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Kyiv



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Швейцарська Конфедерація

STATEMENT ON THE OCCASION OF 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION OF INTERNATIONAL ROMA DAY – 8 APRIL 2021

On the occasion of International Roma Day, celebrated worldwide on 8 April, we would like to send our warm wishes to all Roma in Ukraine.

This year, on 8 April, the International Roma Day celebrates its 50th anniversary and it's the day to celebrate Romani culture, history and language, and to raise awareness of the issues Roma people still face.

Moreover, on this day, we would like to support Roma people in combating stereotypes and discrimination and promoting Romani identity, as well as, raise awareness about Romani culture!

In the last decades, Roma civil society and activists have succeeded to achieve progress in the field of education and political participation. There are many Roma intellectuals, politicians and human rights defenders, which are bravely defending the rights and improving the situation of Roma in Ukraine.

Furthermore, we believe that the young generation of Roma, as well as, Roma civil society are the key in contributing to the advancement of the situation of the communities, and therefore, we call on authorities at all levels to provide the space for their public and political participation in decision-making processes.

Roma constitute an important part of the Ukrainian society and country's rich multicultural historic heritage. Regretfully, on a daily basis Roma face stigmatization, hate speech and bias. Particularly Roma women are subject to intersectional discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and gender.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the pre-existing inequalities in the societies around the world. It is an extremely important time to show solidarity and to demonstrate that no one in the Ukrainian society is left behind. This can be done both at the state level, by ensuring equal access to health and social services for Roma, but also by the society at large by showing human solidarity.

We support the work of Roma mediators and civil society that have worked hard and effectively to reach out to the most discriminated Roma communities and in order to ensure that they achieve full equality of rights and opportunities, as well as access to the necessary services for Roma men and women.

At the state level, a coherent and well-resourced Strategy for Roma Inclusion should be adopted in Ukraine without further delay to guide all the state policies and institutions in safeguarding the rights of Roma. At the same time, the recent administrative reforms in Ukraine and the fact that more powers and budgets were allocated to the local administrations should be seen and used as an opportunity for enhancing the situation of Roma at the local level.

Opre Roma! Bahtalo Internacionalno Romano dives tumenge!

Signed by:

Steen Nørlov, Head of the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine

Matilda Bogner, Head of UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine

Matti Maasikas, Head of the EU Delegation, EU Ambassador

Lotta Sylwander, UNICEF Representative in Ukraine

Dafina Gercheva, UNDP Ukraine Resident Representative

H.E. Claude Wild, Ambassador of Switzerland

H.E. Erik Svedahl, Ambassador of Norway

Jaime Nadal, UNFPA Representative to Ukraine

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