

# **Detention in Private Prisons in the Transnistrian Region, Again in ECtHR Attention. Two Cases Communicated to the Governments of the Russian Federation and Moldova**

On 22 May 2008, Stefan Berzan, at that time employed by the Moldovan Ministry of Interior, was kidnapped by the so-called Transnistrian militia with support from Dorotcaia village police. The applicant was invited to the police station in the Dorotcaia village and later escorted and handed over by the police to the illegal militia department in the town of Grigoriopol. In the Transnistrian region, the applicant was “charged with the offense” of circulating fake money, and was warned that he would be released only if he made self-incriminating statements.

On 11 August 2008, he was “sentenced” to five years of suspended prison, and was released from custody. The applicant was therefore unlawfully detained for 82 days.

After release from illegal detention, the applicant was dismissed from MOI, because the employer interpreted the “conviction” pronounced by the regional illegal “court” as a criminal antecedent, and, respectively, as a reason to terminate employment.

More details on the statement of facts are available [here](#).

On 5 February 2008, Viorel Panteleiciuc was kidnapped on the outskirts of Varnita village (under the jurisdiction and control of the Moldovan constitutional authorities) by

“customs” collaborators from the separatist region, and taken to the militia “section” in the city of Bender. The alleged “court” of Bender accused the applicant of the administrative offense of resisting police, and sentenced him to three days of administrative arrest. On 8 February 2008, when the administrative arrest expired, the applicant was released from detention.

On February 6, 2008, the defendant’s brother filed a complaint with the General Prosecutor Office and other authorities in Moldova seeking the initiation of criminal proceedings and punishment of all those involved in the illegal arrest of his brother by Transnistrian officers. On 28 February 2008, the Bender police department began a criminal investigation on the fact of the applicant’s abduction by Transnistrian officers.

More details on the statement of facts are available [here](#).

Both applicants filed complaints to the ECtHR claiming a violation of Article 5 of the European Convention of Human Rights in connection with the violation of their rights to individual liberty. The applicants also claim that they did not have the right to an effective remedy before a national authority to invoke the violation of the right to liberty and security.

Applicants are represented at the European Court of Human Rights by Promo-LEX lawyers.