

Ukrainian authorities must stand against evictions, anti-Roma violence, address interethnic tensions and restore respect for rule of law

Strasbourg, 7 April 2017: Valeriu Nicolae, the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for Roma Issues, firmly condemns the dismantling and burning of a Roma camp in Bereznyaky district of Kyiv, the home of approximately 150 people. Local experts estimate that over 70 children are left homeless due to the eviction from April, 6 2017.

“Evictions without proper preparations for relocation of the people involved are illegal and have a significant traumatic effect on the lives of those involved. I call upon Kyiv City Council to halt evictions of Roma communities and provide adequate compensations to those already evicted as required by the international law. Addressing the interethnic tension in the settlement to prevent it from spreading further should be the main priority for the City Council and we are ready to help with our expertise to ensure the best solutions to the problems it faces”, said the SRSG for Roma.

This is the latest such incident to occur in the region where, on 28 August 2016, anti-Roma violence broke out in a after the arrest of a man, a suspect in the murder of a nine-year-old girl from the village. Six Roma houses were vandalized and one house was set on fire in front of a number of police officers. Ten Roma families, around 60 people, fled the village before the attack started. Following a request from non-Roma residents, the local authorities agreed to take steps to evict Roma families from the village.

Demanding that immediate action be taken, to stop this pattern, Valeriu Nicolae emphasised again that “authorities must fight violence against and scapegoating of Roma and enforce the law, based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination.”

The defence of human rights and democratic principles and the rejection all forms of discrimination, violence, harassment, incitement to hatred and hate speech against Roma and Travellers is a priority of the Council of Europe

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