

STATEMENT
by the Delegation of the Slovak Republic

2009 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
OSCE

Warsaw
7 October 2009

*Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentleman,*

The inclusion of Roma communities is considered to be the joint responsibility. By signing the declaration in the Program of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in Sophia in 2005, the Slovak Republic joined with other states forces within the framework of Europe with the aim to resolve the critical situation of Roma in the contemporary world at the beginning of the 21st century. By doing so, we undertook to gradually create conditions to eliminate discrimination and unacceptable differences between Roma and the majority.

Since June this year, the Slovak Republic is honored to preside over the Decade of Roma Inclusion, the community of states involved in finding the best solution for Roma inclusion, and in cooperation with the representations of the Decade's Member States shall do its best to create an active, vivid and beneficiary year 2009 -2010.

Ongoing dispute showing the inability to assume a uniform approach to the process of advancement of the Roma population within the Roma ethnic minority itself as well as the majority population has led the Slovak Republic to initiate international dialogue on Roma identity, which is one of the priorities of its presidency over the Decade.

In respect of the Decade's Priority Area – education - as one of the key instruments of inclusion of the Roma population, the Slovak Republic focuses on integrated school system and multicultural education. The aim here is to lead Roma as well as the majority towards multiculturalism by teaching to tolerance and acceptance of the other cultures.

Additionally, the Slovak Republic has decided to support the idea of zero tolerance of extremism and fighting extremism. This goal shall be achieved particularly through exchange of experiences on xenophobia, discrimination and segregation of Roma within the framework of the international conference entitled "The threat of extremism in Europe, What next? Reasons, effects and solutions".

To conclude, I would like to assure you that our Government's efforts aimed at promotion and protection of human rights in the Slovak Republic are permanent. At the same time, we are convinced that Slovak Republic can serve as a positive model for other states in many areas of resolving the situation of Roma and is prepared to share our experiences with you. Accordingly, the written information on the situation of Roma in Slovakia as well as the Presidency of the Decade of Roma Inclusion has already been circulated.

Thank you for your attention!