

United States Mission to the OSCE

International Roma Day



As delivered by Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Elisabeth Rosenstock-Siller
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 16, 2021

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The United States is pleased to join this celebration of *International Roma Day*. As Secretary Blinken noted, “we celebrate the rich culture, language, and heritage of Roma around the world, including the generations of Romani Americans who have helped build the United States.” This year’s commemoration is especially important as it marks the 50th anniversary of the First World Romani Congress, which took place in London in 1971.

This is also a day to remember that many Roma continue to suffer from systemic discrimination and violence. Discriminatory treatment and stereotyping prevent Roma from fully participating in political, social, and economic life around the world.

We urge all OSCE participating States to provide equal access to education, employment, housing, health care, and public services, and to uphold their international obligations and OSCE commitments to respect the human rights of all people within their borders.

During the pandemic, it is especially important that public leaders promote inclusion and non-discrimination, condemn hate speech and its pernicious consequences, and address and prevent health inequities that stem from systemic and structural racism.

The United States applauds the October 2020 working definition of anti-Roma discrimination adopted by the 34-nation *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance*, which provides a tool for governments and the public to identify the many manifestations of this persistent form of bigotry.

Every individual is born free and equal in dignity and rights, and the United States remains committed to human rights and racial equality, both at home and abroad. On *International Roma Day*, we reaffirm this commitment to Roma worldwide.

Thank you, Madam Chair.