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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Elly de Groen-Kouwenhoven, Milan Horáček and Gérard Onesta

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

on the situation of the Roma in Europe

European Parliament resolution on the situation of the Roma in Europe

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 3, 6, 7, 29 and 149 of the EC Treaty, which commit the Member States to ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens,
- having regard to Article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam, which enables the European Community to ‘take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin’,
- having regard to Directive 43/2000/EC, known as the Race Equality Directive, which bans discrimination on ethnic grounds,
- having regard to Article 4 of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on National Minorities and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
- having regard to Article 3 of Recommendation 1557/2002 of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers underlining the widespread discrimination against Roma and the need to strengthen the monitoring system on discrimination against them,
- having regard to the document of the European Union (COCEN GROUP) adopted at the Tampere Summit in 1999 entitled ‘Situation of Roma in the Candidate Countries’, which underlines the need to raise awareness about the racism and discrimination faced by Roma,
- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights, signed and proclaimed by the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on behalf of their institutions at the Nice European Council in December 2000,
- having regard to the Charter of European Parties for a Non-Racist Society,
- having regard to the establishment of a Group of Commissioners responsible for fundamental rights, anti-discrimination and equal opportunities, in which connection the European Parliament awaits the presentation of the Group’s agenda,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1035/97 establishing a European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), to the EUMC's annual and thematic reports on racism in the EU and to the Commission Green Paper on equality and non-discrimination in an enlarged European Union (COM (2004)0379),
- having regard to the recent publication by the Commission of a report drawing attention to very disturbing levels of hostility and human rights abuses against Roma, Gypsies and Travellers in Europe,

- having regard to the report currently before the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs on the protection of minorities and anti-discrimination policies (2005/2008 (INI)) and the European Parliament resolution of 27 January 2005 on the Holocaust, anti-Semitism and racism,
 - having regard to international legal instruments such as General Recommendation XXVII (Discrimination against Roma) of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and General Policy Recommendation 3 (Combating racism and intolerance against Roma/Gypsies) of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI),
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas 8 April has been designated International Roma Day and is considered to be the annual day of Roma, as well as a day for raising awareness of Europe's largest ethnic minority and the extent of its social exclusion,
 - B. whereas the 12-15 million Roma living in Europe, 7-9 million of whom live in the European Union, are suffering racial discrimination and many of them are subject to multiple discrimination on the basis of gender, age, sexual orientation and disability,
 - C. whereas the unique aspect of the Roma's history as a centuries-old European minority will require that steps be taken to finally include Roma in society and will also make it necessary to address societal attitudes which are long-embedded and are fundamentally crippling the ability of Roma to lead lives with full and equal dignity,
 - D. whereas the EC directive on combating discrimination on the grounds of ethnic or racial origin (Council Directive 2000/43/EC) was not transposed or fully implemented by all Member States although it constitutes an important element in strategies for promoting the integration of communities who are often subject to discrimination,
 - E. whereas the Romani Holocaust deserves full recognition, commensurate with the gravity of Nazi crimes designed to physically eliminate the Roma of Europe as well as the Jews; calling, in this regard, on the Commission and the authorities to take all the necessary steps to abolish the pig-fattening industry on the territory of the former concentration camp in Lety (Czech Republic) and create a graceful memorial,
 - F. whereas a large number of Roma were and continue to be victims of war and to be targeted in ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina; whereas a significant number of Roma asylum seekers have been expelled (deported) from the host EU countries, which have thereby violated the asylum procedure under the UN's 1951 Convention,
 - G. whereas anti-Gypsyism is still widespread, with Roma regularly the targets of racist attacks, hate speech, physical attacks by extremist groups, unlawful evictions, police harassment and overall denied their rights as citizens, such as the right to vote and to stand for election,
 - H. whereas in a number of countries there exist clear indications that police services and

other institutions of the criminal justice system are infected with anti-Romani bias leading to systemic racial discrimination in the exercise of criminal justice,

- I. whereas Roma continue to be underrepresented in governmental structures and public administration in Member States and candidate countries where they constitute a significant percentage of the population; whereas their governments are committed to increasing the number of Roma working in decision-making structures but have yet to move forward in this respect,
 - J. whereas Roma are regularly discriminated against in the provision of health care and whereas the European Parliament notes with concern cases of segregation in maternity wards and the sterilisation of Roma women without their consent,
 - K. whereas substandard and unsanitary living conditions and evidence of ghettoisation exist on a wide scale, with Roma regularly prevented from moving out of such neighbourhoods,
 - L. having regard to the racially segregated schooling systems in place in several Member States and candidate countries, as a result of which Roma children are, at best, taught under lower-quality curricula and, at worst, placed in institutions reserved for the mentally disabled,
 - M. whereas in some Member States and candidate countries the press and media coverage of Roma minorities remains discriminatory, which contributes to and continues the negative stereotype views of Roma frequently expressed,
 - N. whereas comprehensive statistical data on grave violations of human rights and racial abuse against Roma in Member States and candidate countries are lacking,
- 1. Welcomes the recent declaration by Commission President Barroso regarding the importance of eliminating discrimination against Roma people and the role which the Lisbon Strategy could play in improving opportunities for Roma, and urges the Council, the Commission, Member States and candidate countries to publicly take steps to combat Romaphobia in all forms and at all levels;
 - 2. Urges the Commission to emphasise the issue of combating Romaphobia and Anti-Gypsyism across Europe among its priorities for the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, and calls on political and civil society at all levels to make clear that racial hatred against Roma is not tolerated in European society;
 - 3. Urges Member States to quickly transpose into national law and fully implement the EC directive on combating discrimination on the grounds of ethnic or racial origin (43/2000 EC) and urges all Member States to set up without delay an independent equality body which could play a crucial role in monitoring implementation of the directive;
 - 4. Calls on the institutions of the European Union, Member States, candidate countries and all European political parties to unequivocally condemn all forms of anti-Gypsyism/Romaphobia, intolerance, incitement to hatred and harassment or violence;
 - 5. Calls for comprehensive human rights education for law enforcement and judicial

systems, as well as the inclusion of this material in education institutions so that officials working in these fields are aware of European anti-discrimination legislation and of the social values of European society;

6. Calls on governments in regions with significant Roma populations to take further steps to integrate Roma civil servants at all administrative and decision-making levels in line with previous commitments and to allocate the necessary resources for the proper and effective performance of the duties associated with such positions;
7. Calls on Member States and candidate countries to develop a strategy and a programme to tackle the need for increased participation of Roma in elections, by targeting Roma as voters (electoral training) and candidates (politics and political systems) for mayors, local councillors, MPs and MEPs;
8. Urges the Commission, Member States and candidate countries to work together to specifically target Roma in National Development Plans (NDPs) to combat social exclusion and to encourage life-long learning programmes and other mechanisms developed under the Open Method of Coordination, in keeping with the goals of the Lisbon Strategy;
9. Calls on the Commission to publicly encourage national governments to ensure that when funding programmes are aimed at Roma, Roma actors are involved in the designing and implementing of such projects, and that civil society organisations working on Roma issues are regularly updated on the funding and programmes available to them in their work;
10. Calls on Member States and candidate countries to take steps to ensure equal access to health care for all, to end segregation of Roma in maternity wards, to prevent the practice of sterilisation of Romani women and to make accountable before the courts any physicians and medical personnel responsible for such acts;
11. Considers that the current ghettoisation across Europe is unacceptable, and calls on Member States and candidate countries to take concrete steps to bring about deghettoisation, to combat discriminatory practices in providing housing and to assist Roma individuals in finding alternative, sanitary housing;
12. Calls on Member States and candidate countries in which Roma children are segregated into schools for the mentally disabled or placed in separate classrooms from their peers, to embark upon desegregation programmes within a predetermined period of time, thus ensuring free access to quality education for Roma children and preventing the rise of anti-Romani sentiment amongst schoolchildren;
13. Recalls that it adopted a resolution in 1989 on the education of Roma, Sinti and Travellers' children, and considers that ensuring that all Roma children have access to mainstream education remains a priority;
14. Calls for the teaching of the Roma cultural heritage (their language and history) to Roma schoolchildren as an important future goal for education; encourages Member States to include information on the national Roma population in the mainstream educational

curriculum; stresses, in this regard, the need to develop special instruments to protect the cultural rights of vulnerable groups such as the Roma;

15. Calls on the public authorities including the media of Member States and candidate countries to increase the representation of minority groups through the introduction of anti-discrimination policies in recruitment and promotion and by changing internal working practices;
16. Calls for coordination among EU-level, national and local authorities to launch information campaigns to Roma communities on the opportunities and best practices available to tackle social exclusion in housing, health care, education and employment;
17. Calls on Member States and candidate countries to establish a strategy for improving the collection, analysis and publication of statistical data on human rights violations and racial abuse of Roma;
18. Urges the EUMC and, upon creation, the Fundamental Rights Agency to devote more attention to the anti-Gypsyism/Romaphobia present in Europe, to allocate the necessary resources through the creation of units and bodies specialised in monitoring racial abuse and human rights violations against the Roma, and to publish comprehensive reports;
19. Welcomes the formation of the European Roma and Travellers Forum, and the work of groups within Parliament focused on Roma and minority issues; recognises the importance of cooperation with such bodies when formulating Roma policies in Europe;
20. Supports the continuing moves within the EU institutions towards incorporating the Roma-to-Roma approach, as developed by the OSCE, in the future hiring of staff for Roma as well as non-Roma related vacancies;
21. Welcomes the Decade for Roma Inclusion Initiative, to which five Member States and candidate countries are signatories, and calls on the Commission to work in concert with the governments concerned to allocate relevant EU programme funding so as to bring the initiative to fruition;
22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and candidate countries.