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**Ms Zorana MIHAJLOVIĆ**  
Deputy Prime Minister  
Serbia

Strasbourg, 26 January 2016

Dear Deputy Prime Minister,

I should like to take this opportunity to follow up on the issue of forced evictions of Roma, in particular displaced Roma, which was addressed in the 2015 report that I published following my visit to Serbia.

In the above report, I expressed concern at the continuing forced evictions of Roma from informal settlements and the authorities' reported failure to comply with legal safeguards during these operations. Of particular concern to me has been the fact that most of these evictions were carried out without prior consultation with the families concerned and often at very short notice, while adequate alternative accommodation was not always provided.

Serious concerns about this situation were also expressed by the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers in its Resolution CM/ResCMN(2015)8 on the implementation by Serbia of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. In this context, I have noted that the approximately fifty Roma families that were forcibly evicted in 2012 from the irregular settlement in Belvil, Belgrade, have not yet been provided with adequate housing solutions despite the reported availability of funds to this aim.

I welcome the legislative steps taken by Serbia in order to address this long-standing issue, in particular the preparation of the draft Housing Law (*Nacrt zakona o stanovanju i održavanju zgrada*), which includes provisions concerning forced evictions. I have been informed that an expert working group was involved in the preparation of the first draft of this law to ensure its compatibility with relevant European and international human rights standards related to access to adequate housing and forced evictions. However, reportedly a new version of the law has been prepared without broad, public consultations. I would very much welcome any further information you may provide me with on this legislative process.

Against this background, I urge you to ensure that any new legislation affecting access by Roma to adequate housing and regulating forced evictions, is fully in line with relevant European and international human rights standards, notably the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter. I also call on you to take all necessary measures in order to ensure that no further evictions of Roma are carried out without provision of adequate alternative accommodation, while the already evicted persons must urgently be provided with adequate housing.

I look forward to receiving your reply and to continuing a constructive dialogue with you and your government.

Yours sincerely

Nils Muižnieks