Dear Prime Minister Filat

Re: Discrimination and the Registration of Religious Organisations

I write on behalf of the Equal Rights Trust (ERT) to express our concern about reports that the Islamic League, the first legally recognised Muslim organisation in Moldova, may be deregistered. We strongly welcome the recent registration of the Islamic League as a crucial step in realising the right to equality for members of religious minorities in Moldova and urge you not to deregister this organisation.

I write on behalf of the Equal Rights Trust (ERT) to express our concern about reports that the Islamic League, the first legally recognised Muslim organisation in Moldova, may be deregistered. We strongly welcome the recent registration of the Islamic League as a crucial step in realising the right to equality for members of religious minorities in Moldova and urge you not to deregister this organisation.

The Equal Rights Trust (ERT) is an independent international organisation whose purpose is to combat discrimination and promote equality as a fundamental human right and a basic principle of social justice. ERT makes frequent submissions to governments concerning the implementation and enforcement of the rights equality and non-discrimination. Within the context of our particular work in Moldova in partnership with Promo-LEX, a Moldovan non-governmental organization, we have received reports about the discriminatory application of laws governing registration of religious groups.

The difficulties faced by some religious minorities in registering their organisations and the application of administrative sanctions to individuals that belong to unregistered religious groups have in the past been highlighted as areas of concern by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination\(^1\), the Human Rights Committee\(^2\), the Special

---


Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief\(^3\), and the European Court of Human Rights.\(^4\) In light of these difficulties the registration of the Islamic League in March this year represents a significant step forward in protecting the equal right to religious freedom for members of religious minorities and their right to be free from discrimination. Disappointingly, a number of media organisations report that you have pledged to review the registration of the Islamic League, indicating that this positive step is now under threat.

In view of the above, we urge you to ensure that any review of the registration of the Islamic League fully respects Moldova’s obligations under international human rights law, in particular, the right of religious minorities to equality contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights.

Yours sincerely

Dimitrina Petrova  
**Executive Director**  
**The Equal Rights Trust**

---

\(^3\) Bielefeldt, H., UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief: Summary of cases transmitted to Governments and replies received, UN Doc. No. A/HRC/16/53/Add.1, 2011, Paras.336-361.

\(^4\) *Masaev v. Moldova*, Application no. 6303/05, lodged with the European Court of Human Rights on 9 September 2004.