



## ROMANIA. BUCHAREST.

### Defenseless young people with severe disabilities held prisoner – Human Rights denied

Thirty young persons with disabilities in the “*Gheorghe Serban*” Centre for Recuperation and Rehabilitation of Neuropsychiatry (CRRN) in Bucharest District 2 are reportedly being tied to their beds and the remaining twenty-four are in grave danger. We call on the Romanian Government and the Local Council of Sector 2 to immediately provide them with adequate food, essential care, protection of their Human Rights and access to the outside world.

The RAP Foundation professionals (a Registered Charity in UK SC 234981) have been denied access to these young people after the Foundation raised serious concerns directly with the Director General in March 2012. The concerns related to ill treatment of the young people and their complete denial of their Human Rights. The Foundation had also raised concerns regarding the treatment for one young adult who had been denied life saving medical treatment for what was identified as a case of suspected Tuberculosis. Only after positive intervention from The RAP Foundation, was the young adult hospitalized and in care for 6 weeks.

The RAP Foundation has been involved in supporting vulnerable children and young adults with disabilities in Romania for many years. The RAP Foundation sought the support of the *Centrul de Resurse Juridice* (Center for Legal Resources - CLR) in order to try to get access to these adults isolated in the centre and to raise the issue of the denial of their Human Rights in respect of inadequate medical and psychological treatment, lack of food and support.

After being made aware of this situation, CLR, a Romanian non-governmental organization, tried to gain access to the vulnerable young people in the Centre, but they too were refused and have been consistently denied access since. This denial of access for CLR has never happened to CLR before.

The CRRN is in Bucharest, only 6 km from the government building. A former employee speaking to a journalist described the treatment of the young people *“The young adults were always kept in the dark (... ) sometimes they were beaten, sometimes screaming at them (..) They were sedated. Hands and legs tied to prevent them get out of bed or hit. They were simply tied with pieces torn from old sheets. The nurses feed them while they lie down on their back. They opened their mouth wide and choked and spat”*.

After viewing recent televised coverage (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xRW1dd0oYTc>), Professor Michael P Kerr Mb ChB, MSc, MPhil, MRCP, FRCPsych, FIASSID, Professor of Learning Disability, Psychiatry and Honorary Consultant Neuropsychiatrist at Cardiff University in UK, provided his independent professional opinion - *“All the individuals with a disability seen on camera appear to be seriously, most probably dangerously, underweight. Such a degree of underweight needs urgent assessment as it is associated with a very high mortality. As all the individuals show such underweight there must be serious concerns that the cause is systemic. That is related to dietary practices or environmental stress”*. **Professor Kerr recommended an urgent assessment made by specialists outside the current care team: “In fact, refusal of entry to such assessors would simply increase the gravity of my concern”**.

**Background information:**

On 17 December 2012 the CLR registered a complaint at the Court of First Instance of District 2 Bucharest, about the lack of compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), Optional Protocol at the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT) and the Romanian Law on Mental Health no 487/2002. Prior to doing so, the organization reported it to Ms. Mariana Câmpeanu, the Minister of Labor and Mr. Neculai Onțanu, the Mayor of District 2.

Images with the inhumane treatments applied to these young adults were broadcast on Sunday, May 19th, 2013, by a national television station and they were also disseminated online worldwide. (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xRW1dd0oYTc>).

**IMMEDIATE RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

- **Call on all people and Bodies who have an interest/support** for People with Disabilities and Human Rights to express concern at the present situation in the “*Gheorghe Șerban*” Centre;
- **Urge the Romanian Government to commission an IMMEDIATE INDEPENDENT** review and report on the factual situation at the “*Gheorghe Șerban*” Centre;
- **Urge the Romanian Government and the Local Council of District 2 to provide the essential access**, resources and support to allow the young people in “*Gheorghe Șerban*” Centre to maximize their potential for a meaningful and safe life, to live without fear.
- **Urge Romania’s General Prosecutor to immediately order an investigation** into the deaths of 2 young women who died in recent months at the “*Gheorghe Șerban*” Centre and that any subsequent deaths there are independently investigated.

**ACTION IS NEEDED NOW!****APPEALS TO:**

Prime minister  
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**Fax: +40 21 319 15 88**  
**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister**

General Prosecutor  
*Mr. Tiberiu Nițu*  
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050706 București, Romania  
**Fax: +40 21 311.3939**  
**Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General**

Ministry of Labor, Family, Social Welfare and the Elderly  
*Ms. Mariana Câmpeanu*  
Str. Dem. I. Dobrescu nr.2-4,  
Sector 2, București, Romania  
**Fax: +40 21 315 88 12**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

Ministry of Health  
*Mr. Eugen Nicolaescu*  
Str. Cristian Popisteanu, nr. 1-3, sector 1,  
010024, București, Romania  
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**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

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**Salutation: Dear Minister**

and to diplomatic representatives of Romania accredited to your country.

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