



**JOINT STATEMENT BY THE TRIO PRESIDENCY (SPAIN,
BELGIUM, HUNGARY) ON THE OCCASION OF THE SECOND
ROMA SUMMIT HELD IN CORDOBA (8 AND 9 APRIL 2010)**

The Roma population has been living in Europe for centuries, currently estimated to be between ten and twelve million persons. A significant number of them experiences exclusion in essential areas of daily life, such as access to education, unemployment and job insecurity, poor housing conditions and inequalities in the field of health. In many situations, discrimination, social rejection and the lack of guaranteed access to fundamental rights make these circumstances worse. Women and children are particularly affected by these problems. Segregation hinders equal access to housing and to basic services as health care, social services, education system, and allows access to services with lower quality only.

The Roma issue has gained priority on the agenda of the European institutions and of many of its Member States in recent years. The Trio Presidency welcomes the progress experienced in the European Union, which is reflected in successive Resolutions of the European Parliament in 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009 and the recently adopted Resolution on the occasion of this Summit on 25 March 2010. The European Commission not only has increased efforts to include the Roma in its programmes and activities, but also has improved coordination among its different initiatives and institutional units. The Trio welcomes the Progress Report presented by the Commission at this Summit and the accompanying Communication outlining future priorities and challenges.

Since 2007 the Council has adopted four Conclusions with the purpose of enhancing European and national policies on Roma inclusion; and several conclusions are expected to be adopted during the Spanish Presidency, which represent another step forward. The First European Roma Summit held in Brussels in 2008 and the creation of the Integrated Platform on Roma Inclusion in order to *organise an exchange of good practices and experiences between the Member States in the sphere of inclusion of the Roma and to provide analytical support and stimulate cooperation between all stakeholders concerned by Roma issues, including the organisations representing the Roma*, are good examples of the significant progress achieved.

The current Trio of Spain, Belgium and Hungary, believes it is the time to give a boost to the Roma dossier in order to achieve substantial improvement in the social and economic integration of the Roma in Europe, within the framework of the Decisions and Recommendations adopted by the European institutions in the recent years. Hence, it is necessary to ensure that current policies and instruments are fully developed and made work efficiently from a medium-term perspective.

Therefore, the Trio commits itself to:

- Advance the mainstreaming of Roma issues in European and national policies in order to that European strategies and instruments include specific actions favouring socio-economic inclusion of the Roma. This mainstreaming should be guaranteed in areas such as fundamental rights, gender approach, personal safety and protection against discrimination, poverty and social exclusion, regional cohesion, economic development and access to education, housing, health, employment, social services, justice, sports and culture. Mainstreaming should also be taken into account in the relations with third countries whose Roma population reaches a significant number.
- Improve the design of a road map of the Integrated Platform on Roma Inclusion which establishes a framework for medium-term action, as well as for objectives and results to be achieved; prioritising the key issues to be addressed; and strengthening horizontal cooperation among Member States and civil society, with the adequate support and boost of the Commission for the preparation of the meetings and activities. It is proposed to provide guidance and support in the framework of the Platform in order to facilitate the implementation and the implementation/put into practice of the Ten Common Basic Principles.
- Ensure that the existing financial instruments of the European Union, in particular the Structural Funds, are made available to the Roma, and that they address their needs and have an effective impact on the improvement of their living conditions. In this regard, the recent amendment of Article 7 of the General Provisions on Structural Funds is particularly relevant, as well as the opportunities it offers to implement integrated actions improving housing conditions and eliminating segregation in both rural and urban areas.



Proposing the introduction of some minimum requirements in EU funds' allocation in order to ensure the equal access of Roma to resources, which is essential for strengthening social inclusion. Moreover, its procedures should be simplified in order to ensure equal access to those resources. In this way, the three principles of 1. promotion of equal access to sources, 2. abolishment of segregation, 3. ensuring complex development should be observed (in the modification of regulations on ESF and ERDF).

The Trio Presidency intends to summarize the conclusions and messages of the Second European Roma Summit with the purpose of taking them into account in the political process and the activities to be done during the course of the current Presidency and of the two forthcoming ones. The Trio Presidency will organise a conference on child poverty and homelessness with a particular focus on the Roma and would like also to pay specific attention to the labour market problems of Roma population therefore plans to organize the meeting of the Integrated Platform on Roma Inclusion in the first half of 2011

The Trio Presidency will stand up firmly against stigmatisation and will also aim at improving coordination and collaboration with the Commission and the Parliament, as well as participating in other political processes, such as the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015, the OSCE Action Plan, within the framework of the Recommendations of the Council of Europe and the United Nations.

Cordoba, 9th April 2010