



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 947 Vienna, 11 April 2013

EU statement on the occasion of International Roma Day

On the occasion of International Roma Day, celebrated on 8 April, the European Union reiterates its call for resolute efforts to improve the situation of Roma and Sinti. We acknowledge that, while some progress has been achieved, challenges in this field are still present throughout the OSCE area, including in the EU.

Since 2007, the European Union has stepped up its commitments and actions to improve the situation of Roma and Sinti. In June 2011, our Heads of State and Government called for the rapid implementation of the Council Conclusions of May 2011 on an EU framework for national Roma integration strategies up to 2020, in particular as regards the preparation, updating or development of Member States' national Roma inclusion strategies or integrated sets of policy measures within their broader social inclusion policies for improving the situation of the Roma. Currently, all EU Member States have devised and started implementation of appropriate strategies or measures within wider social inclusion policies to enhance integration of Roma in the societies they live in, especially via improving access to: education, employment, healthcare, housing and essential services.

We commend the work of OSCE institutions, notably the ODIHR/Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues (CPRSI) and the High Commissioner on National Minorities, in advancing the implementation of the OSCE commitments and assisting participating States to this end. We also welcome increased dialogue and cooperation between ODIHR/CPRSI and the European Union.

The European Union looks forward to the second Status Report on the implementation of the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE area, due to be published later this year. We welcome the fact that the third Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting this year will be dedicated to the implementation of commitments with regard to Roma and Sinti at

the tenth anniversary of the Action Plan's adoption and we look forward to in-depth discussions on effective action to improve the situation of Roma and Sinti in this framework.

The implementation of commitments remains at the core of our actions in the OSCE also with regard to the improvement of the situation of Roma and Sinti. On this occasion, we reiterate our calls for full implementation of all OSCE commitments regarding Roma and Sinti and our firm determination in this respect.

The Acceding Country Croatia*, the Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland+ and Serbia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, and Andorra align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.