

20 June 2011

Justitieministeriet
Att: Minister of Justice Lars Barfoed
Slotsholmsgade 10
DK-1216 Copenhagen
Denmark

Naphegy tér 8
Hungary – 1016 Budapest
Office Tel: +36 1 413 2200
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www.errc.org

Re: Arrests of Roma in Copenhagen in May and June 2011

To the Honourable Minister of Justice

Dear Mr Barfoed,

The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) expresses its grave concern regarding recent arrests of three Roma from Romania, who were members of a group of 23 Romanian Roma deported from Denmark on 7 July 2010. Of this group, 14 individuals, ten of whom were represented by the ERRC, had their deportation orders reversed and travel bans lifted by the Ministry of Integration on 15 April 2011.

Between 22 May and 11 June 2011, the ERRC received reports from three of the Roma it represented in that process, indicating that they had been taken into police custody over night in immigration detention. In all three cases police were apparently unaware of the reversed deportation orders and lifted travel bans prior to the ERRC and a local lawyer intervening.

The ERRC is deeply concerned that our clients have been targeted by Danish police very shortly after their entry into Denmark. The ERRC calls on Danish law enforcement authorities to halt their discriminatory practice of targeting Romani European citizens on the streets of Copenhagen, subjecting them to arbitrary stops and searches and taking them into police custody under the Danish Aliens Act. Such practices amount to harassment and clearly contravene Denmark's obligations under several regional and international norms, most notably the EU Free Movement Directive. Moreover, the ERRC urges the Danish authorities to fully respect the doctrine of proportionality in considering the deportation of EU citizens; particularly in view of two recent judgments¹ of its own Supreme Court which clearly state that deportation is disproportionate in cases of trespassing and misdemeanors.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Kushen
Executive Director
European Roma Rights Centre

Cc:

Jens Henrik Hojbjerg
Rigspolitichef, Rigspolitiet

Jonas Christoffersen
Executive Director, Danish Institute for Human Rights

Viviane Reding
European Commission Vice-President in charge of Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship

¹ Sag 264/2010, judgment of 31 March 2010; Sag 319/2010, judgment of 31 March 2010

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Rigspolitiet
Att: Rigspolitichef Jens Henrik Højbjerg
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Re: Arrests of Roma in Copenhagen in May and June 2011

To the Honourable National Police Commissioner

Dear Mr. Højbjerg,

The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) expresses its grave concern regarding recent arrests of three Roma from Romania, who were members of a group of 23 Romanian Roma deported from Denmark on 7 July 2010. Of this group, 14 individuals, ten of whom were represented by the ERRC, had their deportation orders reversed and travel bans lifted by the Ministry of Integration on 15 April 2011.

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Yours sincerely,

Robert Kushen
Executive Director
European Roma Rights Centre

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Lars Barfoed
Justitieministeriet, Ministry of Justice

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² Sag 264/2010, judgment of 31 March 2010; Sag 319/2010, judgment of 31 March 2010