



**AMALIPE CENTER FOR INTERETHNIC DIALOGUE AND TOLERANCE
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**STATEMENT OF CENTER AMALIPE
Human Dimensions Supplementary Meeting of OSCE**

Regarding the preparation of new / updated Framework Program for Equal Integration of Roma in Bulgarian Society Center “Amalipe” expresses the opinion of Roma organizations that the present Program (approved in 1999) was not implemented because of the following missing points:

- lack of financial resources from the state budget dedicated for Framework program implementation;
- lack of proper administrative infrastructure for implementation of Roma integration policy;
- lack of mechanisms and financial resources for engaging municipal / local power with the Framework program implementation;
- lack of mechanisms for engaging Roma NGOs and Roma community as equal partners and one of the main driving forces for the Framework program implementation;
- last but not least: the lowest possible normative status of the Program (Decision of the Council of Ministers).

Having in mind that:

- the process of preparation of new / updated Framework Program is advanced;
- although Roma NGOs and experts participate in the preparation of the new Program, more efforts for extending the Roma participation in this process are necessary;

Center for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance “Amalipe” calls upon Bulgarian government the following:

- to ensure significant financing from the state budget and the structural funds for the implementation of the new / updated Framework Program for Roma Integration and its Action Plan: we express our concern that the preparation of Budget 2009 is close to its end and no special financing for Framework Program implementation is envisaged in it. We call upon Bulgarian government to start providing state budget financing for Framework program implementation from Budget 2009;
- to ensure proper administrative infrastructure for Framework program implementation: we express our concern that the administrative capacity for Roma integration policy decreases. Most of the District experts on ethnic and demographic issues left their positions or were discharged with the changes in administration in May 2008; the National Council for Cooperation on Ethnic and Demographic Issues is still not-working body and lacks responsibilities; the human resources for Roma integration policy in the ministries are close to zero;
- to ensure decentralized way for implementation of the Framework program through establishing fund and programs for financial support of municipalities in implementing the Program at municipal level;
- to ensure certain mechanisms for participation of Roma NGOs and Roma community in the Program implementation, monitoring and evaluation

- to approve the Framework program after it is approved by the vast majority of Roma NGOs;
- to approve the Framework program as Decree of the Council of Ministers and to propose it the Parliament for approval as Decision of the Parliament.