EUROPEAN ROMA INFORMATION OFFICE
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ERIO in Vienna

ERIO Executive Director, Ivan Ivanov, participated on July 9th in a Consultative meeting on Roma organised by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency FRA. The meeting set out FRA's contribution to the work on Roma with a view to broadening its engagement and building on its work on health and education issues. The meeting took into account work already done by the other intergovernmental institutions and take into account relevant action plans at the European and international level. The meeting was divided in four working sessions: Research and data collection; Awareness raising and Communication activities; Policy related work, Working with others.

Read more on http://fra.europa.eu/fra/index.php?fuseaction=content.dsp_cat_content&catid=3e6c61340870c&contentid=4871ef4df2dc3

The **second meeting** in Vienna with ERIO's participation was held in Vienna on July 10th and 11th and was the 2nd of this year's three Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings (SHDMs) of OSCE. Ivan Ivanov chaired a very animated and interactive panel on the role of local authorities and best practices in integrating Roma at the local level. This meeting, formally devoted to consideration of "Sustainable Policies for Roma and Sinti Integration," also became a forum to protest Italy's announced plans to fingerprint Roma and Sinti – and no one else. The OSCE's newly appointed Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Janez Lenarcic, announced at the meeting's opening that the OSCE and Council of Europe would undertake a fact-finding trip to Italy to examine the situation of the Roma there. Participants at this meeting included representatives from the national delegations to the OSCE in Vienna; government representatives from capitals (including from offices or departments specializing in Romani concerns); local authorities with responsibility for implementing policies relating to Romani minorities; representatives of Romani and other non-governmental organizations (NGO); and international organizations (such as the Council of Europe and United Nations Development Program). A civil society round-table was held on the morning of the first day, enabling Romani civil society representatives to present shared concerns to the OSCE participating States during the opening session. Three additional side events were held on: the effective use of the European Court of Human Rights judgments; building partnerships between Romani communities and local authorities; and fundament rights and freedom of Roma in Italy.

ERIO in Budapest

On July 12th, ERIO's Executive director Ivan Ivanov attended a roundtable on European Roma policy held in Budapest. The event was organised by MEP Lívia Járóka and the Centre for Political Parliamentary Education and Training of the European Popular Party, EPP-ED Group. Mr Ivanov made a presentation and chaired a workshop on the "Reform of the education of Roma children on the national and EU level". The main aim of the conference was to bring together a wide scope of leaders (from European Commission, European Parliament, national governments) to exchange views on the latest issues and challenges concerning European Roma politics, with special reference to education, employment, the role of political participation in the empowerment of Roma, as well as to the role of academia in policy making. Mr Ivan Ivanov agreed with the representative of the European Commission that "ignoring Roma issues and doing nothing for this minority is not a political option anymore".

ERIO in Weimar

ERIO's Executive director Ivan Ivanov also participated in a symposium organised in Weimar (Germany) on July 13th and 14th. The event dealt with the intercultural dialogue and acceptance of diversity among cultures. A particular focus of the event was the historical relationship between Jewish and Roma artists and musicians in some regions of Europe. Ivan Ivanov gave a presentation on "Clichés and prejudices about Roma from majority societies". The meeting was very vivid and offered a very wide presence of artists and academics that expressed a deep interest on Roma culture, history and current situation.

Ukraine, Amnesty: fingerprinting and increasing discrimination against Roma

"Sadly Roma are also targeted outside the EU. A new Amnesty report highlights racism in Ukraine, including discrimination against Roma. In one incident last year police detained and fingerprinted the Roma population of an entire village. Interviewees said the police "blatantly target Roma". As in Italy, discrimination raises the spectre of Europe's shameful past - particularly against a backdrop of increasing anti-Semitism in Ukraine", stated Tim Hancock, UK campaigns director of Amnesty International.

Source: Amnesty International

CoE: Committee of Ministers adopts resolutions on minority protection in Cyprus, FYROM and UK

Strasbourg, 09.07.2008 – The Committee of Ministers has adopted a resolution on the protection of national minorities in Cyprus, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and the United Kingdom. These resolutions contain conclusions and recommendations, highlighting positive developments but also a number of areas where further measures are needed to advance the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The resolutions are largely based on the corresponding Opinions of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention. The detailed Opinions of the Advisory Committee of independent experts, together with the comments by the government of Cyprus, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and the United Kingdom are also available on line.

Source: http://www.coe.int/minorities (see News)

EESC proposes a strategy for the integration of Roma

On July 9th, 2008, the European Economic and Social Committee's plenary session adopted an exploratory opinion on the fight against discrimination and the promotion of integration of minorities, notably the Roma. ERIO Executive director Ivan Ivanov contributed as expert to this opinion from the very beginning. The opinion contains a series of practical policy recommendations on how to end discrimination and foster citizenship and participation of Roma in mainstream society. It is a valuable contribution to the process of developing a coherent EU approach to the issue, particularly in view of the European Roma Summit organised by the Commission and the French Presidency on 16 September. EU Commissioner for Social Affairs, Vladimir Spidla, welcomed the EESC's opinion, which stresses the necessity of developing a coherent EU approach and underlines the fact that all efforts so far to include Roma and to enforce their rights have proved inadequate. The equal participation of minorities in society presupposes effective, durable and tailored measures. Minorities need the will of politicians, business and society as a whole to simultaneously apply the principle of non-discrimination, promote equal opportunities and manage diversity. The Committee stresses that integration needs a "twin track" approach, acting both on a short term basis by dealing with issues that need immediate emergency action, such as enforcement of anti-discrimination legislation, and by initiating a long term process in policy areas such as education or housing, that will last for decades and will need commitment and sustained action. The EESC identifies six key principles for promoting integration of minorities: a legal basis for action that builds on the acquis as well as on the open method of coordination, a coherent and long-term umbrella policy strategy from the Commission, a structured, transparent and sustainable cooperation between all organised civil society players and the promotion of capacity building for NGOs, the active responsible involvement of the Roma representatives in the process, a responsible institutionalised platform structure for the practical implementation of specific steps and positive action programmes to be developed around education, training and employment, including self employment. The Committee also stresses the importance of this topic in the context of the Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

Source: http://eesc.europa.eu/activities/press/cp/index_en.asp

European Parliament votes against the fingerprinting of Roma in Italy

The European Parliament asks the Italian authorities to refrain from collecting fingerprints from Roma people, including children, and to put an end to discriminatory policies, in a resolution adopted today. MEPs also say the

integration of Roma people should be ensured at European level. The resolution was adopted with 336 votes in favour 220 against and 77 abstentions. MEPs point out that Roma are one of the main targets of racism and discrimination, as shown by the recent incidents involving attacks and aggression against Roma in Italy and Hungary and further underlined by recent Eurobarometer surveys. The European Parliament a resolution proposed by PES, ALDE, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL, in a move following the measures tabled by the Italian government last week.A motion from EPP-ED, aiming to postpone the vote until September to wait for explanations from the Italian governments, has been rejected by 316 votes against 296 and 14 abstentions. MEPs urge Italian authorities to "refrain" from collecting fingerprints of Roma and from using those already collected as it would be a discriminatory act infringing the European Convention of Human Rights. MEPs also voiced concern at the affirmation that a 12-month "state of emergency" could be justified by the presence of Romani camps, thus allowing extraordinary measures, in derogation of laws, to be taken. Members say this is "non adequate nor proportionate" to the case.They consider that the best way to protect the rights of Roma children is to guarantee equal access to quality education, housing and healthcare through integration policies, and to protect them from exploitation. They ask for the Commission and Member states to launch an EU Roma strategy for their inclusion and integration and recalls that Parliament, in a vote in January, urged Member states to solve the problem of slums and illegal camps. Parliament calls on the Commission to review the measures defined by the Italian government in order to check their compatibility with EU law.

Source: EP press service

The EP resolution is available on:

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2008-0361+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN

European Parliament: Lívia Járóka MEP on the resolution on a Roma fingerprints database in Italy

"We must step up against all forms of illegitimacy, whether that is illegal data collection based on ethnicity or criminal acts of an individual. Miring innocent people however is unacceptable in the 21st century Europe and regrettably, those Roma who respect the law are also exposed to trespassing on behalf of the authorities. It is vital to clarify the truth through an impartial examination and that is why we requested to postpone the vote on the resolution until the completion of the European Commission's inspection. It is essential to ascertain, whether the data collection of Naples inquisiting religious and ethnic identity was only an isolated incident which must not occur in the future and whether the Italian authorities will investigate who is responsible for the infringement of rights and impeach the discharger of the registration form. For the sake of justice we must receive answer to these questions and in the meantime we are also waiting for the statement of the Italian data protection authorities. The moment we get valid confirmation of the truth, we must get back to the issue immediately. Although the previous Italian governments are also responsible for serious omissions in terms of Roma integration, the current government must make the improvement of the situation of Roma communities a priority. However, neither Italy, nor any other Member State of the EU will be capable of this alone, so the intervention of the European Union is needed. It is therefore very important to launch already in this parliamentary term a holistic programme with European coordination that handles the issues of education, employment, housing, health care and discrimination in their complexity and in the meantime takes into consideration the specific needs of local communities."

Source: Livia Jaroka MEP office

European Parliament: Giusto Catania MEP, Roma fingerprinting flouts EU anti-discrimination laws

Strasbourg, 09/07/08 – Italian GUE/NGL MEP Giusto Catania called on the Berlusconi government to block its discriminatory plan to fingerprint Italy's 200,000 strong Roma community, of whom 120,000 are Italian citizens, during a press conference in the European Parliament. MEP Catania condemned this act as being in "flagrant contradiction of EU laws, a threat to EU citizenship rights and a dangerous precedent". He also urged the European Commission to take the necessary steps to call the Italian government to order. Earlier in the day, GUE/NGL MEPs launched an appeal and collected the fingerprints and signatures of some 120 MEPs, including the chairs of four political groups (PES, ALDE, Greens-EFA and GUE/NGL), 2 EP Vice-Presidents and a number of Committee

chairs and vice-chairs. "This is a political act which aims to demand the immediate withdrawal of this discriminatory measure," Catania explained. MEPs' fingerprints and signatures have been sent to the Berlusconi government today with a view to showing that Euro deputies oppose this measure and their determination to put a stop to such a discriminatory act. The Parliamentary resolution condemning the census of Roma on the basis of ethnicity will be voted at 9 am tomorrow morning.
Source: GUE/NGL Press Service

Italy: International NGO Coalition Report: Extreme Deterioration of Roma Rights in Italy

A coalition of NGOs launched on July 10 a report on the deterioration of the human rights situation of Roma and Sinti in Italy, on the occasion of the OSCE's Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Sustainable Policies for Roma and Sinti Integration in Vienna. Coalition members include the European Roma Rights Centre, the Open Society Institute, the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, Romani Criss and the Roma Civic Alliance of Romania.The report, entitled **"**Security a la Italiana: Fingerprinting, Extreme Violence and Harassment of Roma in Italy"**,** includes a concise summary of a series of discriminatory legal and policy measures targeting Roma recently enacted by the right-wing Italian government, in place since the April 2008 elections. The report also includes the results of first-hand documentation conducted by the Coalition in Romani camps Italy at the end of May 2008, exploring the effects of these measures on members of Italy's Roma and Sinti communities, including: illegal fingerprinting and photographing of Roma for the purposes of creating a database of all Roma in the country; police abuse, ill-treatment and forced evictions of Roma; extreme violence by non-state actors and the failure of Italian authorities to prosecute the perpetrators; and other forms of discrimination against Roma. The report concludes with a series of recommendations for actions to be undertaken by the Italian government, the Romanian government and inter-governmental actors, in order to end the ongoing human rights crisis in Italy and ensure respect for the rights of Roma in the country. During the OSCE meeting in Vienna on 10-11 July, Coalition members are hosting a side event to discuss the concerns outlined in the report and are organising a protest outside the site of the OSCE meeting on 11 July, starting from the premises of the Fundamental Rights Agency, Rahlgasse, Gumpendorferstraß e, Burgring and Heldenplatz – stopping in front of the Hofburg Palace.
Source: DIVERS – www.divers.ro

Italy, US: Helsinki Commission protests against fingerprinting of Roma in Italy

Washington, 08/07/08 – On July 7, Rep. Alcee L. Hastings (D-FL) and Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD), co-chairmen of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (better known as U.S. Helsinki Commission), expressed alarm over reports that Italian authorities are targeting members of the Roma minority for fingerprinting. The program, an initiative spearheaded by the Minister of Interior, is intended to cover Roma (formerly known as Gypsies) living in 700 camps throughout Italy. "We remain concerned about the escalation of anti-Roma and anti-migrant manifestations in Italy," Hastings said. "The blatant racial profiling of Roma by the Italian government sets a very dangerous precedent and turns back the clock to one of Europe's darkest times." Cardin noted: "Singling out Roma for fingerprinting is nothing more than an exercise in racism. It was not that long ago when measures like this were a prelude to deportation, imprisonment, torture and death. I remain troubled by the increased violence against minorities in Italy." Source: UCSJ

Italy, EU: President Barroso confident that Rome will respect EU rules

Rome, 15/07/08 – The head of the European Commission said on Tuesday he was confident Italy's census of Roma people, criticised by the European Parliament and human rights groups as discriminatory, would respect EU rules. The Rome government has come under attack for its plan to conduct a census, with fingerprinting if necessary, of all people living in camps, including children. The census is part of a crackdown by Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's government on crime. EU chief Jose Manuel Barroso, at a news conference with Berlusconi in Rome, said there was good cooperation between Italy and the EU executive, which is assessing whether the plan

is compatible with EU anti-discrimination rules. "I really believe ... that a solution will be found that will respect those principles that are essential for Europe and for Italy, while responding at the same time to the concerns that exist here in Italy regarding security but also the integration of immigrants," Barroso said. EU lawmakers last week asked Italy to refrain from collecting fingerprints in nomads' camps, saying this would be a discriminatory policy aimed at a single ethnic group and would treat Roma and their children like criminals. Similar concerns, dismissed by the Italian government, have been expressed by human rights groups and Catholic charities. There are around 140,000 Roma people in Italy. About half come from abroad, mostly from eastern European countries such as Romania. Fifty-five percent of those living in camps are minors. The census was ordered by Interior Minister Roberto Maroni, a member of the anti-immigration Northern League. It initially involved fingerprinting all those living in camps in Naples, Rome and Milan, including children. However, the government seems to have partly backtracked. Maroni said last week fingerprints would only be taken when no other means of identification was possible. Italy is due to report back to the EU on the census, which has started in Naples and is due to begin in Rome this week, at the end of July. A European Commission source said Barroso's message to Berlusconi in private would be that Brussels wanted "a nuts and bolts explanation of what is going on" in the treatment of the Roma. Barroso would ask for a detailed report from Italy on why the measures were being taken, how many Roma did not have proper identity papers and what individual cases justified incarceration, the source said.
Source: http://www.javno.com/en/world/clanak.php?id=164554

Italy: Discrimination against Roma worries UN rights experts

New York, 15/07/08 – A trio of independent United Nations human rights experts have voiced concern about recent actions and proposed measures targeting the Roma community and migrants in Italy which they deem as discriminatory. The Special Rapporteur on racism, Doudou Diene, the Independent Expert on minority issues, Gay J. McDougall, and the Special Rapporteur on the Human rights of Migrants, Jorge Bustamante, said they were extremely concerned about the proposal made by the Ministry of Interior to fingerprint all Roma individuals, including children, in order to identify those undocumented persons living in Italy**.** "By exclusively targeting the Roma minority, this proposal can be unambiguously classified as discriminatory," they said in a statement issued today in Geneva. They are also shocked at the "aggressive and discriminatory rhetoric" used by political leaders, including Cabinet members, when referring to the Roma community. "By explicitly associating the Roma to criminality, and by calling for the immediate dismantling of Roma camps in the country, these officials have created an overall environment of hostility, antagonism and stigmatisation of the Roma community among the general public," they stated. "This climate of anti-Roma sentiment has served to mobilize extremist groups, which have recently launched a series of attacks against Roma camps and individuals," they added. The three experts urged the Italian Government to abide by its obligations under international human rights law, particularly under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.
Source: United Nations

Kosovo: Ombudsperson investigates on the lead blood-poisoning of Romas in Mitrovica

Mitrovica, 08/07/08 After obtaining information from different sources about the way in which the Roma community live in the northern part of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and after the suspicions raised that members of this community live in an environment with considerably high toxic components, the Ombudsperson Institution has initiated ex-officio investigations. The information which are available to the Ombudsperson Institution show that in the majority of the populations' blood living in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica can be found considerably high components of lead, including also the NATO peacekeeping members. On the other hand, Roma community is by far the most endangered one, as they live near places where lead is disposed of from the Trepça mine. The level of lead in their blood is estimated to be 3-4 times higher than in the other part of population. There are alleged suspicions that the number of Romas passing away as a result of the high presence of lead in their blood is huge and are mainly young people whose

immunity is weak. The Ombudsperson Institution's investigation results shall be made public at the earliest opportunity together with the recommendations for the competent authorities in order that they take adequate measures.
Source: Ombudsperson press service

Serbia, Romania: assistance programme violates Roma rights, Romano Them says

11 July 2008 – In a letter to the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lazăr Comănescu, and to the Serbian Minister of Labour and Social Policy, Mr. Rasim Ljajić, Romano Them has strongly criticised the planned transfer of expertise between the two countries in the field of reintegration of forcibly repatriated Roma. Romano Them reminded that the right to leave one's own country is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which also guarantees the principle of equality of all the people. According to the organisation, the forced repatriation of Roma fits into the same pattern as the policies of containment which have been developed in Europe since the end of the 15th century and which culminated in the genocide of Roma under the Nazis. Referring to the conclusion of a readmission agreement between Serbia and the EU which went in parallel with negotiations over visa facilities for Serbian citizens, Romano Them said it considered it unacceptable that Serbia, which currently also chairs the Roma Decade, decided to trade off the freedom of movement for Serbian citizens with the forced repatriation of its Roma minority. Romano Them also said that Romania would be better advised to use the 180,000 Euros that have been earmarked for this assistance programme to improve the situation of its own Roma population, reminding that Romanian Roma continue to flee the country in hope for a better future. It called it particularly shameful that Germany, with its guilt-ridden past, continues to be one of the first countries to deport Roma. Romano Them concluded by asking for increased efforts to improve the situation of Roma in the countries, where they live, in order to make sure, that freedom of movement becomes a real choice and not a constraint as it has been for centuries. Romano Them (www.kosovoroma.wordpress.com) is an independent internet platform advocating for the human rights of Roma from Kosovo and against forced repatriations.
Source: Romano Them

Slovakia may well promote Roma issue in UN Human Rights council

Bratislava, 09/07/08 – One of Slovakia's priorities as a member of the UN Human Rights Council could well be the Roma issue, the Slovak Foreign Affairs Ministry told SLOVAKIA on Wednesday. According to information on Slovakia's membership, which the Government took into consideration on Wednesday, the Human Rights Council doesn't usually pass resolutions concerning individual minorities or ethnic groups. Slovakia has a real chance of promoting a specific topic that is currently lacking. The Foreign Affairs Ministry thinks that the best way to present the Roma issue is to organise an event accompanying one of the Council meetings. Another issue that requires attention relates to the Middle East. "The question of human rights in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories is a distinctive item on the Council's agenda. It is exactly here where a common EU stance is most difficult to find, while it is mainly EU countries which are also members of the Council that are being addressed," stated the Ministry. Slovakia also wants to promote equality for the citizen; political, economic, cultural and social rights; and the right to development. It also needs to prepare for a presentation in the spring of next year, which will take place within the so-called 'Universal Periodic Review'. One element of membership is voluntary payments to support the head of the UN Human Rights Council Office, which Slovakia began providing this year in the shape of 10,000 Swiss Francs (€6,170), noting that it would be appropriate to raise this currently symbolic amount. The 47 members of the UN Human Rights Council elected Slovakia to the body in a secret vote on May 21, 2008. Slovakia's membership is due to last three years - from June 2008 until June 2011.
Source: http://www.tasr.sk/30.axd?k=20080709TBB00474

Turkey: Istanbul Mayor Topbaş says Sulukule project to be reviewed

Istanbul, 10/07/08 – İstanbul Mayor Kadir Topbaş has said the municipality will re-examine a planned renovation

project in the Sulukule neighborhood in light of a recommendation from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In a recent report UNESCO pointed out that the planned urban renewal program in İstanbul's Sulukule neighbourhood, home primarily to Roma people, will result in the demolition of the area and the relocation of its inhabitants. Sulukule is within the İstanbul World Heritage Site area. At a press conference, Topbaş said they have the report and are aware of the facts. "They are concerned about the culture there and not losing this culture to big apartment complexes. And we are aware of that, too. But I pointed out the fact to UNESCO's president that when you design a place for families to live, it will not be sufficient to house all the families of Sulukule unless there are apartment buildings," he stated. The mayor said the residents of Sulukule live in such poor conditions that they must dump their laundry water in the streets, noting that this is an unacceptable situation. He pointed out the fact that there are presently one storey buildings in Sulukule packed with too many people. Topbaş noted that UNESCO officials could not offer other solutions and agreed with him when he said there are two options -- to preserve the present conditions or build modern buildings. "We don't want to eradicate something in our culture. We don't want to treat people unjustly either. We will review the project and find a middle ground," he stated. The UNESCO progress report on İstanbul -- recently prepared by a four-member delegation from UNESCO's World Heritage Centre which conducted a five day inspection trip in May to İstanbul to determine whether the city, a European Cultural Capital for 2010, should be consigned to the organization's "in danger" list -- was made public last week. According to the report, İstanbul, currently on the UNESCO World Heritage List, is expected to honour its pledge to take the necessary steps for the protection of its historical sites and eradicate the inadequacies determined by the delegation by next year. Otherwise, it will be placed on the UNESCO List of World Heritage in Danger.

Source: http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=147061&bolum=101

Romani women's rights coalition successfully reaches global women's movement

Budapest, Prague, Ostrava, 15/07/08 – Starting at the beginning of July, members of the Ostrava-based Group of Women Harmed by Sterilisation and their advocates from European Roma Rights Centre and Peacework Development Fund initiated a campaign to activate the global women's rights movement in lobbying efforts for public recognition of coerced sterilisation and compensation for Romani survivors of these practices in Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. The campaign was launched around the 2008 Women's Worlds Congress in Madrid, Spain, which brought together thousands of women's rights advocates from around the world, and was supported by the Open Society Institute's Public Health Program and the Heinrich Böll Stiftung Warsaw. During the Congress, supported by simultaneous actions in Czech Republic and Hungary, activists from more than 40 countries signed and sent hundreds of postcards and letters to the Czech, Hungarian and Slovak governments urging them to respond to calls for public apologies and compensation for coerced sterilisation survivors. The survivors and their advocates turned to the global human rights movement to strengthen their efforts to secure justice after the governments concerned failed to react, through public apologies and compensation for the harms inflicted upon Romani women, to 5 years of targeted advocacy and lobbying by the victims and their advocates.

During a panel discussion at the Congress on the issue, the survivors informed women's rights activists, academics and politicians about the coercive sterilisation of Romani women in Central Europe, generating an invigorating discussion, with women from around the world sharing their knowledge about similar abuses elsewhere. The coerced sterilisation of Romani women in Central Europe was highlighted in the concluding session of the Congress and will feature in the concluding recommendations coming out of the Congress, at: http://www.mmww08.org/. The issue is also featured in the documentary film, "Trial of a Child Denied" by Mortal Coil Media, which aired on CNN between 9 and 13 July (see: http://edition.cnn.com/CNNI/Programs/untoldstories/blog/2008/07/trial-of-child-denied.html).The survivors gained much strength from the strong support they received from NGOs, human rights advocates from around the world and different media outlets during the Congress. "Don't give up, fight on," is the message that Elena Gorolova, spokesperson for the Group of Women Harmed by Sterilisation would like to send to all who demand redress for the harms they have suffered. The letters of support for the survivors to the Czech, Hungarian and Slovak

governments are available for download on the ERRC's website, together with comprehensive information about the practice and the Congress.
See: http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2965

The ERRC Board of Directors invites applications for the post of Executive Director

The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) is an international public interest law organisation defending and promoting the human rights of Roma. The ERRC pursues its goals through strategic litigation, international advocacy, research and policy development, and training. Established in 1996 and based in Budapest, the ERRC has an international Board of Directors, employs approximately 20 staff, as well as consultants and interns, and has an annual budget of over US$ 2.4 million. For more information, see the ERRC website: http://www.errc.org. The Executive Director is responsible for providing the strategic and management leadership necessary to enable the ERRC to fulfil its mission of promoting respect for and protection of the fundamental human rights of Roma across Europe. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors, and is responsible for the hiring and management of staff.The full vacancy announcement is available at: http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2971

The European Roma Information Office (ERIO) is an international advocacy organization, which promotes political and public discussion on Roma issues by providing factual and in-dept information on a range of policy issues to the European Union institutions, Roma civil organizations, governmental authorities and intergovernmental bodies. ERIO cooperates with a network of a large number of organizations and acts to combat racial discrimination and social exclusion through awareness raising, lobbying and policy development.

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