



**PERMANENT MISSION OF ROMANIA
to the International Organizations in Vienna**

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22 June 2012

ENGLISH only

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**Statement by Romania to the Permanent Council in response to the United States' intervention
with regard to the situation of Roma in Baia Mare**

We thank the US delegation for their intervention and we will duly convey it to our Ministry, as well as to the concerned local authorities. We reiterate that the improvement of the situation of Roma and Sinti remains a very important issue on the agenda of the Romanian Government.

According to the information provided by the local authorities, the relocation measures carried out in Baia Mare are aimed at the social inclusion of these persons, mostly of Roma origin, currently living in improper housing, illegally built on public property and without connection to public infrastructure and facilities. Projects aimed at assisting these vulnerable communities, including providing temporary or permanent adequate housing, have been carried out since 2007. The consultation regarding the relocation started in 2008 and it included members of the respective communities, NGO representatives, local authorities, a public information campaign was carried out and 89% of the aforementioned persons agreed to relocate. A pilot project consisting of the development of social housing in the Oborului/Postfundaş area of Baia Mare will be implemented for the purposes of relocation. Until the completion of the new social housing, the families that agreed explicitly to relocation were moved, on a temporary basis, in the spaces provided by CUPROM.

Nonetheless, given the concerns expressed by some civil society and international partners representatives, the government decided to investigate the details of the relocation process, including the conditions at the temporary housing venues.

Consequently, the National Agency for Roma (ANR) initiated last week a series of measures addressing the issue regarding the moving of Romanian citizens of Roma origin in the buildings formerly owned by the CUPROM plant. On June 7, the regional office of ANR presented a report on the relocation process from Baia Mare based on their visit to the CUPROM buildings and discussions with the respective Roma families and local public authorities, including the social assistance authorities. On the basis of that report, on June 11, the ANR president filed a complaint against the mayor and the local council of Baia Mare with the National Council for Combating Discrimination (CNCD) and asked for an investigation into and a decision on the public policies with regard to Roma in Baia Mare, including the relocation activities of Roma families. Two days ago, there was a hearing of the Baia Mare mayor at CNCD, which is going to pronounce itself on the case next week. The ANR representatives also elaborated a set of recommendations aimed at improving the situation of Roma in Baia Mare, among which: a pilot project for Roma in the local development plan that includes education, employment, public health, desegregation and community development and that would benefit from central, regional and local government support; earmarking local resources for the absorption of EU funds aimed at social inclusion of Roma; ensuring public transportation and transportation for children to school, providing medical assistance.

Furthermore, the Ombudsman, showed concern on the matter and had a meeting, in Bucharest, with the mayor of Baia Mare. Separately, the Ombudsman asked for more information from the Mayorship, local Health Inspectorate and local Police.



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Moreover, a criminal investigation was launched into the matter at the Police Inspectorate of the county Maramures.

The Romanian government remains seized of the matter and will follow-up resolutely on the findings in this case.

It is important to underline that the situation in Baia Mare represents an isolated case and does not reflect the policies in the area of social inclusion of the Roma population.

On a more general note, let us reiterate Romania's strong commitment to combat discrimination against Roma and Sinti, as enshrined in our legislation and in compliance with international commitments, including those in the framework of the OSCE.