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Request to remove Romani families from Cantonului Street was rejected by the Cluj-Napoca Court

Romani CRISS, the Working Group of Civil Society Organizations (gLOC) and Amnesty International welcome the decision of the court of Cluj-Napoca on Wednesday 18 April 2012 to reject the request of the public company, the National Railway (CFR), to remove approximately 450 people, mainly Roma, living in the settlement in Cantonului Street, in the Romanian city of Cluj-Napoca.

The Court of Cluj-Napoca decided that the request was inadmissible. Its decision is not final and the CFR can appeal it within 15 days after the receipt of the written communication.

This is not the first attempt of the company to evict people living in Cantonului Street. In May 2011, the National Railways requested a court order allowing an immediate removal of the houses inhabited by the Roma. The request was rejected by the court of Cluj-Napoca on 19 September 2011.

Since summer 2011, Romani CRISS, gLOC and Amnesty International have repeatedly raised their concerns with Romanian authorities regarding the serious consequences that a possible eviction might have on the Roma living on Cantonului Street. The organizations have also called on the Romanian authorities to ensure that people from Cantonului Street are not evicted unless and until the necessary safeguards are put in place.

Under international and regional human rights law that Romania is a party to, evictions may only be carried out as a last resort, once all feasible alternatives have been explored in genuine consultation with affected communities. Any eviction of people without adequate notice, alternative accommodation and compensation for any losses would amount to a forced eviction and would violate international and regional human rights standards that Romania is a party to, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Background

The lawyer representing the inhabitants of Cantonului Street was contracted by Bucharest-based NGO, Romani CRISS.

Prior to 2011 and the involvement of Romani CRISS and Amnesty International in the case, there have been several initiatives of the local organisations, Amare Phrala Association and Desire Foundation, to

remind the local authorities of their human rights obligations in the field of housing towards the Roma communities living in the settlements of Cluj-Napoca.

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