



chi rom e...chi no

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Mayor of Napoli – Dr. Luigi De Magistris
Prefect of Napoli – Dr. Antonio Musolino
Welfare and Social Policies Councilor – Dr. Roberta Gaeta
President of the Campania region – Dr. Stefano Caldoro
President of Napoli's province – Dr. Antonio Pentangelo
Chief of Local Police – Luigi Acanfora
Senate's Human Rights Commission
Campania's Children Rights Commissioner – Cesare Romano

14 March 2014

Re: Violent raid in Naples' Roma settlement

The European Roma Rights Centre¹ and Italian NGO Chi Rom e...Chi No² are writing to ask Italian authorities to protect Roma in Naples who are being targeted with threats of vigilante violence.

On 11 March 2014, around 9 pm, some 50 local residents gathered at the Romani informal settlement at via Santa Maria del Riposo following the accusations of a teenage girl that she had been sexually harassed by "two nomads". According to media reports and local witnesses, 50 people began throwing stones and fireworks and started raiding the settlement – physically attacking the Roma in the camp and destroying property. At least one person was hospitalised with injuries.

Local police and Carabinieri arrived at the scene, but did not intervene to stop the violence at first. They finally stopped the attacks around midnight without arresting anyone.

The residents of the settlement spent the rest of the night in fear and started to collect their remaining property and to prepare to leave their homes.

In the morning, a mob gathered again in front of the settlement and resumed their attacks against the families living in the settlement, despite the presence of the law enforcement officers standing outside the settlement.

According to media reports, the president of Naples's fourth district finally showed up and claimed that these attacks were justified by the long-standing tensions between Roma and local residents in this area. The Councillor for Welfare and Social Policies of the city of Naples only

¹ The European Roma Rights Centre is an international human rights organisation defending the rights of Roma across Europe.

² Chi rom e...chi no is a human rights organisation implementing advocacy and intercultural activities with Roma and non-Roma communities in Naples and in the Campania region

stated that unspecified “*alternative solutions*” had to be found, without condemning the mob violence against the Roma.³

This position reflects the city’s inability to prevent or appropriately address such a serious incident. It also demonstrates its inability to develop appropriate housing solutions, in particular given that in late January this year the inhabitants of the settlement at via Santa Maria del Riposo, in the area of Santa Maria del Pianto, received eviction orders without clearly stating if alternative accommodation will be provided.

It is even more uncertain now whether the Municipality of Naples will be able to provide appropriate assistance to the numerous families who were victims of this racially-motivated attack.

The ERRC therefore calls on the relevant authorities, acting within their respective competences, to:

- Deploy an adequate number of police officers and take all necessary steps to protect Romani individuals from violence in Naples as a matter of urgency;
- Provide adequate alternative housing to the victims, ensuring their safety, security of tenure and private and family life;
- Start a dialogue with Roma and NGOs present in Naples, and involve them in any policies targeting Roma and social cohesion;
- Fully investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of all acts of violence and intimidation against Roma in Naples;
- Fully investigate and prosecute the sexual harassment incident, and
- Denounce every instance of anti-Roma violence and other kinds of hate crimes.

We respectfully ask to be informed of any and all actions undertaken by your offices in a timely manner,



Dezideriu Gergely
ERRC Executive Director



Barbara Pierro
Presidente Chi Rom e...Chi No

³ La Repubblica.it, Poggioreale, rom in fuga da un campo dopo scontri con i residenti, 12 March 2014, available at: http://napoli.repubblica.it/cronaca/2014/03/12/news/poggioreale_ assalto_a_campo_rom_per_ una_16enne_molestata_80798551/