

29.01.2016

Dear Madam President,

- Thank you for the comprehensive presentation regarding your visit to the Republic of Moldova.
- We appreciate also that you have invited to this event Promo-Lex, our excellent NGO, which is very active in promotion and protection of human rights.
- We commend, in general, your initiative to establish closer contacts with NGOs. We think that the Council of Europe needs the advice of NGOs in order to improve its work.
- In general, for all the countries, but in particular for young democracies, the role of NGOs is very important, especially in promoting new initiatives, democratic governance, etc. Through the NGOs we are closer to the civil society and society in general.
- We welcome the results of the visit of the Conference of INGOs delegation to the Republic of Moldova and we think that it is important to have an open dialogue with the civil society, national authorities in order to obtain first-hand information regarding the situation of the civil society in our country and, especially, the role of the NGOs in the decision making process. It's a continuous exercise, which we should carry on step by step.
- It was my pleasure last year to have a dialogue with your delegation in my former capacity as the Head of the Global Affairs and Human Rights Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova. I am happy to continue our cooperation here in Strasbourg and to see how we can improve this first step of our cooperation because the report is just one piece and from this piece we can advance with further steps and to improve our cooperation. There are a few remarks and a few aspects that could be discussed additionally.
- I think that even though the Republic of Moldova is passing through a very challenging period there exists strong determination on the part of the Moldovan authorities and the civil society to advance on the path of democratization and reforms. Developing a strong civil society is an indispensable part of this process.
- We hope that this visit could serve as a model for the other countries as well. We need to look very deeply on how we can improve and how we can help the civil society and the NGOs to become stronger here in the Council of Europe but at the same time how the Council of Europe could facilitate the development of the capacities of NGOs in the field.
- Once again, if we take into account the Moldovan case, it is about NGOs not only at the central level but also on the local level. Through the Promo-Lex we can look more deeply into the issue of protracted conflicts, which is valid not only for the Republic of Moldova but for other countries in Europe as well and once again to see how exactly we can improve.
- As it was mentioned in the report, we have good examples of how the civil society contributed to different processes. Personally, I was really happy to work closely with the civil society and to see how the prevention of trafficking in human beings is advancing with the participation of the civil society and the human rights policies in general, in the country.
- However, as I have mentioned, there is room for improvement. I hope with your assistance we can evolve quickly and develop new policies.
- One of the elements mentioned by my colleague Alexandru. Of course, we need to look more deeply into the cases, especially when we are talking about the promotion

through the NGOs of human rights and these issues are promoted here, the right for education. For example, in the case of *Catan v. Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation*, we are talking not only about compensation but about how to ensure the children rights and access to education and how we are ensuring that the schools in this region can function without any impediments or artificial challenges. At the end of the day it is about the rights of kids to education. Unfortunately, alone it is impossible to fight in this very long process but with the help of the civil society and of the international organizations we can do something concrete and to deliver. Here we have a good opportunity to discuss more and together on how to further improve the rules and procedures in order to overcome these problems.

*Comments by the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Moldova:*

- There is a technical mistake related to the name of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The full name is “Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration”.
- All references to “Transnistria” in the text should be changed to the “Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova”.