

NOVEMBER 2000 ACTIVITY REPORT  
OF THE GHM ROMA OFFICE

Contents

1. Relocation and Dislocation of Roma in Greece
2. Statement by Halandri Roma on Housing
3. GHM/MRG-G Press Release on the Prime Minister's Visit to the New Roma Settlement at "Gonou"
4. DROM Press Release on Expulsion of Roma Pupils from School
5. IHF Open Letter to OSCE Summit on (inter alia) Roma Rights (in Greece as well)

<b>1. Relocation and Dislocation of Roma in Greece</b>
--

*"Before the first autumn rainfalls, all Roma tent-dwellers would have been relocated to prefabricated houses. We have already allocated more than 500 of them,"* declared the manager of the Prime Minister's Office for Quality of Life Mr. Angelides to the daily *Eleftherotypia* (24 June 2000, p. 17). Four months later, the only Roma who have been relocated to prefabricated houses were 251 families in the settlement of Aghia Sofia Gonou (Greater Salonica) in October 2000, some 30 families in the Kipaki area of Trikala (Thessaly) in July 2000, and some 20 families in Spata (at the outskirts of Greater Athens), in September 2000. At the same time, new threats of evictions emerged in Nea Alikarnassos (Crete) and Phoinikas (Greater Salonika), while the Roma of Halandri (Greater Athens) turned down an unacceptable relocation offer that would have moved them to a ghetto. Finally, the Aspropyrgos municipality halted the eviction it started in July 2000.

In early October, indeed, the first successful resettlement of Greece's largest destitute Roma community from Gallikos River to Gonou, near Salonica, took place. The ERRC, along with four Greek NGOs (Doctors of the World - Greece, DROM Network for Gypsy Social Rights, Greek Helsinki Monitor, and Minority Rights Group - Greece), backed by a small parliamentary party (Progressive Left Coalition), had for four years pressed authorities -through statements, lobbying, even bringing charges in court- to implement the plan for the creation of the first self-managed Roma dwelling unit in Greece. A plan fully backed by the Roma concerned -and regrettably opposed by the state-launched Panhellenic Federation of Roma Associations.

On 11 November, Prime Minister Costas Simitis, accompanied by three Ministers, visited the new settlement. In his speech, he admitted that *"in Greece there are pockets of backwardness: populations groups like the Roma do not keep up with the economic and social development. This is why the state must intervene and be present. Here we have a transition settlement that will expand, both the houses and the settlement itself with more*

*houses.*” He also added that this is the first of the seventeen similar settlements throughout Greece. A two-day Romani festival, including the projection of Toni Gattlif’s films, in the presence of the director, followed the visit.

136 of the primary school-age children from that community that were already attending school before the move from Gallikos to Gonou were allocated by the Prefecture to four schools in the adjacent municipalities of Evosmos, Halastra, Ionia and Kordelio. This was done with the agreement of the Roma themselves and the support of the NGO "DROM for Gypsy Social Rights" who are involved in helping that community's needs in education and in general.

In all four schools, parents of the Greek children attending them reacted negatively to the presence of the Roma children. But the reactions were quickly overcome in three of the four cases. However, in Halastra, where the school already has 27 Romani pupils from the local (mostly Muslim) Romani community, parents (gadjo as well as Roma...) reacted more strongly. 48 hours after the Prime Minister visited the new Gonou settlement under the eyes of the camera, the Halastra Second Primary School Parents Association imposed (illegally) on the teachers the indefinite closing down of the school, on 13 November, as a protest for the presence of the new Romani pupils. They asked that the 32 new pupils be taken to other schools as "they had enough Romani children already." Media, Prime Minister and other ministers that were quick to promote the new settlement kept silent (with few exceptions) to this development.

Regretfully, the Coalition party, that had in the past strongly backed the Gallikos Roma's efforts for decent housing, this time publicly criticized the diffusion of the Romani children to four schools and 19 classrooms, suggesting instead opening a school only for the Romani children inside the new Roma settlement in Gonou. Identical was the argument of the Dean of the Paedagogical School of the University of Salonica, Professor George Tsiakalos, known for his anti-racist positions. They argued that otherwise, with the diffusion, Romani children quickly drop out of the schools. No Romani family and no NGO working with the Roma accepts that argument, as they believe that such a school will create a ghetto and will most probably not help children learn, as is the experience with a few other schools from which Greek families have removed their children and left Romani or refugee community children only.

DROM, GHM, and MRG-G intend not only to help keep the Romani pupils in the schools they have been allocated but also file charges against all those responsible for the illegal closing down of the Halastra school.

Elsewhere, however, the trend to (attempt) to evict Roma continued. On 10 August, 102 families in Nea Alikarnassos (Crete) were served municipal orders (3754/20-6-00) to evacuate the land they had been living on for fifteen years. A year ago, a similar municipal action (issued on 13-3-1999 in application of the municipal council’s decision 329/97) was stopped by the Peace Court of Heraklion (Crete) as abusive (decision 975/99). Since then, the General Secretariat of the Crete Region has been slowly implementing a program of relocation of that community in an adjacent area, with the

agreement of the Roma. On 23 August, on the initiative of Greek Helsinki Monitor and through it, the “Elpida” (Hope) Cultural Association of Roma of the Heraklion Prefecture filed an appeal (12686/00) to the Ombudsman’s Office. On 5 September, the Ombudsman, in a letter to the Mayor of N. Alikarnassos, pointed out that its municipality could not use the same procedure that was overturned by the courts the previous year. As a result, the eviction was prevented.

On 19 October, the Public Prosecutor’s Office in Salonica engaged a legal procedure against the Roma who live in Phoinikas (Greater Salonica), following a complaint of the near-by School of Judges. Already in May 2000, there was an attempt to evict three Roma families and demolish their houses for trespassing private land and building illegally. Protocols of eviction had been serviced to them by a legal functionary at the presence of the police and municipal employees. Following the Roma’s strong reactions, the eviction was postponed. The families in question have been living in the constantly developing region for more than 30 years. The first attempted eviction took place even though the case from the legal point of view was still pending. Roma families claim to have rights on the land too and their recourses have so far not been examined.

On 7 November, the Greek Roma Cultural Association “Elpida” (Hope) of Halandri (Greater Athens) publicly rejected an offer by the Ministry of the Interior to move the 46 families of that community to an area of up to 1,200 sq. m.. They rightly claimed that such option would lead to the creation of a new ghetto. It is characteristic that, in Gonou (see above), the state settled 251 families in 149,000 sq.m., i.e. 600 sq.m. per family, while the offer to the Halandri community corresponds to 30 sq.m. per family. This community has been living in the present area for more than 20 years. Since April 1999, eviction orders are pending against that community, not implemented following the reaction of NGOs and the Coalition party.

Finally, following the appeal (11128/23-7-00) filed by three Aspropyrgos Roma to the Ombudsman, with the help of GHM, in protest for the illegal destruction of their homes on 14 July, the Mayor of Aspropyrgos claimed to the Ombudsman (letter of 17390/4-8-200) that he had only cleaned the area and did not evict any Roma. In his response (11128/00/2.3/11-9-2000), the Ombudsman pointed to the contradiction between the Roma and the municipal claims, and asked the municipality to state unequivocally whether it did or did not destroy Roma huts, “*so that there will be no need to appeal to the competent court authority.*” At the same time, he asked the Roma to provide any supporting evidence for the destruction of the huts: the latter promptly gave the Ombudsman pictures taken by GHM and the Doctors of the World before and after 14 July, showing the destruction. By mid-November, the municipality had ignored the Ombudsman’s request.

In view of these developments, on 24 October, GHM and Minority Rights Group-Greece, during the OSCE Implementation Meeting in Warsaw, “*recommend[ed] that the OSCE Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues ‘conducts an on-sight inquiry’ as called for by the related Recommendation 5 in the OSCE HCNM ‘Report on the Situation of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE Area’ (April 2000). Building on the positive development in Gonou, we*

*believe that such a visit can help accelerate the implementation of the government plan throughout the country and can also contribute to the necessary empowerment of the destitute Roma communities.”*

## **2. Statement by Halandri Roma on Housing**

### **GREEK ROMA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION “ELPIDA” (HOPE)**

Iridos and Sarantaporou Streets, Kato Halandri, 152 33

#### **PRESS RELEASE**

7/11/2000

In response to the “Ta Nea” article (4/11/00)  
 (“Gypsies to Move to Settlement”)

Following the fruitless meeting of 20/09/00 at the Ministry of the Interior, attended by Mr. Papaspyropoulos as spokesperson for the Government, Ms. Syrmopoulou, Assistant Mayor of Halandri, Mr. Kalamiotis, President of the Greek Roma Cultural Association “Elpida”, and Ms. Efthymiatou as spokesperson for the “DOCTORS OF THE WORLD”, on the topic of the re-settlement of the Gypsies living in Pefko Politi, Halandri, our Association deemed it necessary to state its views and proposals in writing. They can thus be studied and evaluated in the hope of finding a solution that is mutually acceptable to all sides.

On our part, we feel that the living conditions in our settlement and our treatment by the state do not befit a Member State of the European Union. 46 Gypsy families have been living for over thirty years in the area bounded by Iridos and Sarantaporou Streets, within the district lines of the Municipality of Halandri. On the threshold of the new millennium, we are housed in makeshift shanties lacking electrical and water services. We are deprived of even the most basic conditions of hygiene. We are cut off from Association and are treated like second class citizens. Even inalienable rights such as the right to education or work are obstructed by bureaucratic dysfunction.

Unfortunately, within all the mindset of ghettoization and isolationism, we must also include the proposal of the Ministry of the Interior for our total, collective re-settlement into an area of 1,000-1,200 square meters. We believe that not offering us the possibility of harmoniously integrating into mainstream Association with the purchase of one home per family will perpetuate our already existing marginalization. This does not do honor to either the Greek state or the spirit of Greek culture.

After a special general meeting, our Association unanimously decided to reject the Ministry’s proposal. We stand by the firm opinion that the only route to a mutually acceptable solution is the one that integrates the settlement’s inhabitants into mainstream

Association. This, moreover, is an attainable goal. It can be realized simply by the purchase of one home per family, which will also result in diffusing the Gypsy population within the city. To be more specific, we ask for the purchase of a 300 square meter building lot per family – within the residential zone – as provided by the Workers’ Housing programs.

If the Ministry stands fast to its proposal for the mass re-settlement of the entire present settlement community – thereby creating, in essence, a new Roma ghetto – we reserve the right to use every means, available to us by law as Greek citizens and residents of Halandri, to defend our views.

Finally, we wish to make it clear that we are not prepared to back down and be uprooted from the place where we and our children have grown up, as long as the terms of our re-settlement maintain and perpetuate the existing conditions of destitution, isolation and racial prejudice. We do not intend to consent to the creation of any new ghetto, and we will seek recourse in the appropriate organs (Council of State, European Union, etc.) in pursuit of a just solution.

Sincerely,

The President  
Stylianos Kalamiotis  
Tel. +(3) 0-937-882226

The Secretary  
Nikos Katsaris  
Tel. +(3)0-946-412819

**3. GHM/MRG-G Press Release on the Prime Minister’s Visit to the New Roma Settlement at “Gonou”**

**PRESS RELEASE**

12/11/00

**SUBJECT: THOUGHTS ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRIME MINISTER’S VISIT TO THE NEW ROMA SETTLEMENT AT “GONOU”**

With the occasion of yesterday’s visit by the Prime Minister to the new Roma settlement, “Aghia Sophia Gonou” (Thessaloniki), the cooperating organizations **Greek Helsinki Monitor (GHM) and Minority Rights Group Greece (MRG-G)** make public a pertinent passage from their presentation on the Roma given at the recent OSCE meeting in Warsaw. Immediately below this, they point out several unfortunate choices, if not pettinesses, by governmental agents with respect to yesterday’s visit and the Roma feast that followed.

**STATEMENT ON GREECE  
AT THE 2000 OSCE IMPLEMENTATION MEETING**

24 October 2000

Roma Rights

It is a rare and welcome opportunity for a NGO to be able to report on a positive development that has occurred after it had prepared the report for this meeting.

Two weeks ago, indeed, the first successful resettlement of Greece's largest destitute Roma community from Gallikos River to Gonou, near Salonica, took place. Four NGOs (Doctors of the World - Greece, DROM Network for Gypsy Social Rights, Greek Helsinki Monitor, and Minority Rights Group – Greece) backed by a small parliamentary party (Progressive Left Coalition), had for four years pressed authorities -through statements, lobbying, even bringing charges in court- to implement the plan for the creation of the first self-managed Roma dwelling unit in Greece. A plan fully backed by the Roma concerned –and regrettably opposed by the state-launched Panhellenic Federation of Roma Associations.

It is even more gratifying that we owe the completion of this project to the Prefecture of Salonica, and in particular the Deputy Prefect Abraham Kaltaveridis. He recently ended up fighting alongside the Roma and the NGOs against central authorities that were dragging their feet; and against local police that have engaged in collectively stigmatizing these Roma as criminals, despite the lack of any evidence. We want to commend him because, four years ago, he was the object of the charges brought by NGOs and the Coalition Party, as central authorities tended then to put the blame on the Prefecture.

---

Therefore, it does not speak well for the state that the Prime Minister, during his otherwise important speech, when praising the role of NGOs, named only one of the four that worked on the project. He even “forgot” the one that played a leading part from the beginning in pressuring for the re-settlement to Gonou (nor did he mention the Coalition Party).

It is even more unfortunate that one of the NGOs he did mention had nothing to do with this or any other project for the Roma, except perhaps that its founding president is now in charge of the implementation of related governmental programs from his position of advisor to the relevant ministry.

Nor does the Prefecture do itself particular honor by choosing to not invite two of these NGOs to its ceremonies at Gonou. It is equally unfortunate that its leadership (like all the other the governmental agents) did not join in any part of the Roma feast that followed the Prime Minister's visit.

Finally, it does no credit to television -both state-run and privately owned- that it could not even correctly name the settlement's location (the area of Gonou is nowhere near Evosmo). Furthermore, it did not broadcast even one portion of the Roma spokesperson's brief response to the Prime Minister (besides the presentation of the plaque by him to Mr. Simitis).

Thus the impression given was that the coverage, if not also the organization, of the ceremony was designed merely to put on the spotlight the Prime Minister and other governmental agents.

#### **4. DROM Press Release on Expulsion of Roma Pupils from School**

##### **DROM Network for Gypsy Social Rights**

Tel. (30) 937 160705, 977 444163, 932 788696 Fax (30) 31 287186

##### **Press Release, 15-11-2000**

##### **Subject: What Law, what Constitution, what compassion will stop "indignant" citizens?**

The facts are simple: the Parents and Guardians Association of the Halastra Public School decided to shut down (!!!) the school as of Monday 13-11-2000 in a show of militant mobilization against the attendance there of 32 Roma children from the "Aghia Sophia" settlement. Just two (2) days before, the country's Prime Minister Costas Simitis, in the presence of top-ranking cabinet ministers and over 100 governmental officials, inaugurated this very settlement, declaring that "our government's priority and special concern is the housing and education of their children." From statements made by the president of the Parents Association ("Angeloforos" newspaper, 15-11-2000), it appears that the Association decided to close the school because these 32 Roma children will irreparably tax its already overcrowded conditions.

The DROM Network denounces this act as illegal, inhumane and racist. The 32 Roma children are among the 136 children from the Aghia Sophia settlement attending the city's 4 schools. They were sent to Halastra on the order of the Prefecture of Thessaloniki following a written suggestion and recommendation by the Thessaloniki Bureau of Primary Education. Therefore, the decision to consign the 32 children to the Halastra school was made by authorized agents of the Ministry of Education, who evaluated the availability of classroom space. It was not the arbitrary will of the Prefecture – whom the indignant parents are charging. Let's not forget that the Roma are Greek citizens, and that the state has a constitutional obligation to ensure by every means their access to Public Education.

Still, once again we see how local communities of "indignant" citizens forget and trample the Constitution and the Laws of the State when it comes to turning against the

(in the end, defenseless) Roma population. The Public School is not the private property of any Parents and Guardians Association; it cannot be closed on the basis of opinions, whatever they may be. According to the Constitution and the Law of our land, the operation of the Public School is the exclusive authority of the official organs of the Ministry of Education and no other body. Nor will the child's sacred right to education be subject to the discretion of any majority of "indignant" citizens. The fact that 27 Roma children already attend the Halastra school ("so, we're not racists," the Parents and Guardians Association proudly proclaims) is a flimsy excuse. Does this mean that the human rights of a particular social group are to be respected by quota?

Still, what does all this signify? To this date (15-11-2000) the Halastra school has remained closed on the whim of certain individuals. What would be a matter of course in any civilized, well-governed country – that the state would compel the school's operation in adherence to the Constitution and the Laws – here seems to be a utopian request. What does the Government, which 48 hours before celebrated in front of these same 32 children, do in the face of this flagrant violation of the Constitution and human rights? What does the Minister of National Education, who speechifies about karate and other philosophical issues, do? They do what they've always done in instances when the Constitution and the human rights of its Roma populations are trampled by bands of "indignant" citizens. That is – they do nothing. In effect, on an institutional level, they have left the Prefecture of Thessaloniki to navigate on its own (for as long as it can) the tortuous straits of racism.

We believe that the act of Parents and Guardians Association of the Halastra Public School and the Government's tolerance of such blatant violations disgrace the Greece of compassion and solidarity we all seek. We also wish to express our profound sadness that the local committee of the Synaspismos Party, the Coalition of the Left and Progressives, the political party that for the past three years has fought more than any other political body alongside NGOs for the protection of Roma social rights, did not directly denounce the illegal closing of the school. Rather, it published an unfortunate bulletin that essentially justified the act by speculating in opposition-party rhetoric against the Government.

The DROM Network will seek recourse in Justice for criminal offences committed by the closing of the Public School in Halastra, which are described in the articles on public order of the Criminal Code and the Law 927/1979 against racism. We believe that racism also flourishes in our indifference and apathy: The taps in the parks and cemetery locked by the Evosmos municipal authority (1995-1998) yielded the burning down of Roma shanties by the Aspropyrgos municipal authority (1999), the expulsion of the Roma from Paralimni Ioannina (1999), the fascist inspired defense squads and the racist pogrom of Nea Kios lead by the municipal authority (2000), and the raising of Roma shanties in Nea Zoi Aspropyrgos by the municipal authority and the Police force, without a judicial decree. How, then, does this chain of self-propagating racism stop? Together with other NGOs, we have sued, filed charges and protested as much as we can against these incidents. We have made proposals to the government and to society. Likewise, we will file charges against the illegal closing of the Halastra Public

School. Still, we feel very much alone in our anxious anticipation of the next racist incident against the Roma population – with an apathetic government, an indifferent society, and a contented citizenry.

**5. IHF Open Letter to OSCE Summit on (inter alia) Roma Rights (in Greece as well)**

**PRESS RELEASE**

24/11/00

**SUBJECT: OPEN IHF LETTER TO THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL TO ADDRESS PENDING HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS IN THE REGION**

**Greek Helsinki Monitor** (GHM) releases today the IHF open letter to the OSCE's Ministerial Council, that includes an appeal to address acute human rights problems in OSCE countries. Among them are included, following a GHM initiative, the unconditional recognition of all minorities in countries that have yet to do so in full or in part. All Southern Balkan countries, as well as Slovenia and France, belong to that category. The reference to unacceptable geographical distribution constraints for recognition includes the non-recognition of the Greek and Albanian minorities in Albania, outside the official "minority zones" in Southern Albania. There are also references to the Kosovo and Yugoslavia concerns, intolerance towards Roma including in Greece, as well as torture in most countries of the region.

---

Vienna, 22 November 2000

**OPEN LETTER**

TO: Ministers of Foreign Affairs  
OSCE Ministerial Council  
Vienna, 27-28 November 2000

Dear Ministers,

On the occasion of the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting of the OSCE last month, the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF) detailed violations of the Helsinki "human dimension" standards by at least three quarters of the 55 members of the organization.

We would invite OSCE Ministers of Foreign Affairs to take the opportunity of their meeting in Vienna to address some of the most acute and persistent problems of non-

implementation of Helsinki commitments, which continue to cause much suffering in the OSCE territory:

### Specific Country and Regional Issues

- A political settlement of the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh is urgent, and the OSCE should do all in its power to contribute to finding an acceptable solution. The work of the Minsk Group has not given satisfactory results so far. Still, until an agreement is reached, hundreds of thousands refugees and displaced persons are kept captive of the lack of capacity of the parties involved to bring about a settlement of the issue. In Azerbaijan, more than 600 000 people live in deplorable conditions, in tents or compounds, having been waiting for up to nine years now to leave their “temporary” camps and get back to their homes.
- The population of Trans-Dniestria is abandoned to a self-proclaimed state, which neither recognizes nor applies international human rights standards. In spite of the commitment made by the Russian Federation at the Istanbul Summit Meeting in 1999 to gradually withdraw the troops of the Russian army stationed in the region (in view of a total withdrawal by the end of 2002), no progress has been made to date. This is a part of the OSCE territory where the organization exerts too little influence, while authorities of the Trans-Dniestrian region violate human rights in total impunity.
- There is still no accountability for war crimes committed in Chechnya. An International Commission of Inquiry is what the IHF has been insisting on both in the UN and the OSCE, but without success. Unless the OSCE presses for the Special Representative for Human Rights in Chechnya to engage in this work in an independent and impartial manner, or unless a high representative from an international organization is invited to join in these efforts, there will be no justice for victims of the Chechnya war<sup>1</sup>. We appeal to you to condemn on the highest level continuing military actions in the region and reiterate the need for a political solution to the conflict.
- Progress on regional issues such as the return of refugees, the status and stability of Kosovo and accountability for war crimes in the Balkans are dependent upon key changes in the region, notably the present political developments in Serbia. In this context, the obligation to recognize and cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague should be stressed and imposed as a condition for further integration into European structures and international assistance. A commitment by the new leadership of FRY should be made to free all political prisoners from Kosovo, held in Serbian cells.
- The region of Central Asia shows common problems related to the deterioration in democracy and the rule of law, as well as concerns about political, religious and

---

<sup>1</sup> The IHF refers you to the recent report entitled “Welcome to Hell”, published by our affiliate, Human Rights Watch/ Europe and Central Asia. This extensive report documents human rights violations committed in Chechnya, and especially arbitrary detention and torture.

media freedoms, which demand attention from the OSCE. It is well-known that Islamists in Central Asia face serious repression, through mass arrests, and heavy sentences. The fight against terrorism should not be an excuse for arbitrary arrests and brutal oppression. The OSCE should press the Uzbek authorities to reconsider the cases of thousands of political prisoners. In the whole region, the organization should show a strong support for civil society, with a view of protecting individuals and groups threatened for their work as human rights defenders.

- The OSCE should address the threat to democracy and the rule-of-law posed in numerous countries of the former Soviet Union, after flawed referenda and elections marred by intimidation of opposition parties, lack of press freedom and attempts to control voting took place, for example, in Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan, Ukraine, Belarus, Turkmenistan and, most recently, Azerbaijan.

#### Specific Human Rights issues:

- Torture and inhumane treatment of detainees and prisoners by law enforcers exist in virtually all countries of the OSCE. Long proceedings and heavy sentences contribute to extreme overcrowding in prisons in virtually all transition states. There is widespread evidence of deliberate ill-treatment of prisoners, keeping them in inhumane conditions, in most former socialist states. The spread of tuberculosis is becoming a real threat to the lives of prisoners in each of these states. Other contagious diseases due to the poor conditions of living and of the low quality of food contribute to creating situations of epidemics. In Russia alone, according to official figures, the total number of inmates with tuberculosis is about 100,000. It is estimated that 14 000 inmates die every year in Russia, including inmates held in pre-trial detention, which virtually constitutes a *de facto* form of capital punishment even before trial.
- The existence of a minority is "a matter of fact, not a matter of law" (International Court of Justice). Still, some states continue to claim that minorities exist only when laws say so. Respect for the identity of any minority is the prerequisite for a country to be considered that it respects minority rights. We would urge the authorities of Albania, Bulgaria, France, Greece, Macedonia, Slovenia, and Turkey to respect the right of every individual claiming today minority identity, irrespective of historical traditions and geographical distribution, and grant all individuals belonging to these minorities at least all the rights provided by the related international norms. The OSCE, and especially the HCNM, is there to provide all necessary counseling and mediation.
- The OSCE should continue to give full attention to the issue of Roma, who face severe problems of discrimination, racism and xenophobia. Hostility towards Roma is increasing (e.g. skinhead attacks on Roma in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, intolerance in Greece, Hungary, Macedonia and Ukraine). Roma in Kosovo suffer assumptions of their collective guilt for collaboration with Serb forces and participation in war crimes during the conflict there.

We hope that you will find an opportunity to give these human rights concerns the importance they deserve.

Wishing you a fruitful meeting,

Sincerely,

Ludmilla Alexeyeva  
President

Aaron Rhodes  
Executive Director