

Time-Sensitive

PRESS RELEASE

23 January 2005

Despite public assertions that, ten days from now, premiers Vojislav Kostunica and Milo Djukanovic will join heads of state from eight European countries in signing a commitment declaring the "Decade of Roma," the SaM Council of Ministers and the governments of Serbia and Montenegro have not ratified the Decade's action plans in education, employment, housing and health. The "Decade of Roma" opens on 1 February 2005 at an international conference in Sofia that gathers European heads of state and countless investors and donors.

Yurom Center in Nis expresses its concern that, by not acting in timely fashion, the SaM Council of Ministers and the governments of Serbia and Montenegro are endangering participation in processes that aim to integrate all citizens here at home and in the European community.

Given the historic significance of the "Decade of Roma" documents for Europe, for members of the Roma national minority and for all current and future citizens of the European Union, Yurom Center emphasizes that state institutions at State Union and republic level should demonstrate responsibility and interest toward their pledged commitments.

Yurom Center calls upon the premiers of Serbia and Montenegro to act on their obligations and accelerate ratification procedures of the Action Plans so that Serbia and Montenegro can participate as full and equal partners with other European states and members of the international community in realizing the "Decade of Roma."

On behalf of the Executive Board of Yurom Center
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