

UEFA and FFM must condition the respect for minimum human rights standards for playing the football matches in Tiraspol

The Promo-LEX association considers that the UEFA decision to transfer the match between Sheriff Tiraspol – Farul Constanța from Chisinau to Tiraspol is contrary to the obligations assumed by the FFM, UEFA and FIFA in the matters of promotion and respect for human rights. Well-known is the fact that the territory on the left bank of Dniester continues to be a close, isolated territory controlled by an illegal regime where the human rights can not be promoted, monitored, evaluated and protected. On July 18, 2023, in Tiraspol, in the first tournament of UEFA Champions League, will be played the football match between Sheriff Tiraspol – Farul Constanța. The match would be played in a territory beyond the control of constitutional authorities of the Republic of Moldova, in an occupied territory dominated by impunity for over 3 decades, where the human rights are ignored.

On June 24, 2022, for security reasons UEFA has issued a prohibition to organize football matches under the UEFA auspices in the Transnistria region. Here one should recall that in April 2022 and until the present time the de facto administration of Tiraspol has decided to introduce the red and then the yellow code of terrorist threat, which has not been subsequently modified or cancelled.[\[1\]](#)

On July 4 the UEFA Executive Committee adopted a groundless decision to allow the match in Tiraspol,[\[2\]](#) regardless of still applicable yellow code of terrorist threat, at least

until July 18, 2023 (date of Sheriff-Farul match), in these circumstances the UEFA decision appears to be at least incoherent and based on erroneous or incomplete information.

In this context the Promo-LEX Association reiterates the importance of respect for human rights, especially in the territories controlled by illegal regimes, as the violation of fundamental human rights must at all times be followed by relevant legal consequences, while the international community, including the sports organizations – such as FFM and UEFA, must be more responsible and act so as to contribute to the promotion of peace and respect for the values and principles they are promoting.

The consent to play the match on the stadium of Tiraspol is a generous and gratuitous gift, as well as an image and financial gift for the illegal local administration. This type of unconditioned support is an efficient tool for the consolidation of illegal regime which continues to violate massively the human rights and to ignore the democratic principles and values. As an addition to the sports competition figures, one may look at the occurring phenomena and the overall reality in the Transnistria region of the Republic of Moldova:

- The highest imprisonment rate in Europe exceeding by four times the average European imprisonment rate and by over two times the imprisonment rate of the Republic of Moldova.
- Lack of any guarantees or elementary protection for the victims of torture. Moreover, since February 2022 anyone lodging complaints at the national and international human rights protection instances are risking severe criminal punishments.
- Total control of Sheriff Holding over the Transnistria region of the Republic of Moldova via the actors of local and regional administration. The respective territory continues to be inaccessible for the

unhindered activity of journalists, lawyers or human rights defenders.

One might recall that in a recent campaign the Promo-LEX Association has drawn the public attention to the football matches played by Sheriff in the Champions League and the involvement of Sheriff Holding responsible for the violation of human rights in Transnistria region. We regret that this situation is repeated, the relevant actors haven't adopted a proactive attitude and haven't tried to bring to liability the persons responsible for human rights violations, having tacitly and unconditionally accepted the playing of sports matches in a territory of impunity.

We encourage the authorities of the Republic of Moldova to adopt a more decisive and coherent attitude and to overcome the formalist or declarative offers and reactions. When international sports events are conducted on uncontrolled territories where human rights are severely violated, robust approach is necessary and the information on the real situation must be properly communicated, as sports, including football, can not exist isolated from the human rights.

[1]

<https://www.uefa.com/insideuefa/news/0276-1577452f4791-2d066f6b6e1e-1000-no-uefa-competition-matches-shall-be-played-in-the-region-of-tr/>

[2]

https://www.uefa.com/returntoplay/news/0283-186994e297cb-b6d81725341f-1000-uefa-matches-again-allowed-in-transnistria/?fbclid=IwAR36BpwU7u9MVhfhb47obkgSSru-_ur6CuLM7qMZsaP0o30i3fLTaXWySM