



# RDCT BULLETIN

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## FOREWORD

Dear friends,

We reached the end of first year of activity of the Resource and Development Center for Transnistria, created within the “Strengthening of Civil Society from Transnistrian region” program, with financial support of National Endowment for Democracy.

With this occasion, in this bulletin issue you will find Program's Final Activity Report where you can find out about the activities performed by the three RDCT departments – Advocacy and Public Relations Department, NGO Department and Legal Assistance Department – during one year.

At the same time, in this issue you will find the interview given by Ion Manole, president of “Promo-Lex” Association, to B&F-Profit magazine. In Recommendations we put information about economic-financial magazine “B&F-Profit”.

The Resource and Development Center for Transnistria continues its activity and is available to all region's inhabitants!

With respect,  
RDCT Team

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## RESOURCE AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER FOR TRANSNISTRIA

### „STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY IN TRANSNISTRIAN REGION” PROGRAM FINAL ACTIVITY REPORT

“Strengthening Civil Society in Transnistrian region” is a program of Promo-Lex Association the main goal of which was creation of the Resource and Development Center for Transnistria (RDCT). The program is financially supported by National Endowment for Democracy.

The Center was created as result of Promo-Lex Association activities, problems identified by organization's experts, as well as our beneficiaries' initiative.

3 specialized departments were created and activate within the Center:

- Advocacy and Public Relations Department;
- NGO Department;
- Legal Assistance Department.

## **Advocacy and Public Relations Department Report**

### **RDCT Advocacy and Public Relations Department objectives:**

- Monitoring the democratization process and state of human rights in Transnistrian region;
- Informing relevant decision makers, mass media, public opinion, national and international organizations about the needs and problems faced by population from Transnistrian region;
- Developing recommendations for improvement of situation in the field of human rights and not-for-profit sector from Transnistrian region;
- Promoting of democratic norms and values in Transnistrian region.

The activity of Advocacy and PR Department was mainly centered on continuous monitoring of the situation from Transnistrian region. The monitoring targeted both situation of human rights and evolution of civil society in the region. The monitoring process was based on the analysis of the data and information provided by district Assistants, Center's beneficiaries, local mass media, reports of other national and international organizations on situation from Transnistrian region. Based on the data and information gained during the project implementation, a Study was made on human rights in Transnistrian region. The study contains analysis of the situation from the region from the prospective of respect and promotion of human rights. Publishing and translation into 3 languages of the study is financed by MaraKAP Small Grants Program of Dutch Embassy from Kiev.

During the first year of Center's activity, Advocacy and PR Department was involved in numerous events and meetings at national and international level dedicated to Transnistrian problem. Participation to such events led to raising awareness of national and international public opinion regarding concrete problems and difficult situations registered during Center's activities.

Also, lobby was performed for solution of some concrete cases of inhabitants from the left bank of Nistru river through official petitions and approaches, as well as, through some meetings with relevant decision makers (Ministry of Reintegration, Parliamentary Committee for Human Rights, General Prosecutor's Office, etc.).

### **RDCT Electronic Bulletin**

One of the department's activities was distribution of RDCT monthly electronic bulletin.

During the project implementation period, there were distributed 12 issues of the information bulletin. The bulletin, translated into Romanian, English and Russian languages, was distributed to over 3000 subscribers, among which initiative groups, NGOs, think tanks, national decision makers, donor organizations and

other international organizations interested in real situation from Transnistrian region. All the bulletin issues may be accessed at the organization's web page ([www.promolex.org.md](http://www.promolex.org.md)).

The bulletin contains information about Center's activities, not-for-profit sector events, problems faced by civil society from the left bank of Nistru river; reports made by national and international organizations regarding Transnistrian problem. Also, there was attempted to point out some facts and events that tend to become phenomena with negative character in the region, ex: serious violations of human rights, ecology of Nistru river, negative and positive experience of NGOs from the region. Promo-Lex Association encouraged region's inhabitants, beneficiaries and assistants of the Center to freely express their opinions regarding one or another problem, having in this regard a policy of noninterference with the authors' materials. In such conditions, we can state that the RDCT bulletin may be considered a unique monitoring tool of the situation from the region.

This way, the RDCT monthly electronic bulletin facilitates free access to information, in conditions in which the written press from Moldova is not present in the region. At the same time, it is an important source for promotion of exchange of experience and opinions of region's inhabitants, also serving as a unique source of democratic education and encouragement of active civil society.

### **Civic Education Program**

During October 2006 – September 2007, RDCT Advocacy and Public Relations Department performed 5 seminars in the following fields: Democracy, Civic Participation and Mass Media. About 124 persons participated to these seminars, especially representatives of NGOs and initiatives groups from the region, school and university students, teachers and even representatives of local public administration from the region. The seminars were organized in localities Cosnita, Camenca, Parcani and Dorotcaia.

The seminars aimed at promoting democratic norms and values; educating youth from Transnistrian region based on principles of active and responsible citizenship; encouraging civic initiatives among youth.

#### *Results:*

- Increased number of socially active youth in Transnistrian region;
- 124 persons from Transnistrian region were informed about their rights and concrete ways to participate to decision making process;
- 124 inhabitants from the region were educated in the spirit of active and responsible citizenship.

## **RDCT NGO Department**

### *Objectives:*

- Monitoring and analysis of the not-for-profit sector from Transnistrian region;
- Facilitating free access to information for nongovernmental organizations from the region through informational and logistical support;
- Institutional capacity building of the nongovernmental sector from Transnistrian region through training and consultancy program.

### **Training Program for NGOs from Transnistrian region:**

During one project year, NGO Department organized 10 training activities with the following subjects:

- „NGO – general concepts” - 4 seminars
- „Project proposal development”- 2 seminars
- "NGO management" - 1 seminar
- "NGO fund raising" - 1 seminar
- „Volunteering”- 2 seminars

The seminars were organized in localities Roghi, Camenca, Dorotcaia and Parcani.

The seminars' topics were determined based on a training needs assessment for target groups, performed during the year by the NGO Department. 185 persons (inhabitants of the Transnistrian region: school and university students, teachers, representatives of initiative groups, NGOs etc.) were direct beneficiaries of these seminars.

### *Results:*

- 185 persons were trained in different fields of not-for-profit management;
- Increased institutional development and organizational consolidation level for over 40 NGOs and initiatives groups, participants to the training sessions from Transnistrian region;
- Propagation of volunteering among youth from Transnistrian region;
- Active involvement of NGOs (RDCT beneficiaries) with the process of promotion of democratic values in Transnistrian region.

It is important to mention the fact that the seminars organized by RDCT Departments had a very important role in identification of active initiative groups, especially from rural settlements, which later, registered their nongovernmental organizations. Also, the seminars organized by RDCT proved to be an efficient method for dissemination of information (person to person), regarding services offered by the Center.

### **Assistance and consultancy Program for NGOs from Transnistrian region.**

NGO Department, besides the training seminars, offered individual consultancy to 22 NGOs and initiative groups in such fields as: project proposal development, project management, reporting on projects.

#### *Results:*

With the assistance of NGO Department, there were submitted 15 project proposals within call for proposals announced by USA Embassy in Moldova, Soros-Moldova, People in Need, Norwegian Embassy from Bucharest. Out of the total number of submitted project proposals, 4 were accepted, the total value of financing reaching \$12 000, 1 project proposal waiting for decision, the rest being rejected. It is important to mention the fact that all the projects accepted for financing aimed at promoting democratic norms and values in Transnistrian region: seminars, creation of a local radio station, a series of TV shows and editing of a local newspaper. These projects are the first financed projects for 3 out of 4 mentioned NGOs.

As evaluated by RDCT beneficiaries, such an individualized assistance in developing project proposals is highly appreciated due to knowledge, abilities and experience gained during the work sessions, even if the project proposals are rejected.

### **Conclusions/Recommendations**

The political regime from the region has an authoritative and closed character, a regime in which the “ministry of security” represents a perfect tool of control of opposition and which does not avoid persecution of any initiatives of nongovernmental organizations. It is mainly about activities that regard political situation of the region and reestablishment of mutual trust among population from both banks of Nistru river. Here is added the isolated informational environment which models public opinion according to ideology of aggressive separatism.

Civil society in Transnistria is weak, isolated and has an insignificant character but it proves willingness and potential to develop to the level of being able to produce changes. An increased attention paid by national and international donors will serve as catalyst of this development. This way, in order to support development of civil society in Transnistrian region, priority should be given to the following:

**More intensive and continuous financing of initiative groups and NGOs from the region.** The grants should be small, up to 1000 USD, and oriented towards community initiative groups and NGOs. Such a financing will represent a possibility to gain experience in fund raising and project implementation. At the same time it would serve as a test of credibility of NGOs from the region.

**A continuous monitoring of project implementation** will increase the level of responsibility and transparency of implementors. Strict and continuous implementation of projects will lead to elimination of such practices as beclouding of some hidden interests with the unfavorable situation from the region. Depending on the case, the role of monitor may be played by NGOs from the Republic of Moldova the activity of which is oriented towards Transnistrian region. An eloquent example in this regard is Promo-Lex Association within Resource and Development Center for Transnistria which was solicited by Czech organization People in Need to monitor the implementation of several projects financed by it in 2007.

**Encouragement of more intensive assistance in project development and implementation.** Besides trainings and seminars on different topics related to NGO activity, a role would have to be played by resource centers, the employees of which would organize individualized sessions, per grant competition, on project development and implementation with initiative groups and NGOs, at their request.

**Facilitation of access to information.** Taking in consideration the specifics of the region in this regard, access to Internet comes up as a solution. Access to Internet would significantly decrease the negative impact of informational isolation of the region, this way creating basic conditions for a more active participation. Financing of some projects the result of which would be well endowed computer rooms at schools from the region with access to Internet. A basic condition for such projects would be free and unlimited access of inhabitants and first of all of school students to these computer rooms. Financing of some mini projects on endowment of local NGOs with computers and Internet. Access to Internet will allow achievement of a series of major objectives among which: information of civil society from the region about evolutions in the field from the right bank of Nistru river and other countries; a better information of donors about current situation in Transnistria; facilitation of communication and exchange of experience (NGO networking);

**Creation of a network of local and regional trainers.** There would be appropriate a selection of a group of persons, leaders of NGOs and initiative groups, from all districts of Transnistrian region for a course of training of trainers on such topics as “NGO – general concepts”, “Project writing”, “Fund raising activities” etc. Creation of this team, high quality supposed, will decrease dependence of the region on availability of those from outside.

Financing NGOs in authoritarian political regimes is done to open them towards other influences but post-soviet ones, the same thing should be done as much as possible in Transnistria. A strong and intensive support of civil society, nongovernmental organizations and mass media – is one of the compulsory elements for solution of the Transnistrian problem, it being one of the “frozen and forgotten” conflicts in post soviet space. Priority should be given to education of region's inhabitants – educate them think positive, because once they start thinking this way, they will be able to conclude themselves the benefits of an

active civil society and decide their destinies on their own – and especially small community initiative groups and NGOs are those agents that deserve and must be supported, financially even more, since they have to play the main role in this objective. Abundance of NGOs changes the balance of local political power, opens the world to many simple people in the region, offers a different prospective for youth. And it does not matter if the majority of the already existent ones are made of only several persons that see only the opportunity of obtaining grants, as long as the projects implemented by them open new positive opportunities and contribute to democratization of the region.

### **RDCT Legal Assistance Department Report.**

#### Objectives of the RDCT Legal Assistance Department

- Promoting human rights and democratic values in Transnistrian region through information and training program;
- Protecting the rights of the region's inhabitants through free legal assistance program.

### **Training Program**

During October 2006 – September 2007, the Legal Assistance Department performed 5 training seminars among which 3 on topic “Human Rights – general concepts” and 2 on topic “Citizens' basic legal competence”.

The seminars trained 93 representatives of NGOs and initiative groups from the region, students, teachers and several representatives of local public administration from the region.

The seminars were organized in Cosnita, Camenca and Cocieri with participants coming from 14 settlements of Transnistrian region: Cocieri, Camenca, Podoima, Harmatca, Tibulauca, Dorotcaia, Tiraspol, Dubasari, Pohrebea, Corjova, Roghi, Sanatauca, Ribnita and Cosnita.

At the seminars were discussed the fundamental human rights and liberties, their most frequent violations and the existing mechanisms to protect them.

#### *Results:*

- 93 representatives of NGOs and initiative groups from the region, students, teachers and representatives of local public administration from Transnistrian region were trained in the field of human rights;
- Increase of the level of basic legal competence on behalf of the 93 NGOs and initiative groups representatives from the region, students, teachers and representatives of local public administration from Transnistrian region;
- Increased understanding on behalf of the seminar participants of the civil society's role in monitoring, promoting and protecting of human rights;

## **Legal Assistance Program**

During October 2006 – September 2007, Legal Assistance Department offered free legal advice and assistance to 246 direct beneficiaries: 245 persons and one nongovernmental organization.

Legal assistance was offered directly at the RDCT office in Cosnita village, Dubasari district, at the same time, as exceptions, some consultations were offered at Promo-Lex Association office in Chisinau.

The organization's experts offered assistance consulting the stipulations of national and regional legislation as well as relevant experience and international documents.

The department's assistance was requested by persons of different ages, with different backgrounds – civil, administrative, criminal. Family, work, land and property litigations were the most frequent.

### *Gender classification of beneficiaries:*

- men – 63%
- women – 37%

### *Regional classification of beneficiaries:*

- Ribnita – 4%
- Camenca – 8%
- Slobozia – 8%
- Dubasari – 33%
- Grigoriopol – 45%
- anonymous – 2%

### *Classification according to the type of legal assistance:*

- Legal advice – 80%
- Assistance in developing legal documents (petitions, requests, complaints etc.) - 14%
- Court representation – 4% (60% of which have already ended with final court decisions in favor of RDCT beneficiaries, the other 40% are still on the role).
- Litigation before ECHR – 2% In petitions submitted to ECHR were invoked violation of the right to free movement and property rights violations.

### *Classification of legal assistance:*

- Civil Law - 90%
- Criminal Law – 4%
- Administrative Law – 6%

After cases examination, Legal Department concluded that the most frequent

human rights violations in Transnistrian region are:

**The right to free movement**, which supposes free movement of persons, goods, services and capital on the territory of a state. This right is stipulated both, in Constitution of the Republic of Moldova (art.27) as well as Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms (art.2 Protocol 4).

The right to free movement of all country's citizens is violated, including other persons who are legal on its territory and is the result of disrespect of the Moldovan-Russian peace Agreement, signed on July 21st 1992 by presidents of the Republic of Moldova and Russian Federation. Art.5 from this international Treaty foresees that the signatory states are obliged to respect the right to free movement in the region, in this regard there being created a mechanism of control in the zone (Joint Control Committee and "peace keeping" troops, headed exclusively by officers from Russian Federation). Against stipulations of the international Treaty, in the region, with the tacit agreement of the mentioned control bodies, were placed numerous illegal posts ("militia", "customs", "border control", "security" etc.), that create obstacles to all persons that travel in the region. Also, these posts collect different fees ("customs fees", "migration fees" etc.) or these gouge big sums of money for supposed "disorders" from persons that are intimidated and who do not know their rights. Unfortunately, the situation has been so for over 15 years of political uncertainty at Nistru river.

At the same time, there were also registered cases of violations of the right to free movement by representatives of constitutional law bodies, especially by "internal Customs", which has a discriminative behavior towards inhabitants from the "security zone".

**Information of population and freedom of speech and expression** are guaranteed by art.32 and 34 from Constitution. The population from the region does not have free access to information, especially to diversity of sources of information. Inhabitants of Transnistria do not have possibility to freely express themselves, there being registered cases of intimidation and threatening of persons who wish to know and protect their rights. In this regard, a person was illegally dismissed from work. Such methods are very efficient in keeping the state of things in the region and fear.

**Right to a decent life** foresees that "The state has to take measures so that every person has a decent level of life, that would ensure his health, his and his family' s welfare, including nutrition, clothes, house, medical care, as well as necessary social services". It was observed that the constitutional authorities cannot assume full responsibility in this regard because of the lack of effective control over the region's territory. In this connection, since intensification of the privatization process, the rights of hundreds of thousands inhabitants of the region are violated. In the absence of a transparent process, property over enterprises and even agricultural land is taken illegally by suspicious persons and enterprises, the population not having the possibility to participate to this process.

## **Legal Assistance for NGOs**

A component part of the legal assistance program was oriented towards organizations and local initiative groups. Legal Department consulted and assisted representatives of 16 organizations and local initiative groups from the region.

The offered consultancy regarded the foundation and registration procedures of nongovernmental organizations, elaboration of the status draft and bank account opening procedure.

Also, Legal Assistance Department offered assistance in preparation of documents necessary for NGOs registration. As a result, there were registered 9 nongovernmental organizations, and one was re-registered at the constitutional authorities of RM:

*Regional classification of newly created and registered NGO:*

Camenca – 2  
Slobozia -1  
Tiraspol -2  
Bender - 1  
Dubăsari – 3  
Grigoriopol - 1

The fields of activity of newly created NGOs are: ecology, rural development, youth, civil education, rights of women and gender equality, civic journalism and youth press, human rights.

## **Conclusions:**

- Because of poverty, inhabitants of Transnistrian region, especially those from rural areas are not able to pay for services of professional lawyers. They look for cheap legal services, many times of poor quality, a fact that contributes to hindering or even late correct examination of cases, leaving the petitioner without the possibility to efficiently protect his rights. At the same time, courts are influenced by the “administrative” factor, and the rights of inhabitants cannot be adequately protected.

Taking this into consideration, the RDCT Legal Assistance Department offers consultancy to inhabitants of the region and examines under all aspects the problems of its beneficiaries. First of all, our beneficiaries are informed about their rights, the mechanism to protect them and legal procedures, and if necessary, Association’s lawyers prepare the documents necessary for some complaints, requests, or petitions and prepare the documents necessary for initiating of law suits. Once the RDCT beneficiaries know the procedure, stages, means and ways to protect their rights, they get a real chance to

protect their legal rights and interests.

- As a result of legal illiteracy, in many situations, most of the Transnistrian region inhabitants, do not even acknowledge the fact that their rights are being violated, and thus, take no actions to protect them. At the same time, the inhabitants of the region do not trust the system and regime that administrates the region.
- Inhabitants' fear to start legal procedures regarding protection of their rights continues to be a phenomenon. We mention the fact that some beneficiaries refused to use legal means of protection of their rights, as consulted by RDCT experts, they being threatened, intimidated or refuse such procedures being "warned" by relatives who are afraid of possible revenge on behalf of "authorities".
- A major problem in increasing the level and efficiency of legal assistance offered by RDCT is the fact that the lawyers from the right Bank of Nistru river are not allowed in courts or other institutions from the region. This way, our assistance is mainly limited to preparation of documents and consultancy of persons. Under such circumstances, the results are not always the desired ones. At the same time, there is a scarcity of legal specialists in the region, particularly in rural areas. This fact is caused by mass migration of young specialists. Compared to other regions of the country, the pro-bono legal services are insufficient in the region.
- In some situations, the RDCT experts noticed a reserved attitude or mistrust of some inhabitants from the region towards NGOs from the right bank of Nistru river. We believe it is the result of the separatist propaganda, manipulation and isolation of region's population from the rest of country's territory for the past 17 years.
- We remark the fact that human rights are permanently violated everywhere in the world, but in Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova, where there is not legal constitutional system, monitored by a viable civil society and international bodies or community, protection of these human values is practically impossible, their violation at individual level is more remarkable than anywhere else.

### **Recommendations:**

- Creation of a local or district NGO network (Legal Clinics, legal assistance Offices, Centers for protection of rights for different categories of persons etc.), that would offer free legal assistance to region's inhabitants. The presence of some NGOs specialized in law will facilitate the access to information and qualified legal assistance to all inhabitants from the region. Involvement of young specialists from the region with these NGOs would allow full range of legal services, including representation in local and national courts, as well as the possibility to appeal to international courts.

- We believe necessary a more active civil society and constitutional authorities involvement in informing and educating transnistrian region inhabitants regarding human rights and ways to protect them. In this regard, we encourage organization of seminars, trainings, round tables and summer schools for transnistrian region inhabitants, especially youth.
- Also it is very important to support and encourage activities of civic education, initiated by NGOs and initiative groups from the region through organization of some seminars, creation of some local radio stations, editing of local newspapers and booklets, that would promote democratic norms and values, etc. It is important to mention the fact that there are such initiatives in the region, these being successfully implemented by local NGOs with financial support of foreign donor organizations.

### **RDCT Special Events**

- ***Celebration of the “International Day of Human Rights”.***

The event took place on December 10th 2006.

The objective of this event was promoting Human Rights among youth from transnistrian region.

The event was a Competition of sketches and wall papers on Human Rights. 17 teams of school students accompanied by their teachers participated to the event.

The event was organized on volunteer basis by RDCT team, organizational costs were covered by UNDP Moldova.

- ***„Donors Fair”***

Donors Fair was organized on March 29th 2007.

This event aimed at strengthening the not-for-profit sector from Transnistrian region through facilitating the access to information on grant competitions announced by donor organizations.

The event gathered representatives of 42 NGOs and initiative groups from Transnistrian region (Tiraspol, Bender, Dubasari, Ribnita, Slobozia, Camenca) and representatives of 18 donor organizations.

The event was organized on volunteer basis by RDCT team, organizational costs were covered by OSCE Mission to Moldova.

Both events were organized at “Prietenia” leisure Center from Cosnita village, Dubasari district.

## ACTUAL

### „MOLDOVA DOES NOT USE ITS ENTIRE POTENTIAL FOR REGULATION OF THE TRANSNISTRIAN PROBLEM”

***Interview taken by representative of B&F-Profit, Igor Volnitchi, from Ion Manole, „Promo-Lex” Association chairman.***

**B&F-Profit:** How do you appreciate the current situation of the Transnistrian problem regulation?

**I.M.:** In the created situation, the only conclusion that may be made is that Moldova is not an important actor in the negotiation process. Unfortunately, our country does not use all the possibilities and potential for regulation of the problem, being influenced by „Eastern factor” and, many times, even does not do anything, waiting for somebody else to solve the problem. During the last few years, a certain pressure of Russia on Moldova could be observed (crisis of gas, wine exports). Due to these pressures or because of other reasons (that can only be intuited), but a thing is clear – Moldova changed its position, comparing to 2004-2005, towards Transnistrian regulation. This fact is regrettable because such a position discourages our external partners which sincerely wish to help us in regulation of the Transnistrian problem. We are an organization that actively works in the region from the left bank of Nistru river and I can tell you that the perception of simple people is not a positive one. Their impression is that Moldova does not gets involved actively in regulation of the problem and that it passed this task to big powers – USA, EU and Russia.

**B&F-Profit:** How efficient do you think is the current format of negotiations?

**I.M.:** The biggest mistake in this regard was made when Transnistrian region was accepted as a part with full rights to negotiation process. It is clear that in conditions in which Tiraspol has this status and a far from constructive position, it is hard to negotiate anything.

Another problem is the current status of USA and EU in negotiation process – observers. It is clear that in the current formula, the negotiation format is inefficient. Changes have to be made and, with no doubt, accepting EU and USA as negotiators with full rights would give an impulse to the process.

**B&F-Profit:** In the absence of five parties format negotiations, the mediators and observers met several times and discussed aspects regarding Transnistrian problem. What do you think about it?

**I.M.:** The effort made by them is welcomed, but it would be absolutely wrong to

identify a solution for Transnistrian problem in the absence of Moldova. I repeat: Moldova must not wait for solutions from outside, but get involved itself in finding them.

By the way, speaking about solutions from outside – some compare Transnistrian region and Kosovo. I believe absolutely wrong such an approach because the situation of the two regions is absolutely different. Transnistrian conflict is not an ethnic or religious one, thus the solution would have to be different from Kosovo. Kosovo problem is more similar to Chechnya. But Russia would never accept these to be compared or that the problem of Chechnya be solved the same way as the one from Kosovo. Especially in the absence of Russia from the preliminary negotiation process. Why then should we accept it?

**B&F-Profit:** There is an opinion that the negotiation process should be frozen for a while in order not to allow its undesired evolution. Do you support this idea?

**I.M.:** In this regard I can say that I completely agree with president Vladimir Voronin who declared that it is impossible to negotiate with Igor Smirnov. The last one was always saying that it was impossible to negotiate with Snegur, later the same thing he said about Lucinschi and now he says the same thing about Vladimir Voronin. But maybe the problem lays not in the presidents of Moldova, constitutionally elected, but in the leader from Tiraspol? I hope that all parties involved in negotiation process understand it and build their positions based on this situation.

**B&F-Profit:** What are your comments in regard to the idea launched by former presidential councilor Sergiu Mocanu, according to which Moldova should give up Transnistrian region in favor of integration with European Union?

**I.M.:** I believe it is a political speculation. Moldova will not be able to adhere with European Union even if it gives up Transnistrian region. Adhesion with EU is a much more complicated process that does not depend only on the problem of country's eastern districts. By the way, even if we admit giving up the eastern region and adhere with EU, a lot of problems would appear, problems not wanted neither by Chisinau, nor by decision makers from Brussels. For example, the approximately four hundred thousand citizens that live on the left bank and are citizens of the Republic of Moldova will have the full right to request refugee status on the right bank of Nistru river. I do not think EU would want 400 thousand refugees and neither Chisinau would be able to ensure all facilities that result from a refugee status.

**B&F-Profit:** There are many talks about the status of Transnistrian region after solution of the problem. In you opinion, what status would have to have the districts from left bank of Nistru river?

**I.M.:** The region's status has to be decided by people that live there. But, in order for this decision to be free and democratic, it is necessary to create a series of conditions. First of all, there has to be ensured the respect of freedom of movement between the two banks of Nistru river. By the way, this fact is foreseen by the Moldovan-Russian ceasefire Agreement from 1992. It means, nothing else

is requested but respect of a document recognized by Tiraspol and Chisinau which is still valid. Second, democratization of the region is needed, a process that supposes development of civil society and independent mass media. It is necessary to intensify the presence of mass media from the right bank on the left bank. Also, phone connection between the two banks of Nistru river also has to be reestablished so that people can freely communicate. It is obviously that most of these will be impossible as long as Russian Federation does not respect its international commitments regarding its military presence in the eastern region of the Republic of Moldova.

Transnistrian region inhabitants must live in democracy for at least 3-5 years in order to make a free and correct choice. They must taste true freedom. During these 3-5 years, the inhabitants of both banks will have to discuss freely the Transnistrian problem, and their points of view will have to not be influenced by anybody, as it happens now. The decision that will be taken by region's inhabitants regarding its future does not matter – important is that this decision be free and fully acknowledged. Neither Russia, nor any other force has the right to influence, making different speculations, including comparisons to Kosovo.

**B&F-Profit:** Do you mean that until a decision on region's status is taken, an external temporary protectorate will be needed during these 3-5 years?

**I.M.:** It is not necessary. But, in order to ensure a normal evolution of the state of things there can be introduced a system of non-military international monitoring. In my opinion, exactly such an evolution frightens Russia and administration from Tiraspol the most and thus different provocations and problems are created in order not to allow such an evolution of state of things.

**B&F-Profit:** The Association headed by you is one of the most active working on the left bank of Nistru river. What are the main activity directions? Are there other NGOs from the right bank on the left bank?

**I.M.:** There are other NGOs, but as you remarked, „Promo-Lex” is one of the most active and we have concrete results. We work especially for development and consolidation of civil society, promotion and protection of human rights and democratic values.

**B&F-Profit:** Do you face any problems working on the territory controlled by administration from Tiraspol?

**I.M.:** It is not easy to work there. You always have to be cautious and, in addition, it is complicated to work with people that live in a closed society. People that collaborate with us often have problems with unrecognized authorities. By the way, we do not collaborate at all with the illegal administration from Tiraspol. They also are not eager to collaborate with us, they recognize only NGOs registered in Transnistria.

**B&F-Profit:** The Association headed by you opened a Resource and Development Center for Transnistrian region. What is it about?

**I.M.:** It is a „Promo-Lex” project, financed by National Endowment for Democracy.

The Resource Center appeared at the request of inhabitants from the region in 2006. We organize seminars, trainings and offer different information and literature at request. We also offer free legal assistance and consultancy.

**B&F-Profit:** Speaking about legal assistance. I know that you have already reached ECHR with several loud cases. At what stage are they?

**I.M.:** True, we represent, at ECHR, three schools from the left bank of Nistru river that teach in Latin script and which had problems with the administration from Tiraspol. Also, we represent the interests of about 2000 land owners in the case of which the administration from Tiraspol violates the right to property over agricultural land. The cases of the three schools are at an advanced examination stage. The cases of land owners are examined on a regular basis.

**B&F-Profit:** Do you collaborate with the authorities from Chisinau in regard to solution of problems of population from the left bank of Nistru river?

**I.M.:** There is collaboration, but we would like a better and more efficient one.

**B&F-Profit:** What are the prospectives of Transnistrian problem regulation?

**I.M.:** I believe a final solution of the problem will happen in 3-5 years, after a political solution is identified.

**B&F-Profit:** If speaking about a political solution, I would like to ask: do you believe that there is a secret Moldovan-Russian plan for settlement of the Transnistrian problem, about which there are many discussions?

**I.M.:** May be, but I hope that what happened in 1939, when the big powers decided the future of millions of people with a pencil on the map, will not happen again.

**B&F-Profit:** Thank you for the interview and wish you success in the future!

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### “B&F-PROFIT” MAGAZINE

Economic-financial magazine „Banks and Finances” in Russian and „Profit” in Romanian is edited since 1995. One of the publication's goals is defining the real climate of local business' activity environment, identification and raising authorities' awareness in regard to concrete factors that hinder development of private initiative, enterprising, possibilities of people to realize their abilities in business.

Since the first issue that appeared in May 1995, “B&F-Profit” magazine gives its readers advices on how to earn, keep and multiply money in real conditions from the capital market. Our motto is: Make money easy, without effort and with

pleasure!

„B&F-Profit” tends to keep its readers informed about preoccupations of Moldovan business, its possibilities and perspectives, threats it is exposed to and things it should avoid.

Source: [www.profit.md](http://www.profit.md) (the web page is under development and will be launched in November 2007)

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