



**Statement of the International Steering Committee of the
Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015*
on the situation of Roma in Europe**

Prague, October 1, 2010

The 19th International Steering Committee of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005- 2015 reached a join conclusion in that **recently there has been a dangerous deterioration in the situation of Roma in Europe.**

Social exclusion and in some cases human rights violations make Roma the poorest and most vulnerable people in Europe. Discriminatory attitudes towards Roma, in combination with the consequences of security-focused policies and the reverberations of the economic crisis, put Roma in an increasingly disadvantaged position. Roma often fall victim to populist campaigns stirred by extremist organizations. Anti-gypsyism which permeates society in many European countries breeds more exclusion and despair.

Without an increase in our joint support for Roma inclusion and combating human rights violations, and without an intensive quest for new instruments to aid Roma inclusion, there is a risk that the problem will escalate to even more dangerous levels.

We must put an immediate stop to the stigmatizing rhetoric, and strengthen and make more efficient the cooperation among European countries in the interest of improving the situation of Roma in Europe.

To this end, the International Steering Committee of the Decade of Roma Inclusion call upon *all* European countries to:

- Reinforce the core mission of the Decade of Roma Inclusion: to eliminate discrimination and close the unacceptable gaps between Roma and the rest of society;
- Intensify cooperation and ensure synergies between European countries as well as European and international institutions within existing platforms while taking into account the EU's Common Basic Principles for Roma inclusion;
- Uphold their obligation to the protection and realization of fundamental rights and refrain from measures and statements that discriminate against Roma community.

The International Steering Committee instructs the Czech presidency to extend invitation to join the Decade of Roma Inclusion to all European countries.

* Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 is an international initiative of 12 European governments: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, Spain, non-governmental organization from mentioned countries and following international organization: World Bank, the Open Society Institute (OSI), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe Development Bank, the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE ODHIR), the European Union Fundamentals Rights Agency, the European Roma Information Office (ERIO), the European Roma and Travellers Forum and the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), European Network Against Racism (ENAR)