



Romani CRISS
Roma Center for Social Intervention and Studies

19, Buzesti St., Sector 1
-Bucharest – Romania
Tel: 004 021/ 231 41 44
Fax: 004 021/ 310 70 70
E-mail: criss@romanicriss.org
Website: www.romanicriss.org

January 25, 2006

Press Release

Yesterday, January 24th, 2006, the Bucharest District 1 Mayoralty demolished 7 houses of Roma located on Chitila Triaj Street, Chitila neighbourhood – Bucharest. One day before, the Roma in question had been informed, verbally, that their houses would be destroyed.

A Romani CRISS team went to the scene and ascertained that community policemen (which came in a bus and 10 cars, including special intervention forces), gendarmes and representatives of District 1 Mayoralty had undertaken the action. Initially, the community police denied access to Romani CRISS team in the area, although they were on public road and at approximately 500 m from the scene.

An approximate number of 50 Romanian citizens of Roma ethnicity whose houses had been demolished were not allowed to take back anything from their own homes, not even their identity papers. All of their belongings were picked up by the police (furniture, cloths, electronic appliances, etc), without even signing a process-verbal.

“Where am I supposed to go from here? They destroyed my house, they got my wife out of the house, wearing thin cloths, out in this cold, with our 1 year-old child in her arms and they didn’t even let my son to put on some shoes. They even threw out my food” – Zamfir Zamfirel said (a Roma whose house was demolished).

The Roma declare they have been beaten up and threatened; a police officer hit a Roma person in the eye with the gun stock and a member of Romani CRISS organisation got him to the hospital. Another hit person was taken by the ambulance to Matei Bals hospital.

Romani CRISS expresses its concern regarding the abusive demolition of Roma houses, especially when the houses are destroyed without prior written summons, without irrevocable Court orders and when outside the thermometers show a -15 °C degree temperature. Moreover, no alternative housing was provided, though mandatory under international legislation. Thus, in our opinion, a series of minimal standards on eviction and demolition were violated.

„We wait for an official statement regarding the situation from the District 1 Mayoralty, the Ministry of Administration and Interior and the governing D.A. Alliance representatives” – declared Magda Matache, Executive director of Romani CRISS.

CRISS will inform the public opinion, the Romanian Government, the Presidency and the relevant national and international bodies in regard to the situation. Moreover, we will lodge criminal complaints to the Courts of law for abusive behaviour. And, depending on the legal status of the land on which the houses had been built, we will analyse the possibility of lodging criminal complaints for the felony of destruction of property and domicile violation.

Cezara David
PR Coordinator