

URGENT ACTION

HUNDREDS OF ROMA FORCIBLY EVICTED

Hundreds of Roma living in the settlement of Gianturco were forcibly evicted on 7 April. Dozens of families had already left the settlement due to intensified police checks and harassment and many are feared homeless. The 200 people still present on 7 April were moved to inadequate alternative housing or rendered homeless and vulnerable to other human rights violations.

Hundreds of Roma living in the informal settlement of Gianturco in Naples, Italy, were forcibly evicted by local authorities on 7 April. Families had been told by authorities two weeks before that the eviction was scheduled for 11 April but on 6 April they were informed that the eviction was happening the next day. Amnesty International was allowed in the cordoned off area to monitor the operation. Journalists were prevented from entering.

Of the **estimated 1,300 Romanian Roma** that lived in Gianturco, only 200 people, including children, elderly and sick people, were present when the forced eviction was carried out. Dozens of families had left the settlement in the weeks before in fear of being rendered homeless, as the authorities told them there would not be an alternative for all. Repeated police checks, which intensified before 7 April amounted to harassment. The forced eviction was carried out within 4 hours. All homes were demolished and the area was sealed off.

The authorities transferred around 130 people to a new segregated camp, in Via del Riposo, located where a Romani settlement was burned down by assailants in 2013. Anti-Roma slogans had already been sprayed on the nearby walls. Amnesty witnessed people passing by in a car shouting slurs against Roma. Local authorities told researchers that police forces would remain outside the camp for a while as they fear attacks and hostility from non-Roma. A few families were offered to move to the reception centre "Grazia Deledda", where conditions have been reported by many Roma to be inadequate, with no privacy and only communal showers and kitchen. Amnesty has not yet been granted access to the camp in Via del Riposo or to the reception centre and is awaiting a response from authorities to a request filed on 7 April. Many families were not offered alternative housing and were rendered homeless as a result of the forced eviction. At least two families, including one with a one-year-old child, spent the last few days in their cars. A seven-month pregnant woman and a severely sick 20-year-old man slept in a train station. The whereabouts of dozens of other families are unknown. On 11 April, in a meeting sought by Romani families and activists, local authorities said they have no alternatives for the families left homeless.

Please write immediately in Italian, English or your own language urging the authorities to:

- Ensure that all people left homeless as a result of the 7 April forced eviction occurred in Gianturco are urgently provided with adequate alternative housing through an open and genuine consultation;
- Urgently initiate a consultation with the Romani families in the segregated camp in Via del Riposo to develop sustainable rehousing plans which comply with international and regional human rights standards and are consistent with Italy's National Strategy for Roma Inclusion;
- Ensure no further forced evictions of Roma are carried out in Naples.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 MAY 2017 TO:

Mayor of Naples

Luigi de Magistris
Comune di Napoli
Palazzo San Giacomo
Piazza Municipio 80133 Napoli, Italy
Fax: +39 08 17955002
Email: urp@comune.napoli.it

Salutation: Dear Mayor

Minister of Interior

Marco Minniti
Ministero dell'Interno
Piazza del Viminale 1
00184 Roma, Italy
Fax: +39 06 46549832
Email: segreteria.technica.ministro@interno.it

Salutation: Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 63/17. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR30/5937/2017/en/>

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INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In the months prior to the forced eviction, the municipality did not carry out a genuine consultation to explore all feasible alternatives to the eviction and alternative housing options for all the residents. Two weeks before the eviction the authorities told the families they would be evicted on 11 April and handed them a few copies of the eviction decree. However, on 6 April they told all families to be ready to go the following day.

The forced eviction started at 7am on 7 April and by 11am everybody was out of the settlement. The area was seized and access was blocked. The demolitions were already underway from around 10am as they started from the back of the settlement. All homes were demolished. Only a few buildings which existed before the Romani settlement was created were left standing. Many homes around the settlement were empty, as residents left in the weeks and days before the eviction. However, many possessions were left behind both by the families who vacated the settlement before the eviction, and by those who moved out during the eviction on 7 April. These included furniture, clothes, toys and gas canisters. No compensation for loss of property was reportedly offered.

Dozens of law enforcement and other officers (including the Carabinieri, the General Investigations and Special Operations Division – Digos, the judicial police, and the municipal police) were involved in the operation, with many vehicles. Firemen, civil protection units, several bulldozers and trucks for transporting everything that was being demolished were also present.

While some families knew that they were being transferred to the new camp in Via del Riposo, which was built with funds from Naples municipality and the Ministry of Interior, many were told that they were not on the list for the new camp. Many more families received no response from the authorities when they asked where they should go as they had no offers of alternative housing. When Amnesty researchers asked what would happen to the families who had not been offered any alternative housing, representatives of the municipality and one police officer refused to reply. One said “We don’t have places for all of them”.

The families offered a place in the Via del Riposo camp were offered transport if they had none available. Three buses moved adults and children to the new camp, and some cars were used to transport some of the possessions. However many Roma told Amnesty that they were instructed to take very few things as there was not much space in Via del Riposo. Amnesty considers the Via del Riposo camp an inadequate alternative, with possible concerns over space, access to services, security of tenure of the families and overall segregation. Amnesty is waiting for authorisation from the authorities to visit the camp in Via del Riposo, but has been informed that it has 28 containers (27 inhabited and one used by the authorities), each of around 20sqm, and that each container has a room, a bathroom and a kitchen. There is electricity and water (hot and cold). The camp is surrounded by fences and is gated. Anti-Roma slogans such as “no Roma”, “no to degradation” and “traitor major” had already been sprayed on the fences around the camp. There are guards at the gate 24/7 and police forces deployed outside as the authorities acknowledge a risk of tensions and attacks from non-Roma.

Dozens of Romani families from Gianturco remained homeless. Some moved to existing informal settlements in improvised housing, others are temporarily living with friends and relatives, and at least 3 families have spent the night in their cars and one in a train station, including a 7 months pregnant woman and a severely sick 20 years old boy. In a meeting sought by activists and Romani families left homeless on 11 April, the municipality acknowledged that they “do not have alternatives... cannot find solutions for all families”.

Name: Romani families (adults and children) forcibly evicted from the Gianturco informal settlement
Gender m/f: all

Further information on UA: 63/17 Index: EUR 30/6051/2017 Issue Date: 12 April 2017