

10 December 2011

To the Romanian Prime Minister Emil Boc

Government of Romania,

1 Victoriei Piazza, District 1, Bucharest

10 December, the International Human Rights Day: The National Strategy on Sexual and Reproductive Health and the National AIDS Strategy need to be rapidly adopted and implemented!

Dear Prime Minister Boc,

On 1 December 2011, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the EU response to HIV/AIDS in the EU and neighbouring countries. The Parliament called on the Member States to honour their obligations towards the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and to ensure that all national AIDS programmes and strategies develop strong linkages between sexual and reproductive health and HIV services and rights.¹

On International Human Rights Day, we would like to emphasise that sexual and reproductive health and rights are indeed important for the entire population. They are human rights which are under current threat due to the fact that Romania is lacking a National Strategy on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and a National HIV/AIDS Strategy. We can no longer afford to ignore the effects of this absence:

- the number of family planning clinics were severely reduced, and the condom and other methods of contraception are no longer offered free of charge to vulnerable groups;
- women living with HIV are facing numerous obstacles in accessing sexual and reproductive healthcare services: refusals to ensure preventive measures for vertical transmission at birth, segregation in hospitals or in isolated rooms, discriminatory and degrading treatments, breaches of confidentiality regarding the HIV status;
- adolescent access to sexual and reproductive health education, including HIV prevention is very low and inconsistent, while adolescent pregnancy rate is the second highest in the European Union;

¹ European Parliament, [Resolution on the EU response to HIV/AIDS in the EU and the neighbouring countries, midterm review of Commission Communication COM\(2009\)569](#), ¶ 14, 21.

- investment in HIV prevention for key populations such as young people, gay men, intravenous drug users are not reflected into action plans and are not budgeted by the state;
- numerous ARV shortages are registered every year due to administrative and management deficiencies that put the lives of people living with HIV at risk;
- healthcare personnel lack proper and constant training on issues like universal precautions, communication with the patient, patients' rights, including respecting confidentiality, which results in discriminatory attitudes towards people living with HIV, which may result in denial of healthcare services.

We are aware that partnership between the civil society and Government made Romania several years ago into a model of success in dealing with HIV/AIDS and reproductive health. A similar mechanism placed under your high authority is greatly needed to allow and encourage various ministries, state agencies, experts and civil society representatives to adopt, implement and monitor the National Strategies on HIV/AIDS and on Sexual and Reproductive Health. Such a decision is recommended by international agencies (UNFPA, UNAIDS) and will contribute to transform human rights principles and declarations into policies with impact at the community level. Urgent action is required to assure that the needs of vulnerable groups are met and that they are included in this mechanism of cooperation and implementation, based on the respect of their right to health, dignity and non-discrimination.

Respectfully yours,

Michael Cashman, member of the European Parliament, United Kingdom

Renate Weber, member of the European Parliament, Romania

Sophie In't Veld, member of the European Parliament, The Netherlands

Satu Hassi, member of the European Parliament, Finland

Mikael Gustafsson, member of the European Parliament, Sweden

Prof. Dr. Herta Daubler-Gmelin, former member of the European Parliament and Chair of the Human Rights and Humanitarian Assistance Committee of the German Parliament

ECPI-Euroregional Center for Public Initiatives, Romania

IPPFEN-International Planned Parenthood Federation, Belgium

CRR-Center for Reproductive Rights, United States of America

Deutsche AIDS Hilfe, Germany

Berline AIDS Hilfe, Germany
EATG-European AIDS Treatment Group, Belgium
UNOPA, Romania
Accept Association, Romania
FILIA Centre, Romania
RAA-Romanian Angel Appeal, Romania
Sens Pozitiv Association, Romania
Partnership in Health, Bosnia and Hertegovina
The Global Justice Institute, United States of America
The Institute for Public Policy, Romania
Pro Europe League, Romania
SENSOA-Centre for Expertise on Sexual Health, Belgium
SECS Association, Romania
ILGA Europe, Belgium
AIDS Council, Finland
AVALL, Spain
SIDMENNT-The Icelandic Ethical Humanist Association
Central London Humanist Group, United Kingdom
National Secular Society, United Kingdom
Solidarity for Freedom of Conscience Association, Romania
Projecte dels NOMS-Hispanosida, Spain
CPE-Partnership for Equality Centre, Romania
The Swiss AIDS Association

Person of contact: Florin Buhuceanu, Executive president – ECPI

Tel/fax: 021-211 6797; Email: fbuhuceanu@ecpi.ro

www.ecpi.ro