



International Roma Youth Network

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OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2013

Statement on Roma youth

presented by Jonathan Mack (Amaro Drom e.V. / ternYpe International Roma Youth Network)

Honorable delegates,

I address you on behalf of ternYpe International Roma Youth Network, a network of young people and youth organizations which creates space for young people to become active citizens through empowerment, mobilization, participation and self-organization. We believe in the common efforts by creating trust, and mutual respect between Roma and non-Roma youth. ternYpe represents one of the few transnational Romani structures with a strong vision to empower and mobilize the grassroots. A new generation of well prepared Roma university students, and young Roma and non-Roma activists all over Europe engage to combat antigypsyism, stigmatization, racism and exclusion.

DIK I NA BISTAR – Look and dont forget! With this message over 450 young Roma and non-Roma from 20 countries came together in Auschwitz this summer, in order to commemorate the genocide of Roma and Sinti during the Nazi regime. On 2 August 1944, 2897 elderly people, women and children, the remaining Sinti and Roma in the so-called “gypsy camp” in Auschwitz-Birkenau, were murdered in the gas chambers. In 2011, Poland became the first country to declare 2 August as the official day of remembrance of the Roma Genocide. The knowledge and official recognition of the extermination of Roma during the Second World War is still very limited - especially among young Europeans. Most educational curriculums still do not address the persecution and genocide of Roma. We need to shed light on the forgotten Roma genocide, on more than 500.000 victims, and on the continuation of social exclusion, antigypsyism and hate speech today.

The Roma Genocide Remembrance event was the biggest international mobilization and meeting of Roma youth in order to raise its voice in European societies to demand respect, dignity, human rights and full participation. As ternYpe International Roma Youth Network, and as Roma and non-Roma citizens of Europe, we want to express our deepest concern about the current rise of antigypsyism, stigmatization, xenophobia, racism and extreme-right movements. Many young Roma feel forced to deny their identity based on the fears created through stigmatization, hate speech and discriminatory mechanisms. The Roma issue represents a key human rights issue which requires the involvement of a strong civil society, and the responsibility of governments to protect Roma as their national minorities which includes the fight against antigypsyism and racism.

Recommendations

We call upon the OSCE and all participating states to build comprehensive strategies and to enhance their efforts in combating antigypsyism, racism and hate speech especially among young people.

We recommend to all stakeholders to invest into the empowerment, education and capacity-building of Roma youth, through scholarships, human rights education and the support of youth self-organizations in order to promote tolerance and non-discrimination between Roma and non-Roma youth.

We recommend to the OSCE to call upon its member states to recognize the Roma Genocide.

We recommend to all participating states and civil society stakeholders to support remembrance and educational activities on 2 August as the Roma Genocide Remembrance Day.

We recommend to the OSCE and especially to ODIHR to initiate a research about the education on the Roma genocide in school curriculums.

70th anniversary in 2014: Call for recognition of the Roma Genocide

2 August 2014 will mark the 70th anniversary of the day when the last Roma and Sinti were killed in Auschwitz-Birkenau. However, it will mark a historic moment when Roma and non-Roma citizens of Europe will mobilize for recognition and change. The 2 August Movement will bring 3000 young Roma and non-Roma to a 4 days lasting remembrance event to Krakow and Auschwitz. ternYpe International Roma Youth Network and its partners invite all delegations and civil society organizations to support and join the movement for the recognition of the Roma Genocide. Together we demand the recognition of the Roma Genocide on a European level and by all national states.