



# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

Date: 3 December 2014  
Index: EUR 39/004/2014

## **Romania falls short of its international human rights obligations on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

Amnesty International and the European Roma Rights Centre welcome the [Concluding Observations](#) made public on Monday 1 December by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights following the recent review of Romania's periodic reports.

The Concluding Observations highlight outstanding concerns over Romania's failure to ensure effective implementation and protection of the human rights - among others - of Roma people, thus falling short of Romania's obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights ratified by Romania in 1974. These largely echo concerns that the two organizations have raised both publicly and directly with the Romanian authorities.

The Committee expressed concerns over a wide range of human rights issues, including continuing "*widespread discrimination and social exclusion of Roma, especially in the areas of housing, education, health and employment*", as well as prevailing hostility of public opinion surrounding Roma (para 9). The Committee noted shortcomings in Romania's National Roma Inclusion Strategy and called for more effective policies based on disaggregated statistical data on the situation of Roma.

In particular, the Committee shared the organizations' concerns regarding the significant challenges related to the right to housing for "*Roma who continue to live in substandard housing conditions, without safe drinking water or sanitation facilities, electricity, heating, sewage, waste disposal or legal security of tenure which exposes them to the risk of eviction*" and also noted the "*limited number of social housing units available and the absence of a monitoring mechanism to ensure that the allocation of social housing is transparent and non-discriminatory*" (para 18). It finally highlighted continuing "*cases of forced evictions of Roma from irregular settlements, and their relocation to unsafe or polluted sites threatening their lives and health*" (para 19).

The Committee recommended the adoption of all necessary measures to ensure access to adequate housing for disadvantaged and marginalized groups, including Roma. The Romanian authorities were urged to amend national legislation to provide a minimum degree of security of tenure for people living in informal settlements and adopt legislation to ensure that evictions are carried out in compliance with international human rights standards. In particular, forced evictions of Roma should be prevented "*until they have been consulted, afforded due*

*process guarantees and provided with alternative accommodation or compensation enabling them to acquire adequate accommodation” (para 19).*

Amnesty International and the European Roma Rights Centre reiterate their call on the Romanian authorities to implement the Committee’s recommendations with no further delays. In particular the Romanian authorities should seize the opportunity of the review of the National Roma Inclusion Strategy, currently underway, to include measures in-line with the Committee’s recommendations. They should also publicly commit to adopting adequate safeguards against forced evictions and guaranteeing security of tenure to all people, including those living in informal settlements.

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