

Human rights group demands release of a Moldovan policeman from Transnistria's custody

A day ahead of the second round of "5+2" talks on Transnistrian settlement, Promo-LEX Association comes with a request to include on the Vienna meeting agenda of discussions the situation of Alexandru Ursu with a view to securing his immediate and unconditioned release from illegal detention.

Alexandru Ursu is an officer of the Moldovan Ministry of Interior who was arrested in July 2009 by the illegitimate police officers in Bender town, Transnistria. A self-proclaimed court from the separatist region sentenced him to 15 years in prison. According to Promo-LEX, Mr. Ursu is detained in a cell with HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Hepatitis carriers. The man suffered a stroke in January this year and the illness may return because of the precarious detention conditions.

"Promo-LEX Association, which monitors the situation of human rights in the Transnistrian region, expresses its concern for the security and freedom of the police officer "sentenced" by the de facto authorities. Art.29 of Law no.416 on Police states that "the police officer is an inviolable person and enjoys state protection. His/her personality, honor and dignity are protected by law," the think tank informed in a press release.

According to them, the Moldovan authorities did not undertake serious efforts to release the man. Promo-LEX requests the "5+2" negotiators to have an active and effective involvement in defending the rights of Alexandru Ursu, as well as to

intensity the efforts on finding a reliable, legal and effective tool for securing fundamental human rights to all people residing in the Transnistrian region.

Mr. Ursu's father, Timofei Ursu told Moldova.ORG that he is asking for support from the Moldovan civil society.

"We have visited many officials' offices, but the results are null. I went to Chisinau on Monday and an employee of the Ministry of Interior assured me that my son's case will be discussed in Vienna, but who knows," Timofei Ursu said.

Transnistria is an internationally unrecognized entity proclaimed in Tiraspol on September 2, 1990, initially styled the Moldavian Transnistrian Soviet Socialist Republic. Currently known as the Moldavian Transnistrian Republic, this breakaway entity consists of a narrow strip of land (180 km by 32 km) nestled between the east bank of the Nistru River and the border of Moldova with Ukraine, on a small part of what used to be, between 1924 and 1940, the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

In 1992 escalated a conflict between Moldova and Russia over this territory. A cease-fire was signed the same year by president of Russia Boris Yeltsin and president of Moldova Mircea Snegur. An agreement to withdraw all Russian forces from the trans-Nistrian districts of the Republic of Moldova was signed by Moldovan Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli and Russian Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin in 1994. It stipulated that the 14th Army was to leave the Republic of Moldova within three years, but the agreement was never ratified by the Duma, Russia's legislature.

The Transnistrian conflict settlement is made within the "5+2" format. It includes representatives of the sides, mediators and observers in the negotiation process – Moldova, Transnistria, Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE (as mediators), and the US and the EU (as observers).

The next round of "5+2" talks are due to held on July 12-13, 2012 in Vienna. The meeting will be chaired by Ambassador Erwan Fouéré, the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the Transnistrian settlement process.

Source: Moldova.org