



PUBLIC STATEMENT

Moldova responds uncertainly to UPR recommendations

On 16 March 2012 the government of Moldova presented its final responses to the Universal Periodic Review recommendations addressed to Moldova during the first review session in October 2011. The Moldovan human rights organizations are disappointed that Moldova accepted “easy” recommendations, but very uncertainly reacted to the most important and challenging ones.

Responses provided by the government of Moldova to many of the “difficult” recommendations are very loose, misleading and inconsistent. This indicates that Moldovan government continuously demonstrates low commitment to human rights. Several examples of such misleading commitment are brought below:

- 1) Moldova received a recommendation to “ensure the representation of women in the state elective and administrative structures by establishing a minimum quota for women”. In its response the Moldovan government deliberately omitted the clause related to establishing of minimum quota for women, and provided a general statement of commitment to representation of women. This indicates that the government of Moldova continuously undermines the importance of gender equality and the need for decisive affirmative action in this field.
- 2) Moldova received a recommendation to support and develop education programs and institutions for national minorities in their mother-tongue, and to maintain the network of pre-university institutions with access to education in minority languages in line with the recommendation by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In its response the Moldovan government stated that in 2011-2012 the network of pre-university institutions in the country included 1456 educational institutions of which 278 with access to education in Russian language and 81 mixed institutions. Thus the Moldovan Government deliberately omitted to address the issue of access to education in Ukrainian, Gagauz, Bulgarian, and Romani languages, reducing the response only to schools in Russian language. This misleading response hides the fact that the problem in Moldova is in virtually no access to education in Ukrainian, Gagauz, Bulgarian, and Romani languages, spoken as first language in significant number of families in Moldova.
- 3) The government of Moldova reported during its presentation that it brought the Law on religious cults into conformity with the international human rights standards. This statement is particularly misleading in the light of the fact that: a) the Law continuously restricts the right to found a religious organization in Moldova only to Moldovan citizens, thus denying this right to other people (non-citizens) residing in Moldova; b) the Law gives public authority large discretion in qualification and disqualification of religious organizations for registration; c) the Law continuously provides a privileged status to one religious organization – the Orthodox Church of Moldova.

The Moldovan human rights organizations are deeply disappointed by the response provided by the Moldovan government to the UPR recommendations. The lack of governmental progress in the field of human rights is clearly and visibly altered by populist factors. The Moldovan human rights organizations call on the Moldovan government to elevate human rights at the top of governmental priorities, particularly considering the stabilization of political situation in Moldova, and lesser need in populist “pre-electoral” behavior.