

Council of Non-governmental Organization of Roma Communities
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Roma accept with enthusiasm the creation of new Slovak government and do believe that its attention will be finally and honestly dedicated to all minorities in Slovak Republic

We, Roma are aware of declarations committed by the recent country representatives in the past; however we possess concrete eight years experience with the last government. New Slovak government started to apply equal approach towards all Slovak minorities. The appointment of new government it is considered by our community as the first chance ever that will allow real pro-Roma oriented approach.

Despite a number of positive steps implemented through a government of Mikuláš Dzurinda in the field of foreign policy that helped the Slovak Republic to become a highly respected state on the international level, the declared improvement of the status of Roma minority in the society as one of the priorities of the same government failed to happen and moreover had decreasing tendency.

This minority was not raised by the last government from its marginalized standpoint in the real life, neither in the public meaning in Slovak society.

Slovak Republic is being continuously criticized from abroad due to the passive approach and very slow flow of positive changes in the life of Roma communities with aim to education, employment and accommodation, even though that many international organizations dealing with Roma issues stress that it is a question of multigenerational long-term process. International institutions continuously point at unbearable living conditions of Roma living in settlements, non-adopted reforms of existence value in education and to 100% unemployment rate of Roma in some regions of the Slovak Republic. This is the reality after eight years of performance of the last government.

634 Roma settlements out of which many are with out the basic infrastructure, drinking water, electricity and gas connections such as Luník IX still exist and are symbols of negative living conditions of Roma in the Slovak Republic.

We consider as one of the concrete positive steps the employment of Roma minority representative Mrs. Erika Adamová as a spokeswoman to the Vice-Prime Minister of the Slovak Government Mr. Dušan Čaplovič and the creation of the advisory body composed of Roma intelligence serving to the Vice-Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic as intermediate body for dealing with Roma issues.

We will optimistically watch the steps of the recent cabinet and with respect to the clear we offer to the new government our trust and our helping hand.

The last government set a vysokú latku in the achievement of membership for the Slovak Republic in the EU and NATO, setting of goals and programmes, but it did not manage to get out of their political approach towards minorities. The cancellation of the antidiscrimination act by the Slovak Supreme Court, based on the proposal of one of the members of the old government coalition Christian Democratic Party, (KDH) means step back and creation of non-possibility for Roma to bring this minority to the level of the majority population to assure their equal chances within the society.

We, Roma with hope and optimism face the fact, that the Roma issues will not be longer in hands of other minority, which would flagrantly misuse its position in the government in favor of other minority rather than dealing also reasonably with Roma issues, how it was adopted by the last government during the period of eight years in the area of human rights, education, financing of minority cultures, accommodation, health care and redistribution of finance from the EU Structural Funds.

Yours sincerely

Ladislav Richter
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