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Oral statement delivered by Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII

Mr President,

APG23 praises the engagement of the Government of Romania in the UPR process.

In its addendum to the report of the Working Group, Romania rejected recommendations N° 109.31 to 109.34 because already implemented through the National Strategy on children rights for 2008-2013.

However, on the issue of HIV/AIDS, in spite of the positive actions taken by the Government in the fight against the infection, research and intervention, in particular for vulnerable groups and adolescents, remain to be strengthened.

We highlight the difficulty to insert children living with HIV/AIDS in schools, with some reported cases of children required to undergo HIV testing before actually starting school.

This practice is discriminatory and detrimental to the rights of all these children.

We recommend the Government of Romania to:

- a) Improve its policy and programmatic responses to prevent HIV/AIDS, especially by strengthening its commitment to ensure universal access to prevention, treatment, care, and effective interventions for people living with HIV/AIDS, particularly for school-age children;
- b) Raise awareness to fight against all forms of discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS, chiefly addressing the communities in rural areas.

APG23 praises Romania for having ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and we welcome his intention to ratify the optional Protocol - as suggested in recommendation 109.12 -, but further efforts are necessary for the effective implementation of the provisions of the Convention in the national legislation.

There is still a widespread sense of stigma associated with persons with disabilities and this causes their isolation and/or abandonment. This is particularly evident in the school context.

Notwithstanding the fact that since 2000 the Government of Romania has made efforts to transfer children with disabilities from special schools to mainstream schools, the latter are yet not adequately equipped to receive, assist, and implement programs which suit the needs of children with disabilities.

Furthermore, while the Government has approved the national strategy for the protection, integration and social inclusion of the persons with disabilities for the period 2006-2013, disabled adults still face challenges when looking for employments and are often institutionalized.

There is need to ensure the effective implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, through the provision of measures aiming at the elimination of impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers which hinder the full, effective, and equal participation of people with disabilities to the society.

Thank You, Mr President.