Belarus etc. He served as the Special Advisor for Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus in the Office of the Coordinator for U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia. He has received five Superior and two Meritorious Honor Awards from the U.S. State Department. Scanlan holds a Bachelor of Science from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, and a Master of Arts in International Affairs from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.

Vadim Brinzan is the Founder and Managing Partner of Logos Advisors, LLC, a private equity management firm with investments in financial and business services companies in the US, Europe and India. Prior to founding it, he served as a Director in Merrill Lynch’s Principal Investing group in New York (2001-2007), where he helped manage a multi-billion dollar portfolio of Merrill Lynch investments in public and private companies in different sectors. Previously, he worked as a management consultant with Oracle Corporation in the U.S. (1999) and PriceWaterhouseCoopers in Russia and other CIS countries, where he played leading roles in mass privatization projects in Ukraine and Moldova (1994-1996), as well as advised companies in various industries and sectors in Russia (1996-1999). He holds a M.S. in Physics with high distinction from Moldova State University (1993) and a MBA degree with honors from Harvard Business School (2001).

Felicia Belostecinic is a graduate student majoring in International Political Economy at Georgetown University in Washington DC. In the summer of 2013 she volunteered at Learning Enterprises, teaching English in Mauritius, while living with a host family. The experience and the knowledge gained during the program were used by Felicia to introduce Learning Enterprises in Moldova. The program will expand opportunities for LE volunteers to learn about Moldova and for Moldovan students to learn English, enhancing the ties of cultural and educational exchanges. In 2013 Felicia was also among the finalists of *Gala Studentilor*, an event that honored Moldovan students studying abroad.

Petru Cioclea is the Vice President of Moldovan Baptist Churches Association in USA. He has a degree in Theology from College of Theology in Chisinau and currently is a student at the Greenfield Community College in Massachusetts to earn an Associate Degree in Business Administration.

Ray West is the President of Moldova World Children’s Fund, Inc. In 1998, he was recruited by United States European Command to manage its Humanitarian Assistance Program in Moldova. Projects included construction of the National Children’s Rehabilitation Hospital

located in Ceadyr-Lunga and replacement of central heating systems in several schools across the country. In 2006, following his retirement from the Naval Reserve, Captain West created the Moldova World Children's Fund, a private charity based in North Carolina, with the primary mission of helping improve the lives of Moldova's children. He and his organization comb the Moldovan countryside looking for opportunities to tackle which they believe are within their capacity of making immediate improvements and enhancing sustainable success. Ray and his enthusiastic board of volunteers raise private funds, primary in the U.S., in support of a sixteen-year unbroken chain of devotion to the people of Moldova.

Florin Pindic-Blaj is the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Moldova in North Carolina since 1999. He is the founder and President of the Little Samaritan Mission, a humanitarian organization committed to assisting impoverished and underprivileged children and individuals in the R of Moldova and Romania in the areas of education, medical relief, sustainable development projects and general humanitarian aid. The Little Samaritan Mission also pioneered the first Christian radio network in Moldova continuing to broadcast for over 19 years.

Veronica Bacalu is banking professional, presently working as the Deputy Division Chief in the Middle East and Central Asia Department at the International Monetary Fund. She is also Mission chief for Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Previously she held the position of senior economist in many former Soviet Union countries (from 2002 to 2010). Prior to joining the IMF, she held the position of Deputy Governor of the National Bank of Moldova (1996-2002), being directly responsible for foreign exchange reserves management, balance of payments analysis, development of foreign exchange market and foreign exchange policy, public and private debt management; technical assistance coordination. In the same period of time, Veronica Bacalu was the main country negotiator in several public debt restructuring exercises.

Ceslav Ciobanu is a tenured Professor of economics and Eminent Scholar at Virginia State University. In his early career he served as one of the advisers in Mikhail Gorbachev's team (1987-1991), and was the economic adviser and deputy chief in the office of the first President of Moldova, Mircea Snegur (1992-1994). As a member of the Moldovan Government, Dr. Ciobanu held the position of minister of privatization (1994-1997). He also served as deputy foreign minister (1998), and Ambassador of Moldova to the USA and Canada (1999-2002). He is the author of several books and about 100 publications.

Betsy Hafner is the Deputy Assistant USTR for Russia and Eurasia in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. As such, she focuses primarily on formulating and implementing U.S. government negotiating positions and strategies on a variety of trade-related issues with Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus. She represents the U.S. government in bilateral, regional and multilateral fora and works directly with foreign government officials to address issues of concern to U.S. businesses. Ms. Hafner holds her undergraduate degree in history from the University of California, Berkeley as well as a law degree from the Boston University School of Law and a Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy from The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy.

Vlad Spânu is the Moldova Foundation's president. He has been a senior Moldovan diplomat in 1992-2001, holding positions of the Head of Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Division for Regional and International Economic Cooperation (1992-1994, 1997-1998), Counselor (1994-1997) Minister counselor and Deputy chief of mission (1998-2001), Charge d'Affaires (1998) at the Moldovan embassy in Washington, DC. Currently he holds a position of Adjunct

Professor at the College of Business at Bellevue University in Nebraska. Among other publications, his latest book is “The A to Z of Moldova” (2010). He holds a B.S. in economics from the State University of Moldova (1983), a M.A. in public administration from the Romanian National School of Political and Administrative Studies in Bucharest (1992), and a MPA degree from the Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government (2003).

Lilia Burunciuc is presently Manager in the Operations Policy and Country Services unit at the World Bank in Washington DC. Since joining the World Bank in 1996 she held various positions including that of Manager of the World Bank Office in Macedonia, Country Program Coordinator for Central Asia and for Southern Africa. Prior to joining the Bank, Ms. Burunciuc was a Deputy Governor of the National Bank of Moldova (central bank). In that capacity she worked on the reform of banking supervision and bank restructuring in Moldova, the establishment of a regulatory framework for the foreign exchange market and on preparation of new banking legislation in Moldova. She has a master of public administration degree from George Washington University (USA).

Lilian Gaibu is the Chairman of the Association of Moldovans in Chicago. Entrepreneur with several businesses in US and Moldova in Transportation, Logistics, Services, Real Estate and Agriculture, Lilian is using the inside knowledge of business and culture in both countries to build bridges of cooperation to mutual advantage.

Vlad Lupan is the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Moldova to the United Nations in New York since 2012. Ambassador Lupan has held a variety of diplomatic and governmental posts since 1996, such as Head of Political-Military Cooperation Department, up to the Foreign Policy Adviser to the Acting President of the Republic of Moldova. He was also elected as a Member of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova in 2010 (LP), where he served up to 2012. At different times he also served with three Field Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to Georgia, Albania and Croatia. At the United Nations, he chaired the 46th Session of the Committee on Population and Development focusing on migration issues. Ambassador Lupan has published extensively on foreign and domestic politics issues. Educated at the State University of Moldova and at the National School of Political Science and Public Administration in Bucharest, Romania, Ambassador Lupan earned his international relations degree, and later a master’s degree in journalism and public communications from the Free Independent Moldovan University in Chisinau.

Karl Altau joined the Joint Baltic American National Committee (JBANC) in 1997 and has served as Managing Director of JBANC since 1998. During that time he has helped conduct extensive advocacy on behalf of the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian national organizations and communities in the United States, which was particularly intense during the period of NATO accession for the three Baltic countries, a goal achieved in 2004. In addition, Altau is on the Board of Directors of the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, the Maryland-Estonian Exchange Council, and the Advisory Board of the Justice for Sergei Magnitsky Inter-parliamentary Group.

Bogdan Banu is currently serving as the President of the Association of Students and Young Professionals from Romania in the DC area, better known as ASTROM. Previously, he served as Communication Director with CORA, the Congress of Romanian Americans, an organization active from 1991 until 2004 and dedicated to promoting the interests of the broader Romanian-American community in the Nation's Capital and to further the cooperation

between the governments of the United States of America and Romania. Professionally, Mr. Banun is a seasoned Program Officer and Team Lead at Meridian International Center, with over twelve years of experience working in the international exchanges industry.

Nadia Komarnycky McConnell is the Founder and the President of the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation - a nonprofit, non-governmental organization established in 1991 to support democracy, free market and human rights for Ukraine. The Foundation creates and sustains an exchange of information between the United States and Ukraine in order to build peace and prosperity and it is dedicated to strengthening U.S.-Ukraine relations. Through her vision and leadership the Foundation established a presence in Ukraine even before Ukrainian independence. Today Mrs. McConnell directs the development and implementation of projects, and represents the Foundation in all related U.S.-Ukrainian affairs.

Elena Dragalin is the Founder and Chairperson of Moldova AID – a non-profit organization that engages in providing assistance to the independent R of Moldova. A member of Moldovan Diaspora since 1993, Mrs. Dragalin has the inside appreciation for the talent and skills, that are complimented by a strong educational background of the Diaspora. By founding Moldova AID in 2010, Mrs. Dragalin took the challenge of mobilizing the Moldovan Diaspora to leverage its knowledge, expertise and experience for the benefit of the R of Moldova.