



**Romani CRISS**

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## PRESS RELEASE

### **President Traian Basescu apologizes**

On may 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007, Mr. Traian Basescu, President of Romania, addressed to journalist Andreea Pana: “You, pussy, don’t you have anything to do today?” and then said about her in private: “How aggressive that stinky Gypsy was”.

Subsequently, Mr. Basescu apologizes to Andreea Pana for an “underserved moral prejudice” and ads that “the used phrasing [...] doesn’t represent in any way the President’ attitude [...] towards the Roma community in our country [...]”.

Romani CRISS publicly condemns the sexist and racist statement of Romanian President who, through his personal example, feeds and legitimates the use of such language by anybody, a language that leads to increase of intolerance among Romanian citizens, especially that Romania has become an European Union member state and that 2007 is the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All.

According to the Presidency’s press release, Mr. Basescu doesn’t regret what he said, but that “an inappropriate expression [...] has become public”. There are no public apologies to the women in Romania who have been insulted by the offending language “you, pussy”, nor to the Roma community, as Mr. President doesn’t see any relation between him saying “Gypsy” and the Roma community - it is just an expression “used under a state of maximum political and media pressure”.

No pressure justifies such language towards the women and Roma, especially from a president of a country. And if the term “Gypsy” was said only to be pejorative towards a person, this shows, once again that, despite politically correct speeches or official positions, there are still deep internalized bias in the majority population in Romania.

We are looking forward to a second press release directly from President Traian Basescu, with sincere apologies to all the insulted: women and Roma in Romania.

Sincerely,

Cezara David  
Public relations coordinator  
Romani CRISS