



COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSAIRE AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME



Press Release
on the Joint Conference concerning Roma Migration and Freedom of Movement

Vienna, 9-10 November 2009

The serious human rights challenges faced by Roma when migrating or exercising their right to freedom of movement, as well as the security implications, will be the focus of a joint international conference in Vienna on 9-10 November 2009, organised by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights (CommHR), the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM).

Morten Kjaerum, Director, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights: *"In the European Union, many Roma EU citizens settling in another Member State in search of better conditions continue to experience racism, discrimination and exclusion. Of particular concern are reports of hate-motivated incidents against Roma, and racist rhetoric reported in a number of States. The EU and its Member States need to adopt targeted policies on integrated rights- and equality-based standards promoting social cohesion."*

Thomas Hammarberg, Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe: *"Roma migrants are faced with a double jeopardy - migration makes life even harder for those who face a plethora of serious, discrimination-related problems. The protection of human rights of Roma on the move in Europe should be placed high on the agenda. I believe that the joint conference in Vienna is an excellent contribution to these efforts."*

Janez Lenarčič, Director, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights: *"The cross-border migration of Roma in Europe is a reality, and the challenges related to such movements must be handled by all authorities involved in full compliance with international human rights standards. At the same time, governments must do more to eradicate pervasive discrimination and other factors driving Roma away from their homes in the first place."*

Knut Vollebaek, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities: *"The recent migration of Roma entails a wide range of challenges, including considerable security implications for both the Roma and the receiving communities. Only by addressing the underlying reasons for migration and creating the appropriate conditions for cohesive*

societies, will we be able to tackle this security and human rights issue. This is the challenge for this conference.”

The international conference is devoted to discussing and identifying courses of action in order to address the situation of Roma, in the context of migration or exercise of the right to freedom of movement. The conference follows up on findings of the FRA Study on Roma and freedom of movement and the HCNM and CommHR’s Study on Recent Migration of Roma in Europe.

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