

Open Letter

Romani CRISS, Sance Egale (Equal Opportunities) and Asociatia Umanitara Impreuna pentru Ei (Humanitarian Association Together For Them), strongly oppose to the illegal and inhuman actions initiated by the mayor of City Hall Baia Mare, against the Romanian citizens of Roma ethnicity in the locality.

The imminent eviction of the Roma from Craica and other communities from Baia Mare, made a concern subject for Romani CRISS and Sance Egale since 2011, considering the failure to comply with international legal standards regarding the right to housing¹. The demolition procedure was started by the Municipality of Baia Mare, which is putting pressure on Roma, who refuse to move in the alternative social housing provided by the City Hall, even if, formally, to the public opinion, the Municipality claims that these moves take place only with the consent of the Roma.

The Municipality of Baia Mare understands to respect the right to housing, **guaranteed** by international treaties, ratified by Romania, by both breaking the law, as well as by despising people from Craica.

On April 20 2012, the Municipality of Baia Mare issued summons² ensuring that *"no person or family will be evicted, and no house will be demolished without their consent"*. Also, to ensure, again, strictly from the legal perspective, that people at risk of eviction are offered alternative housing. The Municipality of Baia Mare specifies relocation options, but none adequate.

On June 1 2012, despite commitments made in writing by the Municipality, in Craica community were present representatives of Police and Baia Mare's Municipality, including the Mayor Chereches Catalin, who put a direct pressure on Roma to convince them to voluntarily leave the community and to move into social housing offered within CUPROM building. According to some Roma people, they were threatened to be left on the roads, that their houses will be demolished and they will not have a place to live, if they do not accept what is offered. One of Roma people living in Craica showed the Municipality's representatives the received summons, saying that *"no person or family will be evicted, and no house will be demolished without their consent."*

¹ http://www.romanicriss.org/Scrisoare_deschisa_de_protest_zid_Baia_Mare.pdf

² See attached to this letter

The answer of an elected official, namely Mr. Catalin Chereches, was that *“he pi...s on the papers”*.

On June 1 2012, a few tens of people who were moved from Craica into the Block no 2 within CUPROM, were intoxicated, after ingestion of substances found in homes that have been distributed, requiring hospitalization³.

This critical incident, that involved many children, proves only the lack of interest regarding the rights of Roma persons. The lack of a minimum improvement of the space provided as a housing within CUPROM – block 2, is aggravated by the fact that in rooms where Roma were moved, there were left recipients with toxic content, which represents a breach of the provisions regarding chemical substances.

Once again, Roma are treated as second class citizens, having their health and citizens rights put at risk. The mayor Catalin Chereches makes no exception from this statement: he is accelerating evictions in Craica, *“covering”* himself in lawful summons and putting direct pressure on Roma people in order to respect his electoral promise: *to demolish the shacks from Craica*. We consider unacceptable an electoral campaign⁴ of a Mayor to be based on moving an ethnic group at all costs, in any conditions, even with endangering the health and life of tens of people.

We strongly protest against this situation and ask the Romanian state institutions to take concrete legal, administrative and political measures to stop the actions of City Hall Baia Mare against Roma and to inform publicly, urgently on the measures taken.

Sincerely,

Marian Mandache
Executive Director

Robert Vaszi
Executive Director

Gabriela Pop
President

Romani CRISS

Sanse Egale

**Asociatia Umanitara
Impreuna pentru Ei**

³ <http://www.emaramures.ro/Stiri/67195/ULTIMA-ORA-Intoxicatie-in-masa-printre-locatarii-blocului-social-Cuprom-Baia-Mare>.

⁴ <http://www.emaramures.ro/stiri/66695/ADVERTORIAL-Planul-primarului-Catalin-Chereches-pentru-Baia-Mare-in-urmatorii-4-ani->