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Conference Services

Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting

Implementation of the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti

(dedicated to the 10th Anniversary of the adoption of the 2003 OSCE Action Plan)

7-8 November 2013, Vienna

Asmet Elezovski

European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF) Secretary

Executive Director of the National Roma Centrum,

Kumanovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Respected,

My name is Asmet Elezovski and I am secretary at the European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF) based in Strasbourg and partner organization of the Council of Europe.

With this message I would like to thank you for the opportunity to participate on the SHDM. It feels good to be here again, in this house of democracy, where I have been a guest for many years. Many of your current ambassadors are new and it is normal for you to change, but we, the field activist always remain the same.

I would like to point out that the current situation of the Roma is very serious. Thus, please take the information that I would like to share as serious as well, despite the fact that the manager of the CPRSI might not have informed you about most of these issues.

The rights of the Roma are disrespected throughout Europe and in EU member countries. The freedom of movement is endangered. Roma aren't allowed to go out of their countries, even though based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that is a guaranteed right. But it seems that nobody is doing something about this, even you as an organization. At one time, Europe was against the measures undertaken in the former Soviet Union, when the citizens of this country weren't allowed to go out and where they had their passports taken away by the state institutions. The same thing happened prior and during the WWII in Germany. But the same thing happens now and no one reacts to it. Many Roma have had their passports taken away from them. They aren't allowed to move freely and as willingly.

For the Roma there is no prevention and no protection. The EC pressures the small countries not to let the Roma to leave the country. That is against many international declarations, many local constitutions and laws. That's racism. And where's OSCE, where's ODIHR? What has the CPRIS done for this issue? I believe you had a chance to read Nils Muiznieks's report on this matter. So I don't understand why your respected organization and especially the CPRSI hasn't done anything about this?

We gave a lot towards the development of your organization and it seems that now when there's a concrete problem, OSCE, ODIHR and CPRSI remain silent. What has the CPRSI manager done? What has he done during his whole mandate? Nikolaj Georghe worked and created things. What has the current one done?

Be responsible and think about the future, think about the future of your children and the future of our children.

1.   Why until now, OSCE and the director of CPRSI are silent regarding the problems and violation of human rights of Roma when it comes to movement and migration and this includes : the ability of Roma who are EU nationals to move to and reside in other Member States; the illegal expulsion of EU citizens of Romani origin by EU Member States; and discriminatory treatment of Roma from the countries of south-eastern Europe like Serbia and Macedonia in response to their migration to the EU, following the visa-liberalisation.

2.   We expect to have a constant dialogue with OSCE and its representatives so that together we can make sure that Roma issues are high priority on the agenda of OSCE but also the agenda of other European institutions. And in that way we can avoid situation in which OSCE will lose its mandate to push countries not to allow severe violations of human rights of Roma especially when it comes to movement and migration, one of the ways in which Roma people want to secure better future for their children.

Please confirm the receipt of this message.

With respect,
Asmet Elezovski,
ERTF Secretary
Executive Director of the National Roma Centrum, Kumanovo, Macedonia