

URGENT ACTION

ROMA FAMILIES PROTECTED FROM FORCED EVICTION

The demolition of the homes of 53 Roma families living in the Grmeč informal settlement in Zemun municipality has been suspended on the order of the Serbian government. All families living in the settlement have been promised alternative accommodation before any eviction should take place.

The Serbian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, Zorana Mihajlović, who is responsible for the advancement of the situation of Roma in the country, informed Amnesty International on 14 August that the government had ordered the Zemun municipality not to evict the Roma families from the Grmeč settlement and not to execute the demolition orders issued in July.

On 19 August, the Serbian NGO Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, which had submitted an application to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) on behalf of 130 individuals living in the settlement, confirmed that the Court had received sufficient guarantees from the Serbian government that it will not proceed with the eviction until alternative accommodation has been provided to the families.

Further, the ECtHR was informed that the demolition orders had been quashed on appeal. For those who had not submitted a domestic appeal, the Zemun municipality ordered the postponement of the execution of the demolition orders until alternative adequate accommodation was secured. As a result, all families in the Grmeč settlement are now protected from forced eviction.

The Minister confirmed to Amnesty International that a working group was being set up to draft and introduce legislation ensuring that future evictions are carried out in line with international human rights standards.

Thank you to all those who sent appeals. No further action is required from the UA network.

This is the second update of UA 161/15. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR70/2270/2015/en/>

Name: 53 Roma families
Gender m/f: both

Further information on UA: 161/15 Index: EUR 70/2307/2015 Issue Date: 20 August 2015

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