



**The European Commission  
and Parliament must  
intervene immediately;  
Roma cannot be used as  
scapegoats anymore.**

*Brussels, September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010*

**Roma are considered as the main reason for insecurity in several European countries. By putting them in the news, the government makes them responsible for economic and social difficulties, for austerity measures happening in these countries and makes them hostages of political higher bids.**

In 2007 in Italy, a Romanian national was charged for the murder of a woman. This event constituted a pretext for demolitions of camps, displacements and deportations of Roma. This summer in France, following confrontations between the police and French citizens of the travellers' community, Roma from Bulgaria and Romania are deported after having seen their makeshift houses demolished. Trying to go on better, the Italian Minister of Home Affairs requests from the European Commission "the right to deport" Roma in breach of European legislation. Denmark plans similar measures. Germany sends back Roma children to Kosovo whereas the Council of Europe underlines the risks of such deportations and recommends only voluntary returns<sup>i</sup>.

In breach of international conventions and in breach of the EU Treaty, some people are discriminated on the basis of their origin. In breach of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, member States deport Roma collectively<sup>ii</sup>. In breach of the recent Cordoba summit, of the European Commission's recommendations on the social inclusion of Roma, and in breach of the European Parliament's reports and opinions, Roma keep on being considered as second-class people. They are scapegoats in their own countries and in countries where they try to find a better life. We can only agree with former Commissioner Vladimir Spidla who, in May 2007, declared that what was going on in Italy was not an isolated case, that "*the racial violence is fed on populism as we can see in several member States ... whereas... overcoming racial hate, pogroms and destructions by fire is the true meaning of the European Union*".

The 10 to 12 millions Roma living in the European Union are European citizens; therefore they have the right to move freely within the territory of the EU and the right to set in an EU member State as to find a job. The AEDH notices that Roma face multiple discriminations and that their rights are being violated in a lot of EU member States. Today, the AEDH denounces mass deportations, confusions with the issue of insecurity that stigmatize an entire population because of its origin, as well as the weakness of the measures taken by the States in order to remedy marginalization and precariousness, whereas the EU does make available the means to do so. The AEDH recalls that all EU citizens have the same rights, ensured by the treaties, the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, and international conventions.

The AEDH calls the European Parliament and the European Commission to react, to condemn and sanction the policies implemented by some Member States. Discriminations, threats, deportations, destructions of housing and private properties must stop. The Commissioner Mrs Reding's statement<sup>iii</sup> is a step in this direction, as well as the current parliamentary initiatives<sup>iv</sup>. Recently, and even in the past, many seminars, talks, conferences, summits and opinions have taken place in order to analyze the situation and make recommendations. It is no longer time to talk, it is time to take concrete and exemplary measures in order to ensure dignity and respect of rights for 10 million citizens.

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**L'Association Européenne pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme (AEDH)** regroupe des ligues et associations de défense des droits de l'Homme des pays de l'Union Européenne. Elle est membre associé de la Fédération internationale pour la défense des droits de l'Homme (FIDH). Pour en savoir plus, consultez le site [www.aedh.eu](http://www.aedh.eu)

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<sup>i</sup> Avis du MG-S-ROM de 2009

<sup>ii</sup> Article 19 of the Charter of the Fundamental Rights

<sup>iii</sup> Statement of August, 25<sup>th</sup> 2010

<sup>iv</sup> For the opening of a debate on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010