



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Advocates' Women's Human Rights Program and partners to present report on the implementation of Moldova's domestic violence legislation

Minneapolis / St. Paul, MN (10/29/12) - The Advocates for Human Rights and its partners, the Moldovan Women's Law Center and the Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation, have completed a new report, *Implementation of the Republic of Moldova's Domestic Violence Legislation*. The groups will present the report to various stakeholders in Moldova, including government ministries, police, lawyers, judges, advocates, and service providers, on November 29 and 30. The following week, The Advocates and the Women's Law Center will train Moldovan police officers in best practices for implementing the domestic violence legislation in a three-day seminar.

Two experienced police officers from Minnesota, Minneapolis Deputy Chief Kris Arneson and St. Catherine University Director of Public Safety Laura Goodman, will join The Advocates in Moldova to train the police. The Moldovan police will then train 500 officers across the country on the implementation of the law. Mary Ellingen, staff attorney for The Advocates' Women's Human Rights Program, says, "We are delighted to have the opportunity to launch the report and we are also excited to implement some of our recommendations right away through the police training."

The United States State Department's 2010 Human Rights Report on Moldova found that 40 percent of Moldovan women had experienced at least one violent act in their lifetime. In September 2008 Moldova's Law on Preventing and Combating Family Violence went into effect. The new law provides for an order for protection, a coordinated community response to victims, and recognizes the security of victims as a basic principle. The Advocates' report assesses the implementation of this law and other domestic violence legislation in Moldova and gives recommendations on how the implementation can be improved.

The Advocates' Women's Human Rights Program recently returned from a trip to Croatia where they presented a similar report, *Implementation of Croatia's Domestic Violence Legislation* to the Croatian Parliament and audiences in Zagreb, Rijeka and Karlovac. The Advocates' team also met with the press, two national television stations, the Ministry of Interior and the United Nations to discuss their findings and 107 recommendations for change. Some of these recommendations concern vague language in the law, discriminatory views of women among prosecutors, and a lack of funding for women's shelters. However, Director of The Advocates' Women's Human Rights program, Cheryl Thomas says, "Many government and community leaders are working on changing laws and practice. And women themselves are increasingly seeking help, claiming their right to safe and healthy lives for themselves and their children. Violence against women by their intimate partners, ancient and pervasive, is an abuse women are no longer willing to accept."

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The Advocates for Human Rights, a nonprofit organization headquartered in Minneapolis, is dedicated to the promotion of internationally-recognized human rights. To learn more visit theadvocatesforhumanrights.org.