

## **OPEN LETTER TO THE ROMANIAN PRIME-MINISTER FROM THE CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS**

To: *Mr. Ludovic Orban, Prime Minister of Romania,*  
*Mrs. Raluca Turcan, Deputy Prime Minister of Romania*

Copy to:

*Ms. Tlaleng Mofokeng, Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, UN, Office of the High Commissioner*

*Ms. Dunja Mijatović, Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe, Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights*

*Mr. Didier Reynders, Commissioner for Justice, the European Commission,*  
*Michel Kazatchkine, Special Advisor to the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) for Eastern Europe and Central Asia*

*Ms. Lucica Dițiu, Executive Director Stop TB Partnership*

*Mr. Paul Sommerfeld, Chair of TB Europe Coalition*

**Dear Prime Minister,**

**We approach you today, close to the World AIDS Day, as non-governmental organizations advocating for the right to health, with an urgent appeal on behalf of people at risk or infected with HIV / AIDS and / or tuberculosis. We call on the Romanian Government to ensure that the National Strategic Plan for HIV / AIDS and the National Intersectoral Committee for the Control of Tuberculosis and HIV / AIDS Infection will be adopted by government decision before the date of the parliamentary elections.**

The National Strategic Plan for HIV / AIDS, developed in 2017 with the support of civil society and published by the Ministry of Health for public debate in November 2018, is still pending approval by government decision. The proposal for the organization of the National Intersectoral Committee for the Control of Tuberculosis and HIV / AIDS - consultative body, without legal personality, under the coordination of the same ministry, is also pending for approval by government decision since December 2019. Similarly, the joint order of the Minister of Health and the Minister of Labor and Social Protection, for establishing the methodology for allocating the amount of food support for TB patients (Law no. 302/2018) has been pending approval for 3 weeks .

On October 30, 2020, the Romanian Country Coordination Mechanism for the HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis Programs (CCM Romania) notified you about all these issues. **Prior to this notification, on January 30, 2020, we also appealed to the Deputy Prime Minister regarding the failure to adopt a National HIV / AIDS Strategy for more than 10 years, but we did not receive an answer.** On October 9, 2017, fifteen institutions and organizations advocated to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Health to adopt the necessary measures to ensure the access of the population to HIV prevention.

Although Romania is among the countries severely affected by communicable diseases (including HIV and tuberculosis), national health programs are reduced to diagnosis and treatment. 15 other appeals have been

sent in the last two years institutionally, directly to the Ministry of Health, as well as to the other ministries and agencies that are members of the Romanian Country Coordination Mechanism for the HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis Programs.

In the last year, the responses received by civil society from the Ministry of Health (MoH) have varied from:

“Draft legislative acts for the application of Law no. 302/2018 is in the MoH approval circuit, the HIV/AIDS NSP is in the procedure of detailed review and updating of data. The process is laborious and involves the work of several departments and services within the Ministry of Health and therefore the specialized department cannot estimate a date when it will be sent to the government for approval” (point 2 of Answer no. 349/306 / 17.02.2020)

to

"Regarding NSP HIV/AIDS 2019-2021, we inform you that due to the change of leadership of the Ministry of Health, it will be re-signed on the internal approval circuit and will subsequently be sent on the inter-ministerial approval circuit" (Answer of MS DGAMSP no. NT 349 / 04/16/2020)

and

"Regarding NSP HIV/AIDS, we inform you that it will be modified and completed by the specialists from the specialized commission within the MoH and will be sent again on the internal approval circuit within the MoH and later on the inter-ministerial approval circuit" (Response of the Ministry of Health DGAMSP No. NT 352e / 24.04.2020)

Mr. Prime Minister, we believe that after ten years of expectations and promises, such answers are unacceptable. The UN and European institutions have already drawn Romania's attention to the fact that people at risk or living with HIV/AIDS or tuberculosis are among the most vulnerable groups and that we must take urgent action.

**In order to prevent the situation from worsening, we ask you, Mr. Prime Minister, to urgently adopt the following normative acts that could improve the lives of people from vulnerable groups:**

1. **Joint Order of the Minister of Health and the Minister of Labor and Social Protection, establishing the methodology for allocating the amount of food support for TB patients (Law no. 302/2018)**
2. **HIV / AIDS National Strategic Plan for the next 3 years**
3. **Organization and functioning of the National Intersectoral Committee for the Control of Tuberculosis and HIV / AIDS**

We would appreciate an answer to our letter as soon as possible.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Silvia Asandi,  
General Manager, The Romanian Angel Appeal Foundation  
[silvia.asandi@raa.ro](mailto:silvia.asandi@raa.ro)

**Signatory organizations:**

1. ACCEPT Association, contact person Florin Buhuceanu, 0728.530.729
2. Romanian Angel Appeal Foundation (RAA), contact person: Cristina Enache, [cristina.enache@raa.ro](mailto:cristina.enache@raa.ro)
3. Paula Rusu, journalist, former TB patient
4. The National Union of Organizations of People Affected by HIV/AIDS (UNOPA)
5. Romanian Association Against AIDS (ARAS)
6. Romanian Harm Reduction Network (RHRN)
7. Youth for Youth
8. ECPI - Euroregional Center for Public Initiatives
9. Romanian Health Observatory
10. ActiveWatch - Press Monitoring Agency
11. SEX vs STORK Association
12. I Am! Are you? Association
13. Population Services International Foundation in Romania
14. Alliance for the Fight Against Alcoholism and Drug Addiction (ALIAT)
15. RESPECT platform for Rights and Freedoms, bringing together over 100 organizations and civic groups