



Podgorica, 5 April 2005

Press Statement:

**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) marks April 8,
International Roma Day**

By marking International Roma Day, UNDP is stressing extremely difficult Roma situation in Montenegro.

According to the UNDP data:

- Roma population poverty rate is 4,5 times higher than national poverty rate, meaning that on the average every other Roma family lives below the poverty line;
- 61 % Roma population lives in the housing smaller than 30m², almost half of them lives in the barracks, while about 50% of the population lives in the objects older than 17 years;
- 85,8% of Roma households in comparison with 8,2% of the regular population lives in less than 10m² per person;
- As consequence of harsh living conditions, on the average, Roma live 10 years shorter than the general population (64 in comparison to 74 years).

Unemployment of Roma is extremely high, therefore Roma, no matter what their status (refugees, IDPs or domicile population) are forced to turn to "informal sources of income" as the only way for their survival (waste collection, recycling, begging...)

According to UNDP data, about 20,000 Roma lives in Montenegro.

UNDP is trying to improve position of Roma in Montenegro through its activities, such as support to the realization of the Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy in Montenegro and through the programs assisting NGO sector.

This year, UNDP supported publishing of the National Action Plan for Roma Inclusion, as part of the project "Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015" as well as activities of number of NGOs promoting this Action Plan.