



**Speech by Mr. Raphaël Alomar, Governor of the Council of Europe Development Bank, at the high level meeting on the integration of the Roma in Europe held on 20 October 2010**

I would first like to thank the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General for their initiative and their invitation.

The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) is well acquainted with the situation: the Roma minority is one of the most deprived population groups, suffering from high unemployment rates, exclusion, along with a deplorable situation in terms of health, education and housing.

The CEB is actively involved in operations aimed at improving the living conditions of the Roma, in the form of loans (in such countries as Bulgaria, Hungary, Serbia and Spain), but also grants (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bulgaria).

The CEB benefits from fruitful cooperation with the Council of Europe, the World Bank, the European Commission and the specialised agencies of the United Nations.

These actions fit into the framework of the recommendations of the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe, which emphasised the importance of the CEB for disadvantaged population groups, and for social cohesion.

The need for concrete actions to help the Roma has frequently been underlined.

The Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia, Mr. Djelic, has mentioned several such actions in relation to his own country and has formulated proposals of great interest for expanding the Bank's activity in this field, where the CEB will be continuing its firm commitment in conjunction with the Council of Europe.

Among the documents issued to you, you will find a review of the various actions undertaken by the Bank in its efforts for the inclusion of the Roma.

Thank you for your attention.