

For the attention of the Deputy Prefect of Nice-Montagne
Sous-préfecture de Nice-Montagne
Tour Ouest - 10ème étage
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Dear Madam,

The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC¹) is an International public interest law organisation established in 1996, working to combat racism and discrimination, as well as to defend human rights of Roma population across Europe through strategic litigation, research and policy development, advocacy and human rights education.

The ERRC is writing to you to express its deep concern provoked by an incident which occurred in Nice on the 26th June involving England football supporters and Romani children. According to information compiled from various sources, including media articles, the football supporters publically humiliated and racially abused the Romani children. Moreover the scenes filmed by Channel 4 in their recent undercover journalism show England fans to be fully aware of the specific racism which they are exhibiting. In broad daylight, England fans refer to Roma as ‘Pakis of Europe’ before chanting that they ‘all hate Pakis’, which is concerning on multiple levels. The most distasteful example of the deliberate and specific nature of anti-Roma abuse comes when England fans up the ante and chant that they will ‘gas you all’, in direct reference to the Romani holocaust where between 500 thousand and 1.5 million Roma perished at the hands of the Nazis and their collaborators.²

The ERRC is appalled by the unacceptable and intimidating behavior of the group of fans in this video. Amongst the deplorable litany of xenophobic, Islamophobic and misogynistic fan chants, there were numerous occasions of this explicit anti-Roma hate speech which was purposely directed at groups of children.

Given the importance of the incident outlined above, the ERRC in accordance with the Framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law³ as well as the national action plan (2015-2017) for fighting against racism and anti-Semitism adopted by the French government⁴ calls for the Prefect in Nice to issue a prompt, public response condemning the actions of these fans; and second, to take

¹ www.errc.org

² Channel 4 News (2016) “England’s shame: Undercover with England fans”, 28th June 16, Available: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wO_Un-1KwPM

³ Council Framework Decision [2008/913/JHA](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=URISERV:l33178&from=FR) of 28 November 2008: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=URISERV:l33178&from=FR>

⁴ <http://www.gouvernement.fr/sites/default/files/liseuse/4040/master/index.htm>

measures for protecting Roma children rights according art.2 of the International Convention on the Rights of the child.⁵

The ERRC thank you for your attention to this urgent matter, as well as for your efforts which will greatly contribute to maintaining the status of France as a peaceful and egalitarian society. We look forward to your prompt and detailed response.

Yours sincerely,

Dorđe Jovanović

President European Roma Rights Centre

Piara Powar

Executive Director FARE Network

⁵ <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>