

# **Conscripts are tortured and kidnapped in Transnistria, human rights NGO Promo-LEX**

The rights of recruits and conscripts in the Transnistrian region are blatantly violated, as they are commonly subjected to torture and expropriation, while the Moldovan authorities do little to defend their rights, according to the human rights NGO Promo-LEX Association.

The situation of Transnistria's conscripts was discussed Thursday at an international conference titled "The Rights of Recruits and Servicemen in Moldova's Eastern Region: A Parallel with other Conflict Areas in the CIS", whose conclusions will be submitted to the Moldovan authorities.

Alexandru Zubco, legal department coordinator of Promo-LEX's Resource Center for Transnistria, says that each year around 6,000 young men are enrolled in the region's paramilitary forces; many of these recruits are robbed by the illegitimate authorities before being forcibly enrolled. "These young men are recruited by force, being forced to swear an oath of allegiance to an illegitimate regime. While being actually citizens of Moldova, they are forced to serve an illegitimate regime and fight against Moldova", says the lawyer.

Alexandru Zubco insists that the Moldovan government should intervene. "There are certain concrete steps that the Government could take. First and foremost, the Moldovan Government should enroll those young men in its own lists for future conscription. As soon as this is done, the separatist regime will not be actually able to register them for conscription. This is a first step that needs to be taken by the legitimate authorities".

A second step, according to him, is to bring the paramilitary

leaders to justice. The Moldovan Criminal Code makes it a crime to organize and command paramilitary units, but no such proceedings have been initiated to date.

Alexandru Zubco went to add that the young men who refuse conscription into the Transnistrian paramilitary forces are taken by force, which basically amounts to kidnapping.

Promo-LEX director Ion Manole noted that the 500,000 people living in the Transnistrian region are discriminated against by the Moldovan state authorities. "These people suffer discrimination because they don't have equal access to justice and other national legal instruments and mechanisms. The authorities haven't created conditions, and are not even thinking of creating them, so as to guarantee the fundamental rights and liberties enshrined in the country's Constitution as well as in the international documents which Moldova is a signatory to", said Ion Manole.

Alexandru Postica, also a lawyer with Promo-Lex, stated that the young men who refuse conscription are often subjected to torture. He recounted a recent case in which a young man was tortured for not accepting to serve in the region's paramilitary forces. Having attempted desertion, he was found dead half a year later. "Bullying practices inherited from the Soviet era are widespread in those units. This happens because of a lack of transparency and monitoring of the recruits' situation", concluded the lawyer.

Source: [Info-prim.md](http://Info-prim.md)