

Anti-graft prosecutors request approval for criminal probe of former PM Tariceanu

The National Anti-Corruption Directorate (DNA) has asked the Attorney General's Office to notify President Klaus Iohannis about initiating a criminal investigation of Calin Popescu Tariceanu into bribe taking when Tariceanu was a prime minister, according to a DNA press statement.

According to DNA, the request takes into account that, at this moment, there are aspects supporting the reasonable suspicion that the person whose criminal investigation is requested would have received, indirectly, in 2007 - 2008, from the representative of an Austrian company benefits worth 800,000 US dollars as payment for consulting services.

"In exchange, he would have exercised his duties so that a series of government decisions would be adopted in favor of the company. The amount of 800,000 US dollars representing a commission from the value of the payments made by the Romanian government to the company would have been used to the benefit of the dignitary in order to cover some expenses of his electoral campaign, allegedly being wired on fictitious contracts concluded with several offshore companies," the investigators claim.

DNA states says the case was built in 2018 from comingling three criminal cases, one of which was taken over at the request of Austrian judicial authorities.

"On November 7, 2018, at the request of DNA, the Romanian Senate was asked to approve the criminal investigation of the same person (at that time holding a senator's seat) for bribery, and on June 3, 2019, the Senate rejected the request to start the criminal investigation of said person," DNA explains.

Subsequently, criminal probes were carried out into facts and other persons, including a businessman sent to court.

"As a result of the administration of additional evidence new findings emerged that outlined the above-mentioned state of affairs with reference to the former dignitary," DNA says.