

**8 April 2021 - International Roma Day  
12 :00 – Flower Casting Ceremony  
Speech of Snežana SAMARDŽIĆ-MARKOVIĆ, Director General of Democracy**

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

We are gathering here today to celebrate International Roma Day.

This is an important date for all Roma in the world.

International Roma Day highlights the persecution and discrimination that Roma people face in all areas of life.

But it is also a day to celebrate and cherish Roma history, culture and identity.

This year, International Roma Day also marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First World Romani Congress held near London in 1971 and the emergence of a Romani movement for human rights, equality and Romani identity.

The casting of flowers is a ceremony for remembrance and to celebrate Roma culture and unity.

All Roma are encouraged to gather on 8 April at noon to cast red flowers into the nearest river, sea or ocean, so that Roma around the world are united through the flow of waters.

We gladly join them, to pay our respect to a worldwide tradition and its motto “Unity in peace, prosperity and solidarity!”

“Happy International Roma Day”!