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HOUSING RIGHTS  
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**Oral Statement: Czech Republic Universal Periodic Review**  
**11 June 2008**

This statement is made on behalf of COHRE, the Center on Reproductive Rights, The European Roma Rights Centre and the Peacework Development Fund. We welcome the process and outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of the Czech Republic, undertaken during the UPR's historic first round.

We in particular welcome the close attention paid during the interactive dialogue and in the report of the Working Group to the severe exclusion of the Romani minority in the Czech Republic, as well as to matters concerning the need to tackle discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in the Czech Republic. In the course of the adoption of the Working Group's report, we would request that the record reflect the following:

- The Czech government has neither offered an apology or any indication as to how it intends to remedy the coercive sterilization of several hundreds of Romani women during the period from the late 1970s to 2004 or thereafter. It has missed the opportunity to do so here.
- The Czech government has offered no clear indication as to how it intends to rectify the deep erosion currently taking place to the domestic law right to adequate housing framework, or how it intends to tackle the extreme exclusion of Roma in access to housing.

- Despite repeated expressions of concern by the government delegation, we leave this process without clarity as to how or when the Czech government intends to desegregate the school system.
- It is of extreme concern that on 16 May, President Vaclav Klaus vetoed the anti-discrimination bill which the Czech Parliament adopted on 24 April 2008 and, in an open letter to Chairperson of the Chamber of Deputies Milošlav Vlček, President Klaus stated that he considered this law to be “useless, counter-productive and of low quality and its consequences very problematic”. These statements would seem to make a mockery both of the priorities expressed by the governments of Council during the interactive dialogue, as well as of the statements of the Czech delegation itself during the UPR proceedings.

We urge that Council take account of these matters in proceedings to follow up on the first Czech Republic Universal Periodic Review.