

## **Promo-LEX (Moldova) Statement**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a statement at this pre-session! My name is Vadim Vieru and I represent the Promo-LEX Association, a human rights organization from the Republic of Moldova.

Promo-LEX has submitted seven joint reports on different emerging issues; in my presentation, I will focus on four:

- *Torture and ill-treatment;*
- *Human rights in the Transnistrian region;*
- *Drug laws and policies;*
- *Hate speech and incitement to discrimination.*

### ***Torture and ill-treatment***

One of the biggest problems is the poor organization of the medical service in the penitentiary system, which does not have the capacity to provide medical care in line with international standards.

Another serious problem is deaths in prisons. The mortality rate from medical causes is high and the number of deaths in the penitentiary system is increasing.

The Republic of Moldova fails to provide sufficient and adequate medical care in the penitentiary system and to solve the problem of overcrowding and inadequate material conditions in pre-trial detention facilities.

We ask the Honorable Delegates to urge the Republic of Moldova to follow the recommendations of the UN Committee against Torture and the Recommendations made under the UPR to develop a public policy ensuring the transfer of the medical units from the National Administration of Penitentiaries to the Ministry of Health.

### ***Human rights in the Transnistrian region***

The human rights situation in the Transnistrian region has worsen. About 2000 people are illegally deprived of liberty and detained in inhuman conditions. Since 2016, at least 15 people, journalists, civic and political activists and even simple residents of the region, have been and continue to be persecuted for criticizing the regional administration.

Regional regulations on non-profit organizations and the fight against extremism best characterize the systemic attempts of the *de facto* regional administration to limit freedom of expression, assembly and association. People responsible for serious abuses are not punished, and impunity is pervasive.

We ask the Honorable Delegates to urge the Republic of Moldova to take concrete steps to facilitate unconditional access of the national and international human rights monitoring mechanisms to the Transnistrian region.

### ***Drug laws and policies***

Penalizing drug use has a disproportionate impact on the right to health of drug users.

Drug laws focus on drug users rather than on traffickers. Official data on crimes proves that most of the cases investigated by the criminal prosecution bodies in the field of drugs fall under the category of the least severe and minor crimes. These crimes relate to consumption of drugs and not with trafficking.

We ask the Honourable Delegates to urge the Republic of Moldova to amend laws, regulations, and policies so that they explicitly provide the possibility of applying drug treatment as an alternative to punishment for drug-use related offenses.

***Hate speech and incitement to discrimination***

The Moldovan authorities have mimicked a process of consultations and negotiations on the draft law on prejudice motivated crimes. Thus, the impunity for hate speech leads to its continued use. The lack of disaggregated data makes it impossible to establish the necessary actions to protect victims of hate speech and prejudice motivated crimes.

We ask the Honourable Delegates to urge the Republic of Moldova to finalize and adopt the draft law no. 301/2016 on prejudice motivated crimes. Institutions with responsibilities in the field need to develop mechanisms for monitoring and collecting disaggregated data on hate speech and prejudice motivated crimes.