

ITEM 4 - MARINA SHUPAC - FELLOWSHIP
MOLDOVA

**Joint statement of the Youth Platform of Interethnic Solidarity of Moldova and COTAARM
(Community of Originals From African Asian Countries)**

on the item 4 of the 11th session of the UN Forum of Minority Issues

**"Ensuring the right to a nationality for persons belonging to minorities through
facilitation of birth registration, naturalization and citizenship for stateless minorities"**

Madame chair,

My name is Marina Shupac and I represent Youth Platform for Interethnic Solidarity of Moldova.
This statement is in solidarity with the Roma people and people of African descent living in Moldova.

Why?

Because they are at risk of statelessness as a result of birth registration procedures and naturalization process.

How?

Firstly, as CRC¹ and Council of Europe² mentioned, despite expansion of the network of civil status offices into remote locations, the establishment of an electronic birth register, and increased monitoring, children born in Roma families are still subjected to the risk of not being registered. Reasons: lack of means to cover the late registration fees families incur for births that occur while working abroad; homebirth.

Applicants for Moldovan citizenship need to prove that they have been legally and habitually resident in Moldova since 1990³ but considerable number of Roma are not registered with their municipality. At the same time, many Roma people in age still hold Soviet passports and thus are at risk of statelessness.

Secondly, people of African descent reported about numerous cases where they met the stated requirements for naturalization, however, never obtained Moldovan nationality. There are reasonable assumptions among the community that the reason of denial is discrimination.

¹ CRC concluding observations on Moldova (2017)

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CERD%2fC%2fMDA%2fCO%2f10-11&Lang=en

² Opinion as part of the third monitoring cycle on the Republic of Moldova, the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities <https://rm.coe.int/16806f69e0>

³ Moldovan Law on citizenship http://lex.justice.md/document_rus.php?id=22054258:156FAF87

The acquisition of citizenship through naturalisation is problematic, particularly for those who are stateless because of bureaucracy and costs.

There are also similar cases of denial of citizenship to refugees living in Moldova, whose already children and grandchildren have been born in the country.

*This is happening in parallel to the dubious decision of Moldovan government to grant citizenship in exchange for investments in the Fund of public investments for sustainable development.*⁴

Nevertheless, Moldova makes significant steps to reduce statelessness and can even share good practices in this regard. But there is still room for improvement, and we would like to propose the following:

1. Implement CRC, CERD and ICESR recommendations and allocate sufficient budget to implement Roma support Action plan 2016-2020, especially for descent payment and training of Roma community mediators who assist in documentation of Roma people.
2. *Eliminate late registration fees to birth.*
3. Provide disaggregated data based on race, religion, ethnicity of people applying for Moldovan citizenship, people granted with the citizenship, and those who has been denied.
4. Oblige Security and Intelligence Service of Moldova to justify their decisions to deny granting the citizenship.
5. Implement ICESR recommendation to insure that non-citizens are given access to education, housing, health care and employment, without discrimination.
6. Implement CERD recommendation to prepare and implement a suitable programme of measures and policies for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

We also invite SR on Minority Issues to conduct a follow-up visit to Moldova.

⁴ Ammendmend to the Law of Citizenship which allows to acquire Moldovan citizenship in exchange to investments
http://justice.gov.md/public/files/transparenta_in_procesul_decizional/coordonare/2017/iunie/28/Proiect28062017.pdf