

Criminal cases, persecution and fines for persons who refuse to join Transnistrian army

The young men in the Transnistrian region continue to be persecuted for the refusal to enroll in the military units of the unconstitutional regime. Those who oppose the draft are fined, arrested, announced wanted and face legal action. The situation of the young persons who are persecuted by the Transnistrian regime was discussed at public debates at Info-Prim Neo on April 30. The event formed part of the series of public debates "Current problems in areas of vital importance: convergent and divergent views", launched by the National NGO Council.

"The military service is equal to detention as when the young people are caught by the Transnistrian authorities they are forced to choose between prison and army. The people living in the region are thus scared," said the head of Promo-LEX Association Ion Manole. According to him, more than 40,000 of the about 55,000 possible victims of the military system of the region are citizens of Moldova.

Ion Manole said the young people who want to avoid the Transnistrian army ask to be taken under the supervision of the Ministry of Defense of Moldova, often through the agency of Promo-LEX Association, trying thus to protect themselves from persecution. In order to deprive the young men of such a possibility, the Transnistrian authorities start to supervise them when they are at school so as to draft them when they reach the required age.

The head of the Reintegration Office Ion Stavila said the

problem of forced enrollment of the young people will be solved when the Transnistrian region is granted a special status, as integral part of Moldova. "It is hard to help these persons. We are now looking for solutions," said the official. He stressed that the persecution of this group of people is part of the intimidation campaign carried out in the region, which is targeted mainly at the civil society. Ion Stavila referred to the case of journalist Ernest Vardanyan, who was arrested over 'betrayal of the state', the case of the Bender town resident Ilie Cazacu, who was arrested 40 years ago under the same charges, and other cases.

Sergiu Vylkov, a member of the Joint Control Commission (JCC) on behalf of the official Chisinau, explained that the Transnistrian delegation often opposes the inclusion of related issues in the agenda. "Even if the JCC works in the Security Zone, we do not have access to Transnistrian military institutions as many of them are located in the area illegally, including in breach of the Moldovan-Russian ceasefire agreement of 1992," said Vylkov.

According to Ion Manole, the situation is serious and can be overcome by applying international documents like the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, whose ratification has been delayed by the Parliament for 10 years. Viorel Barbanoua, a member of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, said that if the Rome Statute is applied both the constitutional authorities and the inhabitants of the region will benefit from additional instruments for fighting the human rights violations and other illegalities committed by the Transnistrian authorities.

According to the data of Promo-LEX, legal cases were opened in 2009 against 290 young people from Transnistria who refused to join the local army. Young persons of certain religions banning doing the military service were fined. A study made two years ago by Promo-LEX revealed several cases of death in the Transnistrian army.

Source: [Info-Prim Neo](#)