

12th Session of the Human Rights Council

Item 6: Universal Periodic Review (Macedonia) – Statement by Action Canada for Population and Development (Speaker: Enisa Eminovska)

Thank you, Mr. President,

In relation to recommendation No. 6, we urge the Macedonian government to fully implement the Ohrid Framework Agreement especially with respect to the Roma communities.

We also strongly urge the government to prioritize the process of formulating an anti-discrimination legal framework and strengthen the administrative structures to sanction any form of discrimination.

We would like to call attention to the fact that shelter centres for victims of domestic violence remain inaccessible for Roma girls under the age of 18 who suffer violence based on early and or arranged marriages within their families.

With respect to Kosovo Roma refugees in Macedonia, it has been our concern that the process of granting asylum is not fully gender sensitive. There are cases of women who suffered gender based violence in the worse form and yet their families are being denied asylum status in Macedonia.

Concerning the rights of Roma begging children, we urge the Macedonian government to introduce affirmative measures in an effort to eliminate begging in the country. Recently, a state official publicly stated that the government has no program to offer to children under the age of 16 who have problems with addictions.

Up to 90% of the begging children in Macedonia are Roma and almost half of them have problems with addictions thus putting these children in conflict with the law.

We strongly urge the Macedonian government to consider amnesty for all the children under the age 16 for whom the State has no programs to offer to help them with issues of addictions.

Thus, we urge the Macedonian government to put into practice, as soon as possible, the recommendations received and to take effective measures on this issue.