

REPUBLICA MOLDOVA

Misiunea Permanentă pe
lângă Națiunile Unite



REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Permanent Mission to the
United Nations

STATEMENT

**by H.E. Mr. Vlad LUPAN, Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Moldova to the United Nations,
during the 45th session of the Commission on Population and Development,
on agenda item 4: National experience
in population matters: adolescents and youth**

New York, April 2012

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The list of problems we are facing in terms of young population and development are many: Education; Reproductive healthcare and health education; Street children; Lack of employment; Youth mobility and social communication and inclusion; Youth participation; Sometimes (and now too often) - post-conflict recovery and engagement. These are only a fraction of the problems young population around the world is confronting with. The relationship between youth and development goes beyond this dual dimension, it is indeed multi-faceted.

I will speak about national experience in addressing youth issues from the perspective of a country that faced post-conflict rehabilitation, youth education, freedoms of transition and development. Thus, for the Republic of Moldova this topic is indeed very important, first of all because we talk about our future. While shape our individual approach on the matter we also envisage effective ways to consolidate national efforts for the implementation of international mechanisms in the field, such as the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development and the World Program of Action for Youth.

Even though there are general and more common challenges that youth face today in all countries like employment, access to education, social protection, access to affordable health services etc., there are specific problems affecting youth in developing countries and those with economy in transition. The social conditions of youth and adolescents depend on a large scale on the level of the economic development of their countries, as well as a wide range of other factors that influence these conditions.

Nowadays, one of the major challenges that the Republic of Moldova is confronting while addressing youth issues is generated by shortages of offers on the national labor market. And it seems this is not only the case of Moldova. Less than 30% of the young population in Moldova is employed and a large portion of the young qualified labor force emigrates abroad in search for more opportunities, which constitutes about half of the total active labor force of the country. On another hand, parents migrated and left their young children with relatives, without proper attention and care, with an impact on their future social conduct. While transnational legal employment brings significant benefits to the countries of origin as well as to those of destination, speaking about intercultural and experience exchange and shared values from one hand and remittances to boost consumer economy and entrepreneurship on the other, the mere fact that nearly half of the active population has left the country is of great concern. For these reasons the Moldovan Government is trying to shift from traditionalist approaches to reverse this situation.

The National Strategy on employment policies is giving more and more focus on youth employment. Our Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports is one of the former youth leaders and at the age of 28 he is the youngest minister in the Government. The Prime-Minister's office is also assigned with an adviser exclusively on Youth issues. During the year 2010 to 2011 the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports organized several activities in the framework of the International Year of Youth (IYY) with the reference to the quote of the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon *"Youth should be given a chance to take an active part in the decision-making of local, national and global levels."* – and in Moldova it did.

The promotion of professional education specialization, the implementation of the inclusive education concept for youth with disabilities, organization of national information campaigns against

illegal migration, internet access improvement in the Youth Resource Centers, promotion of new programs on health services friendly to the youth and programs for young families – are some of the actions that the respective ministry is working on with other governmental bodies under heavy financial restraints, characteristic to the current global economic crisis.

The picture, however, is not a promising one yet. When we speak about economy and employment, we see not only opportunities. Our country still needs to adjust to the market demands for labor in terms of qualification, specialty and competitiveness. We hope to see more Foreign Direct Investment in our positively changing environment – an element that would shape the labor market as well. Twenty years after the transition from a planned to market economy in Moldova is precisely the time when a new generation has grown up with a different education and views on their perspectives – their ideas and the market demands may not coincide. Thus, about 60% of our students graduate in law, political sciences and international relations, economy and foreign languages. At the same time, we have less teachers and doctors, particularly in rural areas. And what is more concerning to us is the lack of qualified labor in agriculture – once a vital branch of our economy. About 60% of the population of the Republic of Moldova lives in rural areas. While only a small fraction of youth is employed - about 15% chooses to work in those areas. That fact poses new challenges for the Government in order to balance the potential we build in education institutions with the demand in labor force.

The Republic of Moldova has known crucial political transformations by the hand of youth – a so-called Twitter revolution by young citizens, in April of 2009. It finally led to an election of a young Government determining a new wave of expectations and opportunities for youth. Nowadays, the Government has developed, with the UN support, a new Strategy for National Development “Moldova 2020”. One of the aims is to build a long term partnership between the educational system and the stakeholders operating on the labor market. Consequently, this is hoped to contribute to the decrease of unemployment, population exodus and the social segment being less exposed to the risk of poverty and exclusion. By 2020 the Government hopes to reduce the unemployment rate among youth up to 4% and the emigration up to 10%.

Mr. Chairman,

National efforts and domestic expenditures are crucial for the development and opening of new opportunities for youth. In the report of the Secretary General on the flow of financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development presented for consideration during the current session it is clearly indicated that the domestic resources of developing countries provide the largest portion of funds for attaining population and development objectives and that an estimated two thirds of the funding required for the further implementation of the Program would come from domestic resources. Nevertheless, due to the real situation in developing countries, the multilateral partnership remains crucial especially in times of economic crisis facing the world today. We endorse the recommendations contained in the Secretary General’s report regarding the recommitment of both governments of donor and developing countries towards the implementation of the objectives of the International Conference, underlying the role of the private sector in the mobilization of adequate resources for population and development.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.