

## ROMA NATIONAL CONGRESS

Umbrella Organization Of the Roma Civil Rights Movement

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## POLITICS OF EU COUNTRIES TOWARDS ROMA

One of the biggest political processes today is creation and enlargement of the European Union. On the 9 of May 1950, the French Government, in the allocution stated that they are going to build and choose united Europe. One of the creators of the idea of creating EU declared that: "It is necessary for each one to be aware that we need each other, with no difference of our status or power that we have. Isolation become not only reason for weakness, but also a reason for destruction". So the ideal from 1950 now is becoming reality more or less, European countries are promoting and defending bases of the civil society. But we must be aware of the fact that the Roma population is identified in almost every European country and in 1993 in Council of Europe Resolution 1203 they were declared to be " a true European minority", but as a specific entity they are faced with issues related to basic human rights and needs as human beings.

Roma National Congress as a civil and human rights organisation which tries to influence European governments and European policy in a bid to improve the living conditions and the human and civil rights of our people, but many things related to Roma are declarative only. We don't have enough positive examples or positive measures towards Roma as we should. There are many opposite examples in many European countries, Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Bulgaria as a state candidate etc.

Germany refuses to implement the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees: Its Asylum and Aliens Acts include no administrative regulations for applying the

Convention, a fact that has often been criticized by UNHCR and refugee organizations.

Today, after 66 years from the Holocaust hundreds of thousands of Roma have had to flee from the wars in the former Yugoslavia. Since the begin of the Balkan Wars, thousands of Roma have become victims of ethnically-motivated violence. More than a hundred thousand Roma from Kosovo have either fled from they cruelties of the Kosovo-Albanian militia and NATO military activities or have been forced to leave their homeland. They are victims of a war they had nothing to do with. Some of now as in Germany, are threatened by deportation. No 'International Community' feels responsible for these people; no western 'democratic constitutional state' “ which until recently was prepared to bomb for 'human rights'- is open to the victims of human rights crimes, violence and ethnic cleansing. Yet - every international human rights organization (incl. COE, UNHCR, OSCE, ) agrees that for the Roma, there is no return possible to their home countries.

For over six years, those who represent the refugees and the exiled have tried to speak to the German government as well as the International Community about the future of the Roma from the former Yugoslavia. So far, neither has been prepared to deal seriously with the fate of the Roma. Instead, despite the international human rights organizations agreement that the Roma cannot return, plans are being made - not only for the Roma to return “ but for them to return through the creation of special 'Collective Camps' in Kosovo under the direction of the IOM, in which Roma should be placed until their deportation...and history repeats itself.

Their Homeland is Germany!

Despite constitutions assuring citizenship to all, these states are created around a ethno-national character and the public very predictably perceives belonging to these states as being tied to ethnicity. Being foreign in their own land is a situation Roma experience over and over again. Violence against Roma, marginalization in all sectors of society, inadequate and unequal education opportunities, illiteracy, high child mortality rates, discrimination and unemployment: these do not cause the problems, rather they are the symptoms of the majority's obsessive antigypsism, or Anti-ciganism; its discriminatory attitude towards Roma.

About the situation of Roma in Slovakia and Czech Republic there is a number

of cases with coercive sterilization of Roma women, and it is obvious that some things must change.

The Czech Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsman) made public an English-language translation of his December 2005 report on investigations into allegations of the coercive sterilization of Romani women in the Czech Republic. The report concluded that "The Public Defender of Rights believes that the problem of sexual sterilization carried out in the Czech Republic, either with improper motivation or illegally, exists, and that Czech society stands before the task".

In Poland there is a revival of the nationalism, because of the posters found there stated that "Polish for Poles", these expresses a Situation in Russia indicates that as nationalist-extremist movements have been gaining popularity in Russia over the past decade, racially-motivated violence against Roma occurs with disturbing frequency. Roma are particularly exposed to attacks by nationalist-extremist vigilante groups because they live in compact settlements that are easy to identify. On April 13, 2006, two Roma were killed by youths apparently identified by local Roma as skinheads. The attack and killings took place in the Volgograd region of Russia. In the pogrom, approximately six members of the Romani family were also severely beaten and wounded.

The Roma children don't have access to the educational capacities in the EU member States, this is statement of the European Centre for monitoring racism and xenophobia. Roma children are confronted with direct or indirect discrimination. The segregation in schools is obvious, stated Beate Winkler manager of the Centre. For example in Slovakia there are 400.000 Roma, but only 0.53% of Roma children attend normal primary school, and 7.6 % are in schools for pupils with disabilities. In addition of the report there is a statement of European Commission that they are aware of the situation, that they insist to those countries to change the policies towards Roma, but time some period is necessary for this to be realized and implemented in practice.

In this moment when policy of Europe declare interests for Roma people as known, we invite all European countries and the European Parliament through practical activities to help in this issues, to stop the deportation from Germany, to solve the problem with the refugees from Kosovo and to involve them to participate in the decision making about their status, to respect the to increase the level of education by accomplish positive measures towards Roma. The Roma population is a larger minority in Europe and deserves greater attention

from the public and we must try to learn to live together, to respect each human being as equal and to include Roma as relevant subjects in all ongoing processes towards integration. This should be acceptable for each country, because Roma are without their own country but we should notice that they are citizens of each country in Europe as well.

The Roma and non-Roma in Europe have the European Roma and Travellers Forum nowadays as high level Roma representative organization but what we as Roma are missing is the recognition by non Roma and cooperation with the non-Roma institutions. . Therefore, an appeal should be sent to all governments in Europe that capacity and wisdom of ERTF should be used to maximum because our Roma delegate to ERTF received the trust to represent the 15 million Roma in Europe.

So this day is related with the idea of integration of the nations of Europe as equal subjects and this is a day for remembrance that we belong to Europe as well and we ask to stop the deportation of Roma from Germany and to accept the fact that positive measures towards Roma are the only way to respond to these challenges and to build our future. But we must know that integration of Roma in the society is a process, not an event, so we must strike together to this goal.

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## **Petition**

### ***Prevent Guilt -Crime the Second Time!***

16th of May, 1940 - 16th of May, 2006

***IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE FIRST DEPORTATION OF THE ROMA AND SINTI FROM GERMANY INTO THE NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMPS***

***Remembrance Locations : Hamburg, Central Train Station in Hannover***

***Looseplatz (HafenCity)***

***On: 16th of May, 2006 - 12:00 noon***

On the 16th of May, 1940, the Nazis began with the systematic 'relocation' of the 'Gypsies' from Germany into the Nazi concentration camps. In 1940, Himmler decreed that 2,500 Sinti and Roma from the western part of Germany would be deported into the 'General Ministry'. The Roma and Sinti were to be collected into Fruit Quonset number 10 in the Hamburg harbour before their actual deportation began. In the early morning of May 16th, 1940, commandos of the criminal police arrested approximately 550 Sinti and Roma in Hamburg and interred them along with Sinti and Roma from Bremen, Winsen an der Aller, Bremervrde, Wesermnde and from communities in Schleswig-Holstein such as Flensburg, Kiel, Neumnster and Schleswig into such Fruit Quonsets. All the men, women and children in custody were recorded systematically by name and number; were freed of supposed lice and searched for items of value. After four days of custody in Hamburg, a deportation train from Hannover Central Station brought them through Warschau and Lublin to Belzec. After the Roma and Sinti had been made to construct the 'Gypsy Camp', they were condemned to forced labour in the area. Many of them died after a short time of cold, hunger typhoid or dysentery.

Just how many Roma and Sinti in total fell victim to the German Nazi's race-craze remains unknown to this day; estimates range from half a million to one million people.

Today, after 66 years, hundreds of thousands of Roma have had to flee from the wars in the former Yugoslavia. Since the begin of the Balkan Wars, thousands of Roma have become victims of ethnically-motivated violence. More than a hundred thousand Roma from Kosovo have either fled from they cruelties of the Kosovo-Albanian militia and NATO military activities or have been forced to leave their homeland. They are victims of a war they had nothing to do with. Those who could save their lives from ethnically-motivated violence, NATO bombs and 'ethnic cleansing', vegetate in inhumane 'refugee camps' in Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, or, as in Germany, are threatened by deportation. No 'International Community' feels responsible for these people; no western 'democratic constitutional state' “ which until recently was prepared to bomb for 'human rights'- is open to the victims of human rights crimes, violence and ethnic cleansing. Yet - every international human rights organization (incl. COE, UNHCR, OSCE, ) agrees that for the Roma, there is no return possible to their home countries.

The war against Yugoslavia was legitimized by the moral slogan 'Never Again Auschwitz' by the government at that time. After almost seven years of activity by the Germany army in Kosovo, under the supervision of the International Community - and in full sight of the German army- Albanian separatists have managed to ethnically cleanse Kosovo and turn it into a second Albanian 'country' in which the safety of minorities can no longer be guaranteed. This attempted genocide and the ethnic cleansing on the Roma in the former Yugoslavia has neither been taken up by the media nor has it been acknowledged by those who wanted to bomb the human rights into the Balkans just a few months ago!

For over six years, those who represent the refugees and the exiled have tried to speak to the German government as well as the International Community about the future of the Roma from the former Yugoslavia. So far, neither has been prepared to deal seriously with the fate of the Roma. Instead, despite the international human rights organizations agreement that the Roma cannot return, plans are being made - not only for the Roma to return “ but for them to return through the creation of special 'Collective Camps' in Kosovo under the direction of the IOM, in which Roma should be placed until their deportation...and history repeats itself. The '*International Organisation for Migration*', or IOM, is considered in many parts of the world to be the 'Henchman Organisation' for deportations and dealers in de-fakto internment camps for refugees.

Nearly 20,000 Roma have managed to make their escape to Germany or have been made welcome as 'Kosovo-Albanians'. Deeply traumatized, pursued and

exiled, these people wait daily for their deportation 'back' to a country which no longer exists. Back to a homeland which was robbed from them; deported to an environment in which there is no protection from abuse.

Many of the men, women and children who live here, have integrated here, and work and go to school, are forced to live their lives as tolerated foreigners who must await their deportation -some for over 25 years.

### **Their Homeland is Germany!**

Who could be considered as more appropriate than Germany to carry the particular fears of the Roma and Sinti and to face the historical responsibility? Which European country could be more suitable to engage itself with the upholding of the human rights of Roma and Sinti in Europe?

We appeal therefore to the German Government to recognize its responsibility stemming from both the common history of the Nazi Holocaust and as a consequence of their participation in the Balkan War.

- Right of Residency for Roma from the former Yugoslavia!
- Participation of the Roma in the negotiations on Kosovo's status!
- No 'Collective Camp' for Roma!
- Support for Roma in Europa!

### **... It concerns preventing Guilt-Crime a Second Time.**

Initial Petitioners:

Roma und Cinti Union e.v. (RCU), European Centre for Antiziganism Research (EZAF)

**[I want to support the Petition !\(Easy Webform zu fillout !\)](#)**

<http://www.ezaf.org/registration/index.php>

Or please send an Fax to : +49 40 310 475

Or Send an Email to: [RCU.e.V@web.de](mailto:RCU.e.V@web.de)  
Or simply give us an Call: +49 40 310 521