

URGENT ACTION

ROMANI FAMILIES AT RISK AFTER FORCED EVICTION

Around 75 Romani families were forcibly evicted on 21 June from the camp of Masseria del Pozzo, in the town of Giugliano in Campania, near Naples. They were moved to an abandoned factory site, without adequate housing, sanitation or access to health services.

Around 300 Roma including dozens of young children, were forcibly evicted from the camp of Masseria del Pozzo, where they had been living for almost 3 years, on 21 June. The community had been informed that the eviction was going to take place after judicial authorities declared the land unsuitable for human habitation and ordered its seizure. However, the families were only informed verbally that they were expected to move to a former factory site and they were not provided with additional information. The local authorities did not give the community written notice and did not neither carry out a genuine consultation with the community to explore adequate alternative options before the forced eviction.

On 22 and 23 June Amnesty International visited and interviewed dozens of members of the evicted community who stated that they were told by municipality officials and by the police that the former factory site was their only relocation option. In a meeting with Amnesty International on 23 June, the mayor of Giugliano in Campania denied that the municipality had instructed the families to move to the former factory site but also stated that the municipality would not take immediate steps to guarantee the Romani inhabitants' right to adequate housing and sanitation, as well as access to essential services, on the former factory site as it is privately owned.

The former factory site, located in the industrial area of Giugliano in Campania, is a bare plot of land completely inadequate for human habitation. There is no structure in place to shelter families, nor access to electricity. It has only one shower, one plumbed and two almost unusable portable toilet facilities. Men, women and children have little alternative but to use the surrounding bushes. Cold water is available only from four communal taps. People who owned caravans were allowed to bring them to the site, however at least three families were left homeless as they did not own one. Many adults and children sleep in their cars, outdoors or in improvised shelters. Some of the Roma have skin conditions, and at least one man is in need of urgent health-care.

The mayor stated that the municipality had no immediate plans to find a suitable and adequate alternative location in consultation with the community. The mayor also said that the families should remain in the current location until a new planned camp is in place. Plans to build a new segregated camp, previously put forward by authorities, have been severely criticised by Amnesty International and other NGOs as they reinforce segregation rather than inclusion.

Please write immediately in English, Italian or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to urgently guarantee the right to adequate housing, sanitation, and health-care for the 75 Romani families forcibly evicted, in accordance with international human rights obligations by immediately offering them adequate alternative shelter;
- Calling on the authorities to engage immediately in genuine consultation with the Romani families to identify long term adequate alternative housing as outlined in international and regional human rights law and standards and Italy's National Strategy for Roma Inclusion.



PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 9 AUGUST 2016 TO:

Mayor of Giugliano in Campania
Antonio Poziello
Comune di Giugliano in Campania
Corso Campano 200 80014
Giugliano in Campania (NA), Italia
Fax: +39 0813 301 542
Email: segreteria.sindaco@comune.giugliano.na.it

Salutation: Dear Mayor
Via Quattro Novembre 119/A
00187 Roma, Italy

Prime Minister
Matteo Renzi
Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri
Palazzo Chigi, Piazza Colonna 370
Roma, Italia
Fax: +39 0667 797 743
Email: matteo@governo.it
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister
Fax: +39 0647 417 17 / +39 0646 549 467

And copies to:
Minister of Interior
Angelino Alfano
Ministero dell'Interno

Email: segreteriatecnica.ministro@interno.it

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY PASQUALE Q. TERRACCIANO, Embassy of Italy, 14 Three Kings' Yard Davies Street W1K 4EH, 020 7312 2200, Fax 020 7312 2230, Salutation: Your Excellency

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 144/16. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR30/4284/2016/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Masseria del Pozzo Camp

The camp of Masseria del Pozzo was built in 2013 by the Giugliano municipality in close proximity to a landfill stocking toxic waste to temporarily host Romani inhabitants. In October 2015, judicial authorities ordered the seizure of the land of the camp and ordered the removal by the municipality of the families due to the precarious and degrading hygienic and structural conditions of the camp.

Long term plan for segregation

Faced with the closure of the camp, in February 2016, local, regional and national authorities did not launch a genuine consultation to identify adequate housing alternatives for the community. Instead, the authorities jointly approved the construction of a new segregated camp with 44 pre-fabricated units for the Roma living in Masseria del Pozzo. Amnesty International and other NGOs strongly criticised the plan:

<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/EUR3035202016ENGLISH.pdf>.

Highly inadequate temporary alternative for the Romani families

Since 14 June 2016, Romani families had been told by representatives of the local authorities and police that the eviction would take place on 16 June, for then to indicate as date 23 June. By the time it was implemented, on 21 June, no written notice had been handed to the inhabitants by the authorities, who had only provided the Romani families scattered information orally. No genuine consultation had been carried out by local authorities to explore alternative options with the families.

After initially considering the transfer of the community to a remote plot of land, with no facilities, water or sanitation in place, local authorities forcibly evicted the Romani families on 21 June. The families were transferred to the site of a former fireworks factory. Dozens of inhabitants, interviewed by Amnesty International on 22 and 23 June at the new site, stated that they had not been made aware of the new location and had not been given a chance to see it or assess it before the move. Authorities presented the new site to the community as the only possible alternative, and were faced with the impossible dilemma of agreeing to be moved to an unknown location or be rendered completely homeless.

The new location is highly inadequate. Degrading living conditions involve: severely limited access to sanitation facilities, no access to electricity or any other source of energy for cooking and lighting, limited access to water, overcrowding as people are forced to sleep in small caravans or outdoors for lack of alternative shelter. See more on Amnesty International's concerns regarding absence of an adequate alternative at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur30/4300/2016/en/>. The situation of the Romani community demands urgent attention as many children and adults present symptoms of skin conditions, fever, headaches and at least one man was severely ill and required urgent healthcare.

As necessary safeguards had not been put in place ahead of the relocation, the move amounts to a forced eviction, which represents a grave human rights violation. This brings Italy in breach of its obligations under a range of international and regional human rights treaties, including EU legislation (Race Equality Directive). This forced eviction and the long term plan to transfer the families to yet another mono-ethnic camp also fly in the face of commitments undertaken by Italy in its own National Strategy for Roma Inclusion, adopted in 2012, to end segregation in camps.

Further information on UA: 144/16 Index: EUR 30/4343/2016 Issue Date: 28 June 2016