



ROMANIAN FAMILY UNION PARTY

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Bucharest, ROMANIA

May 30, 2023

Mr. Benyamin Netanyahu, MK
Prime Minister

Prime Minister's Office
Kiryat Ben Gurion
Jerusalem, Postal Code: 9195015

Dear Prime Minister Netanyahu:

My name is Elena Valentina Cioancă and I am the President of the Romanian Family Union party. With great concern and utmost urgency, I would like to address the case of the 12.5 years old Romanian citizen BEN GREENBERG, which was taken abusively from his family and is being forcefully held for almost 1 and a half years in the private facility “Megadim” in the city of Migdal HaEmek, under the supervision of the Israeli Ministry of Welfare and Social Services.

I am asking for your intervention in the case of BEN, who has been held in this private facility locked up as if he was a criminal, as a result of numerous errors and blunt opacity of the Israeli Ministry of Welfare and Social Services. All this took place following a flawed legal procedure, which prevents the child from returning to his homeland and family in Romania.

It should be noted that the Romanian government supports the return of the child to his homeland, but despite its many efforts and its clear position that are in line with the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, all the documents that were transferred to the Ministry of Welfare of Israel through your Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are being ignored and/or not being treated accordingly, and this position by the Israeli authorities is causing BEN an irreparable damage for the rest of his life!

BEN was born in Bucharest in 2010, he is of the Orthodox Christian religion and was baptized in Romania and has grown in the city of Voluntari, near Bucharest, until 2016 when his father was given a job offer by IAI.

BEN’s case was brought to my attention following the extensive media coverage by public and private TV stations, concerning the dubious circumstances that led to his placement inside a private boarding house for the next 2 years and especially regarding the conditions that he is being presently held since he was taken out of his home on January 5, 2022.

I was very troubled to learn that at the request of the Israeli Social Services and following a series of decisions by the Israeli Judge Rivka Makayes, **BEN is not allowed to speak in the Romanian language, read Romanian books or learning brochures, and not even allowed to talk about his birth place – Romania!** When BEN requested to celebrate the Easter Christian holiday, he was denied by the same judge and forced to celebrate the Jewish Passover!

BEN’s education is also seriously hindered: the first 7 months he was held in a private center where children of all ages were in the same classroom and he has not learned in Hebrew ever since; now BEN chooses to study in Romania, in the Romanian language and in accordance with his religious affiliation. Contrary to his right to do so, he is presently being punished for his choice: all his Romanian books and learning materials were confiscated from him and he is not allowed to study in his native language.



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Moreover, until a decision was taken in his case, Ben was not allowed by the same Israeli judge to express his opinion about his own faith, although he is capable and has the right to do so. Now, the Israeli Social Services even intend to cut Ben off completely from his father in Romania, just because the child wants to return to his family and friends in Romania and his father supports his choice!

There could be only one aim to all these draconic measures against an innocent child: a forced conversion program aimed at erasing the child's Romanian national identity and his Christian orthodox heritage!

This is unacceptable for me as a political leader in Romania that supports our national and family values and rights, especially those of children! I am absolutely positive that you, as an experienced leader, understand that we will not stand aside and watch this child as he is being tormented and his childhood is being mutilated!

Considering the gravity of this situation, the Romanian Ministry of Family, Youth and Equal Opportunities and the National Authority for the Protection of the Rights of the Child, have thoroughly analyzed BEN's case –while taking into account the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as on the basis of Romania's legislation, as the minor's State of citizenship and the State on whose territory he had his usual residence until the time of departure to Israel –and has concluded that the placement of the minor within his extended family in Romania is the best legal and moral solution for BEN, focused on the child's best interest.

This approach also took into account the principle unanimously recognized internationally, according to which, in the event that a child is temporarily separated from his family, through the establishment of a special protection measure by the State, the members of his extended family will be considered as first priority for his placement.

There is no doubt that the aforementioned placement solution, already submitted to the Israeli Ministry of Welfare and Social Services, the Israeli Ministry of Justice and Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is in the best interest of the minor and is in full accordance with the United Nations guidelines regarding the implementation of the international Convention on the Rights of Child, which both Israel and Romania have ratified a long time ago.

Although the corresponding documents were sent to the Israeli Ministry of Welfare and Social Services almost 1 year ago, this obvious solution is yet to be accepted and implemented by the Israeli authorities and this situation causes a huge distress to the child, who is on the verge of irreparable harm for the rest of his life, as pointed out by the professionals who met him:

“Each and every day that Ben is forced to live outside of his home, will cause him irreparable emotional damage that will last for the rest of his life.”

Furthermore, since Ben was taken out of his home, the Romanian consular representatives have repeatedly asked to visit him, but up to this point no such visit was permitted. As the Israeli Social Services have custody of the child, it is bewildering to us why the Romanian consular representatives are not allowed to meet the child, since as a matter of bilateral consular protocols and considering the good relations between the European Union / Romania and Israel, such visit should have been already facilitated. Neither the Christian priest in Jaffa was not allowed to meet the child and offer him the spiritual support he is in so much need of.



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Just a couple of weeks ago, a war took place and thousands of rockets hit Israel and unfortunately killed Israelis in Rehovot, just a few hundred meters from where BEN used to live. Why isn't BEN allowed to come back to his home in Romania? Why should BEN be traumatized by a war in a country that is not his homeland, while his entire family lives in Romania?

Continuous harm is brought to BEN's tender soul on a daily basis and we ask you to actively assist in order to stop the abuse and the attempted forced conversion of the Romanian and EU citizen BEN Greenberg and transfer him to the supervision of the welfare services of the State of Romania, which are capable - as a member state of the European Union - to offer him together with the child's family, everything that he is required for proper development in his country of birth - Romania.

Prime Minister, everyone who read BEN's letters and heard his voice clearly, does not have even the slightest doubt that he is longing to return home in order to live with his only family, in Romania! During every conversation with his father who lives in Romania, the boy begs to return home!

I truly believe that the Jewish State of Israel has a high sensibility towards matters such as language, tradition and religion and that the case of BEN – a young child exposed to such harsh interdictions on these exact grounds... – does not represent anything else than a poor judgement decision from certain factors that do not understand the implications of such behavior around the world, especially in countries with a friendly population such as Romania.

Ahead of next year's parliamentary elections, the party I lead will promote an agenda based exclusively on FAMILY and CHILDREN values and we trust that your government associates the same importance to these values in the Israeli society and strives to be an example to other countries around the world.

Considering the critical nature of this case and in order to avoid the annihilation of the BEN's Romanian and Christian identity and a permanent harm to his childhood development, I request to have a working meeting in Jerusalem with you or with state representatives designated by you, as soon as possible, in order to find an immediate solution to this tragic situation. Based on your availability, I would be personally honored to meet you briefly in order to thank you for your leadership and humanitarian approach.

I want to assure you that the party I represent has as its declared objective the well-being of the Romanian family - including those abroad - and especially of the Romanian children whom we have decided not to abandon and for whom I promise you that we will continue look after relentlessly!

We count on your direct and immediate involvement in returning Ben back to his family in Romania!

Please be assured of our very best intentions at all times.

Most respectfully,

Elena Valentina Cioanca

President of the Romanian Family Union Party

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[Enclosed: Documents issued by the Romanian Government regarding BEN's return to Romania]