

## “Red Cross Collaborates in Ethnic Filing of Roma in Italy”

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Press release from: [European Center for Antiziganism Research](#)

Agency: **RomNews Network**



July 14, 2008 - “Red Cross Collaborates in Ethnic Filing of Roma in Italy”

Massimo Barra, the head of the Italian Red Cross, insisted that the aim was to integrate Roma people into Italian society. If children were fingerprinted, it would be done "as a game", he said. Mr Barra said the Red Cross "always respects human rights. We are building bridges, not walls."

– 5 July, The Times

The European Center for Antiziganism Research based in Hamburg, Germany condemns in the strongest possible terms the involvement of the Italian Red Cross in assisting the Italian Government in the ethnic registration and profiling of Roma. We urge members of European Civil Society to condemn this action of the Italian Red Cross and to pressure the Red Cross (internationally) to demand that their Italian division withdraw from this involvement.

The registration of minorities is contrary to European Data and Minority Protection legislation in Italy, and yesterday, the European Parliament itself passed a Resolution against the fingerprinting of Roma in Italy, see a recent news report at: [news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/7500605.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/7500605.stm)

The announcement that the Red Cross will assist the Italian police in the registration and fingerprinting of Roma in Rome, Naples and Milan was made by Massimo Barra, Head of the Italian Red Cross, in an interview published in The Times on July 5. This was confirmed in a statement by the Italian Minister of the Interior, Mr. Roberto Maroni, published in the Südtiroler Zeitung on July 10, that the government of Silvio Berlusconi is proud of the participation of the Red Cross in the ethnic registration and fingerprinting of Roma.

The decision of the Italian Red Cross to assist a neo-fascistic Government in singling out the Roma for registration and profiling is chillingly reminiscent of Red Cross collaborations with the Nazis during WWII in the registering, deportations and destruction of Roma life. Moreover, today these actions are being validated by arguments that are similar to those of Nazi German, which state that Roma and Sinti need to be controlled as a means of “crime-prevention”.

We ask every Board and Organizational Structure of the Red Cross to condemn the actions of the Italian Red Cross which support the current Italian government’s recent measures towards Roma.

We request an official Statement from the International Red Cross, as a matter of urgency, condemning the behaviour of the Italian Red Cross for their support of the policies of the neo-fascistic Italian Government. We demand an immediate interdiction of this support for the Italian Police in ethnic profiling and registrations of Roma.

Furthermore, we urge members of European Civil Society to pressure the Red Cross by withdrawing their support, and

stopping their financial support to its activities.

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EZAF is a scientific institution with the aim to systematically investigate anti-Gypsyist attitudes and actions in those countries where members of the Sinti and Roma people live, using the means of scientific analysis.

While hate against Jews, the persecution and extermination of the Jewish people, old and new anti-Semitism has been experiencing great amounts of public attention and broad scientific analysis for a long time, this does not hold true in any equal measure for the concern towards the Sinti and Roma minority. Anti-Gypsyist prejudices remain to be unsolved and manifestly fixed within wide sections of the population, but also within the media and the social institutions. They are publicly expressed unfiltered. This apparently is a declaration of enemy status within society, that can be felt mentally as well as physically

[You can find this press release here](#)