

Former Speaker Olteanu handed final 5-year-in-prison sentence

The Bucharest Court of Appeal on Thursday handed a final and binding 5-year-in-prison sentence to former Speaker of Romania's Chamber of Deputies Bogdan Olteanu for influence peddling in a case in which he is accused of taking one million euros from businessman Sorin Ovidiu Vintu.

Initially, in December 2019, the Bucharest Tribunal handed Olteanu a 7-year-in-prison sentence, which the Bucharest Court of Appeal reduced to 5 years.

The Bucharest Court of Appeal upheld the ruling of the tribunal regarding the confiscation from Bogdan Olteanu of the lei equivalent of the amount of one million euros, representing the amount trafficked.

Olteanu was brought to court sued by the National Anti-Corruption Agency (DNA) in October 2016, which accused him that, between July and November 2008, when he was the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, he requested and received from businessman Sorin Ovidiu Vintu one million euros and electoral support in exchange for the appointment of Liviu Mihaiu as governor of the Danube Delta.

As a result of Olteanu's diligences, Mihaiu was appointed, on September 18, 2008, governor of the Danube Delta, prosecutors claimed.

According to them, the amount of one million euros was transferred from an account in Cyprus to the Bulgarian account of a company registered in the US and then withdrawn in cash in three consecutive days. Later, at Vintu's request, the money was sent to Olteanu at the office where he worked at the headquarters of the National Liberal Party (PNL).

Also, the prosecutors show that in the autumn of 2008 Olteanu ran in the general election for a seat in the Chamber of Deputies.

At Vintu's order, Olteanu got political consultancy for electioneering without paying for the services estimated at tens of thousands of euros.