

## JusMin Stelian Ion: Coalition carries on, but I'm disappointed at decision to sack HealthMin Voiculescu

**Justice Minister Stelian Ion termed the dismissal today of Health Minister Vlad Voiculescu as "a very unpleasant moment", but said that the governing coalition carries on as "the idea of stopping now cannot be accepted".**

"The coalition carries on. It is a very unpleasant and very difficult moment. Both USR Chairman Dan Barna, and PLUS Chairman Dacian Ciolos have sounded alarm. There are issues that need to be solved in the next period, but stopping now is unacceptable. (...) I was taken aback and disappointed at today's decision. (...) We must look at those who elected us and at the reasons why they did so, and this was not for us to trade blows inside the coalition. I know that there are also intra-party elections ahead, but the idea is to focus on the proposed reforms, to move forward at a fast speed, because we effectively don't have time. Spinning around the tail over ideas that we have pledged to under the governing program, throwing spanners into each other's work won't take us anywhere," Stelian Ion said at the Senate.

In his opinion, the sacked Vlad Voiculescu has been the target of a "media lynching campaign". "It was obvious to me that they tried to hang on him all sort of things and this saddens me a lot. Voiculescu doesn't deserve this because he is a man of good faith, who put all his energy into solving problems, but many times they put sand into his wheels and we were obviously aware of this. We are not yet in the position to discuss who the future minister will be. USR PLUS has well-prepared people for every portfolio, who can perform very well in the ministries. The idea is that we should all pull in the same direction, to implement those reforms at a fast pace because we are running out of time. The problems in society are getting worse on various segments. This goes for both medical and economic aspects, not to mention Justice. We have a lot of work to do," said Stelian Ion.

Asked if a discussion with President Klaus Iohannis would be necessary, where USR PLUS should request the replacement of the Prime Minister and of the government, Stelian Ion replied: "Talks are always welcome, but these are subjects for the political leaders to address. If such a discussion is necessary, it will certainly take place."

Stelian Ion also said that he discussed his own activity with the Prime Minister last week and that PM Citu did not reproach him anything, adding that he has always had "a correct relationship" with National Liberal Party and Prime Minister Citu, and that he did his best to "carry out the governing program at a sped up pace."