

Dokumentation av arbetsseminariet

**OM EN SANNINGS- OCH
FÖRSONINGSPROCESS**

och/eller

**EN VITBOK KRING
ROMERNA I SVERIGE**

Den 25 juni 2008 arrangerade Delegationen för romska frågor ett arbetsseminarium om en sannings- och försoningsprocess och/eller en vitbok kring romerna i Sverige (det s.k. Vitboksseminariet) för att diskutera möjligheten att starta en sannings- och försoningsprocess kring de brott mot mänskliga rättigheter som romerna i Sverige har utsatts för.

Här följer en dokumentation av dagens anföranden och diskussioner.

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PROGRAM 25 JUNI 2008

Arbetsseminarium om en sannings- och försoningsprocess och/eller
en vitbok kring romerna i Sverige
Rotundan, Rosenbad kl. 9.00-17.30

*Vänligen anmäl er i receptionen vid stora ingången Rosenbad 4. Ni kommer att lotsas upp till
Rotundan,
det är därför viktigt att inte komma efter kl. 9:00. Observera att föranmälan krävs.*

- 8:30 Kaffe, te och smörgåsar serveras
- 9:00 *Inledande anförande av **Maria Leissner**, ordförande för
Delegationen för romska frågor.*
- 9:15 **Rosa Taikon**, silversmed: *En historisk överblick över
förföljelserna av romer i Sverige.*
- 10:00 **Miranda Vuolasranta**, vice ordförande för the European
Roma and Travellers Forum: *Romerna och mänskliga
rättigheter i Europa.*
- 10:30 Diskussion
- 11:00 Kaffe
- 11:30 **Dick Oosting**, Europe Director, International Center for
Transitional Justice, ICTJ, Bryssel: *Vad är en sannings- och
försoningskommission? Vad kan sådana kommissioner
uppnå – vilka är riskerna?*
- 12:30 Lunch
- 13:30 **Julie Roy** och **Doug Kropp**, Legal and Senior Counsel,
Justitiedepartementet, Kanada: *Indian Residential Schools
Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Canada.*
- 14:15 Tove Skotvedt, Senior Adviser,
Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet: *Norge och vitboken om
tvångssterilisering av resande/tatere.*
- 14:45 Diskussion om Kanadas och Norges erfarenheter.
- 15:30–15:40 **Katri Linna**, Ombudsman mot etnisk diskriminering (DO):
Förutsättningar för upprättelse – DO:s syn.
- 15:40-16:10 Kaffe
- För speciellt inbjudna:**
- 16:10 Sammanfattning och diskussion om hur arbetet ska gå
vidare.
- 17:30 Seminariet avslutas.

Sammanfattande seminarierapport: Dags för en Vitbok och en Sannings- och försoningsprocess kring romerna i Sverige?

Delegationen för romska frågor arrangerade i slutet av juni ett arbetsseminarium för att diskutera möjligheten att starta en sannings- och försoningsprocess kring de brott mot mänskliga rättigheter som romerna i Sverige har utsatts för. Genom att starta en försoningsprocess skulle en lång historia av förföljelse och utanförskap kunna avslutas.

En viktig del av seminariet var att ta del av erfarenheter från liknande processer, bland annat från Kanadas och Norge.

– Jag hoppas vi kan hitta en metod för att göra upp med osynliggörandet av romerna, sade Maria Leissner, ordförande för Delegationen för romska frågor.

Trots att romer bott i Sverige i över 500 år fick de inte status som nationell minoritet förrän år 2000. Under århundradena har romerna fått utstå diskriminering och övergrepp som satt djupa spår. Samma år som erkännandet som nationell minoritet kom bad den dåvarande ärkebiskopen K G Hammar om ursäkt för svenska kyrkans räkning, medan den dåvarande regeringen valde att skriva en ursäkt, som riktade sig till de resande, i en debattartikel i Expressen. Att detta inte var tillräckligt är många ense om och därför kvarstår frågan: Hur ska svenska staten, majoritetssamhället och romerna försonas?

I sitt öppningstal talade Maria Leissner bland annat om romernas situation i Europa, både om Förintelsen under andra världskriget, och de övergrepp i form av pogromer som många romer utsatts för än i dag. Procentuellt mördades lika många romer som judar i koncentrationslägren, ändå är det få som känner till detta. Det tog 40 år för Tyskland att be om ursäkt, men Tyskland är inte den enda nationen med ett mörkt förflutet. Än i dag är det flera länder som nekar romerna deras mänskliga rättigheter, vilket exempel bland annat från Kosovo och Italien visar.

– Antiziganismen är en del av Europas mörka sida, sade Maria Leissner. Vi måste se och erkänna den för att kunna göra något åt orättvisorna.

Maria Leissner tog också upp den strukturella och systematiska diskrimineringen i Sverige. Till exempel att romer inte fick rösträtt förrän på 60-talet, tvångssteriliseringar av romska kvinnor, rasistisk lagstiftning med mål att utesluta romerna från det svenska samhället, samt att romska barn länge nekades att gå i

skolan. En bild av att staten medvetet diskriminerade en av Sveriges äldsta minoriteter växte fram.

En försoningsprocess skulle, enligt Maria Leissner, inledas med att en så kallad Vitbok skulle skrivas. Vitboken skulle dokumentera historien, förföljelserna och situationen idag för romerna i Sverige – och ge enskilda romer möjlighet att berätta om egna erfarenheter av övergrepp.

När människorättsaktivisten och silversmeden Rosa Taikon visade bilder från sitt liv och talade om den rasism och de övergrepp som hon och hennes familj upplevt var det många bland åhörarna som nickade och hummade instämmande. Hon berättade om getton som romer tvingades bo i eftersom lagen förbjöd dem att stanna på en plats i mer än tre veckor, och om hur myndigheterna omhändertog romska barn med tvång. En grymig svartvit OH-bild visade ett dokument från 1923; ett dokument som hävdar att zigenarnas inordnande i samhället är ett olösligt problem och att det enda sättet att lösa det är att begränsa deras rörelsefrihet.

– Egentligen står det att man ska göra livet så outhärdligt för romer så att de lämnar landet av sig själva, sade Rosa Taikon upprört.

Brott mot romernas mänskliga rättigheter gick som en röd tråd genom hela seminariet. Miranda Vuolasranta, vice ordförande i European Roma and Travelers Forum och projektledare för den finska Romadelegationen talade om hur verkligheten ser ut för romer i Europa i dag. Många lever under omänskliga förhållanden och barnen nekas skolgång. Lite har förändrats sedan inkvissionens tid menade hon. Rasism, utanförskap och isolation uppmuntrar till antiziganism och det är få som erkänner romernas lidande, trots att fakta finns. Trots att EU, OSCE och UNHCR har producerat flera rapporter, och trots att EU har flera program med mål att integrera romerna, lever många av Europas romer i misär. Mycket tid och pengar har spenderats utan något tydligt resultat. Enligt Miranda Vuolasranta är problemet att politikerna i respektive länder är dåliga på att implementera den politik som är nödvändig för att förbättra romernas situation.

– Till nu har vi varit offer för utrotning, integration, och assimilation. Nu är det dags att vi aktivt deltar i processen för att formulera en politik som håller i längden, sade Miranda Vuolasranta.

Ett sätt att göra något åt situationen är att inleda en försoningsprocess. Sanningskommissioner upprättades först i Sydamerika med mål att lyfta fram sanningen om övergreppen medborgarna genomlidit i bland annat Chile och Guatemala. De sanningskommissioner som hittills upprättats har främst varit inriktade på att ta itu med övergrepp mot mänskliga rättigheter som begåtts under diktaturer och inbördeskrig. Deras uppgift har bland annat varit att efter en konflikt få fram sanningen samt att skapa ett klimat där en fungerande demokrati kan byggas upp. Att

använda sanningskommissioner i andra sammanhang är ovanligt och därför nyskapande och måste utvecklas med tanke på varje enskilt fall och trauma.

Dick Oosting från International Center for Transitional Justice var på plats för att förklara vad en sanningskommission är och hur den skulle kunna anpassas till en försoningsprocess i Sverige.

– Man kan inte sopa det förgångna under mattan, var hans budskap. Det kommer alltid tillbaka, kanske i form av existentiella frågor som ”Hur kan vi bygga ett demokratiskt samhälle med tanke det som varit?”

Om det, som i Sverige, finns olika bilder av det som hänt är det viktigt att skapa ett sammanhang där de olika bilderna kan mötas och även offren ges en röst, framhävde Dick Oosting. Det handlar lika mycket om att få fram sanningen som vad man gör med den. Att upprätta en sanningskommission är en omständlig process som tar tid och kräver åtagande och engagemang. Därför är det viktigt att vi frågar oss vilken typ av sanningskommission vill vi ha i Sverige och vad målet skulle vara. Dick Oosting är tveksam till en traditionell Sanningskommission i Sverige. Enligt honom är det viktigt att hitta en modell som passar det svenska samhället och strukturen.

I Kanada har man gått igenom processen att inrätta en sanningskommission kring de övergrepp som begåtts mot ursprungsbefolkningen där. Två juridiska experter, Julie Roy och Douglas Kropp, som varit med i processen berättade om ett flera år långt arbete med undersökningar, förhandlingar och visst motstånd innan man ens fick till stånd ett intresse för och ett beslut att inleda försoningsprocessen.

Sannings- och försoningskommissionen i Kanada är inriktad på ”Residential schools” (barnhemsskolor), där indianernas barn placerades för att assimileras i det kanadensiska samhället. Förutom att de tvångsomhändertogs och förbjöds att tala sitt språk och lära sig om sin kultur utsattes många barn för olika sorters övergrepp.

Men målet med den kanadensiska sanningskommissionen är inte bara att föra fram sanningen om övergreppen och få till stånd en försoningsprocess, utan också att förstå de attityder, trossystem och strukturer som tillät att övergreppen begicks över huvud taget. Därför valde man i Kanada att göra sanningskommissionen till en del av ett större åtgärds paket som även omfattar en offentlig ursäkt från ansvariga myndigheter och institutioner, samt kompensation i form av pengar. En ursäkt framfördes av regeringen den 1 juni 2008 och därefter inledde kommissionen sitt omfattande arbete.

I Norge har regeringen bett om ursäkt och kompensation har betalats ut till tvångssteriliserade. Nu inleds också en vitboksprocess. Liksom i Sverige tog det lång tid innan man erkände romer som minoritet. 1999 bad den norska regeringen om ursäkt samtidigt som resande/tatere fick status som nationell minoritet bland andra

minoriteter. Det var början på en fragil försoningsprocess som pågår än i dag. Tove Skotvedt, från arbetsmarknadsdepartementet i Norge, vittnade om att det tar tid att försonas: att erkänna orättvisor, be om ursäkt och återupprätta förtroende med den utsatta gruppen.

– Det är viktigt att myndigheterna ger romerna den tid de behöver för att skapa en atmosfär av förtroende, sade Tove Skotvedt.

Hennes råd till Sverige går att sammanfatta i några punkter:

- Att regeringen är redo att möta anklagelserna med ordentliga utredningar med mål att finna och lyfta fram fakta om den diskriminering och de övergrepp som skett.
- Att regeringen erkänner sina misstag och sin skuld och ber om ursäkt.
- Att romerna uppfattas som jämlika partners i en ömsesidig dialog.
- Att det finns tid och tålamod att ta de steg som krävs, i rätt takt, för att nå försoning.

Seminariets sista talare, diskrimineringsombudsman Katri Linna, fokuserade på dagens samhälle och den diskriminering som romer möter i sin vardag. Hon menade att tidigare lagreglerad rasism gör det svårt även för dagens romer att ta sig fram i och bli accepterade av majoritetssamhället. För att bryta gamla mönster och strukturer behövs ny lagstiftning samt tydliga politiska beslut både på nationell och regional nivå.

– En ursäkt är ett första steg i en försoningsprocess, men en ursäkt utan åtgärder kan bara ses som ännu ett svek, var Linnas budskap.

Text: Irini Mavroudis/Global Reporting

Transkribering av anföranden och inlägg som hölls på svenska

Introduktion av Maria Leissner

Ni är väldigt välkomna allihop, till det här arbetsseminariet för att diskutera om vi behöver en sanningskommission eller en försoningsprocess i Sverige för att starta ett läkande av det sår som finns mellan det svenska majoritetssamhället och de svenska romerna. Det vill säga alla romerna, eftersom att vi sedan 8 år tillbaka har ett officiellt beslut på att romer är en svensk minoritet. Skälet till att vi från den svenska delegationen för romska frågor vill göra det här är flera, och ett viktigt skäl är att förföljelserna mot romer i världen, i Europa och också i Sverige inte verkar ta slut. Man trodde kanske att i de moderna tider som vi lever och med den starka betoning på mänskliga rättigheter som vi har inte minst i Europa och i Sverige att förföljelserna av romer skulle tillhöra det förflutna. Men så är det inte.

För några veckor sedan så skakades hela Europa av vetskapen om vad som skedde i Italien. Med pöbelattacker mot ett romskt läger i Italien, som gjorde att pogromer, bränder, förföljelser och våldsattacker blev en vardag för de Europeiska romerna år 2008.

Italien hade en mycket hatisk valkampanj i våras, där romerna i Italien till och med utnämndes av den som sedan blev premiärminister till "ondskans arme". Och nu förbereder man särskilda lager i Italien riktade mot romer för att kunna kasta ut framförallt romer som har kommit från Rumänien i full enlighet med den fria rörligheten i Europa. Det är en öppen konfrontation med de gemensamma regler om frihet som vi har satt upp mellan de europeiska länderna.

Nyfascistiska politiker i Italien har börjat tala om att ge romer ett eget hemland, man kan inte låta bli att tänka på de bantustans som apartheid i Sydafrika satte upp för den svarta befolkningen för att slippa ge dem fulla medborgerliga rättigheter.

För några decennier sedan, eller ja det var nog på 90-talet, när Jörg Haider i Österrike drev en invandrar fientlig och rasistisk politik i många stycken så blev det en enad front i Europa. Man bestämde sig för att isolera den typen av politiker. Österrike fick få känna av att Europas grundvärderingar handlar om att skydda demokratin och de mänskliga rättigheterna. Jag har svårt att se någon principiell skillnad mellan Jörg Haiders uttalande och Berlusconi's uttalanden. Och frågar, vad tänker Europa göra?

Men den Italienska hetsen mot romer är ingen isolerad företeelse. I Kosovo blev romerna syndabockar när serberna attackerade. Och man blev anklagad för att

samarbeta med serberna och därför blev också husen brända, kvinnorna våldtagna och barnen misshandlade.

I Tjeckien så har ombudsbannen för mänskliga rättigheter hundratals fall av romska kvinnor som har steriliserats mot sin vilja. Vi vet sedan lång tid tillbaka att romerna är inte bara den största minoritetsgruppen i Europa utan också den som är mest diskriminerad och förföljd.

Romer tvingas leva faktiskt bokstavligen talat på avskrädes högar och i u-landsfickor. Man kan ha svårt att tänka sig att det är Europa man finner sig i när man kommer till ett område i många av de europeiska medlemsländerna där det bor många romer. Med tanke på de höga siffrorna på barnadödlighet, de enorma problem med försörjning för att överleva, få mat för dagen, hälsoproblem, kort medellivslängd och det faktum att barnen är utestängda från normal skolgång. De vuxna är också utestängda från arbetsmarknaden genom en systematisk strukturell diskriminering.

Antiziganismen är tyvärr en gammal europeisk tradition av det mörkare slaget. Jag brukar oftare säga att Europa har två ansikten, ett mörkt ansikte och ett ljus. Vi talar oftast i högtidstalen om det ljusa ansiktet. Om demokratin, friheten, solidariteten om allt det som är gott och fint. Men vi har ju också som kontinent varit ursprunget till en rad totalitära ideologier, till kolonialism och en rad olika varianter av rasism. Det kallar jag för den mörka sidan av Europa, som vi också måste se och erkänna för att den ljusa så småningom ska kunna segra.

Under andra världskriget så vet vi att det mördades nära en halv miljon romer. Vi vet att till procenttal av sin grupp så blev det lika många romer förintade som judar. Vi vet att långt innan andra världskriget i de lagar som berövade judar och romer sina fri- och rättigheter så nämndes romerna särskilt och inte enbart judarna. Vi vet att det här var en medveten strategi av nazisterna som hade nazistiska grunder. Ändå dröjde det upp till 40 år innan Tyskland erkände att romerna också vart utsatta för en förintelse under andra världskriget.

I Sverige så har det varit en ännu längre process när det gäller att ta till oss vad som hände under andra världskriget med romerna.

Vi hade tillsammans med Forum för levande historia och Etnografiska museet i vintras en väldigt intressant premiärutställning, kan man säga, för Sverige – även om det var en vandringsutställning som har visats i flera andra länder. Som för många blev en ögonöppnare när det gäller den grad av förföljelse som romerna upplevde under andra världskriget. Också som offer har romer varit marginaliserade.

I utställningen framgår till exempel att det bara var två romer som kom med de vita bussarna till Sverige av alla de som räddades från koncentrationslägren. Så man kan undra hur det egentligen stod till med vår svenska syn på vem det var som var offer om vi kanske inte hade ögonen helt öppna för romernas situation.

Om vi tittar på Sverige hur det har sett ut under 1900-talet så har vi haft ett invandringsförbud mellan 1914 och 1954 som effektivt utestängde de romer som ville och behövde fly undan nazismen. Men som också gjorde det omöjligt för romer som var svenska medborgare att besöka något annat land än Sverige under detta sekel för då fick man inte komma tillbaka in.

Vilken medborgare får inte komma tillbaka till sitt eget land? Jo uppenbarligen, under ett halvt sekel i Sverige den som är rom. På 20-talet antog riksdagen en lösdrivarlag med målet att zigenare skulle drivas ut ur Sverige. På 30-talet en steriliseringslag som riktades till romer och zigenare ”som bärare av oönskade rasegenskaper”. På 40-talet så genomfördes en så kallad ”Zigenarundersökning” där man registrerade alla zigenare i Sverige, och det kan man ju föreställa sig vad det registret skulle ha används till om det blivit en annan utgång under andra världskriget, om tyskarna hade kommit också till oss.

Vad som skedde efter andra världskriget var ju en oerhört kraftig reaktion mot nazismens folkmord och förintelse av judarna. Det ledde till att antisemitismen förvandlades från att vara ganska accepterad i mycket stora kretsar till att bli mindre och mindre rumsren. Idag är det väldigt pinsamt om någon blir påkommen med en antisemitisk kommentar. Det har tack och lov upprättats en väldigt stark skamgränd för antisemitism. Men det finns ingen sådan skamgräns för antiziganismen. Den är inte tabubelagd, och vem som helst i Sverige såväl som i andra länder kan utan att bli offentligt fördömd eller utan att känna att man är bortgjort fälla en sådan kommentar som: ”Nej, jag gillar inte romer de är ...”. Också kan man ha någon synpunkt om vad romer i allmänhet är.

Det tog ända fram till en bit in på 60-talet innan romska barn fick börja skolan. Jag förvånas fortfarande över att jag inte visste om det förens jag började arbeta med romska frågor och dels att det fortfarande finns så många i Sverige som inte har en aning om att romska barn fram till början av 60-talet var utestängda från den skola som har varit obligatorisk sedan 1842 i Sverige.

Röstkort måste man ha om man ska kunna rösta och 1941 så blev rösträtten allmän i Sverige. Men om man inte är fast bosatt någonstans så har ju dåvarande skattemyndigheten lite svårt att veta vem de ska skicka röstkortet till. En arbetsuppgift som jag har bett att vi tar fram i samband med utredningen i delegation är när den förste romen i Sverige fick sitt röstkort. Min gissning är att det var först på 60-talet.

Jag har tagit väldigt stort intryck liksom många andra icke-romer i Sverige har gjort av att läsa både Katitzi böckerna och Hans Caldaras bok ”I betraktarens ögon”. Som handlar om hur det har känts att växa upp så helt utanför det vanliga samhället. Det är svårt att begripa och ta till sig att det skedde samtidigt som jag växte upp, en verklighet som jag inte hade en aning om förrän nu, när jag är över 50 år gammal.

Romerna erkändes som nationell minoritets tillsammans med fyra andra nationella minoriteter år 2000 i Sverige. Vi har haft en tillfriskningsperiod när det gäller majoritetssamhällets relation med romer. Ärkebiskopen K G Hammar bad då å svenska kyrkans vägnar om ursäkt år 2000 för hur man har behandlat romer och resande.

Den dåvarande svenska regeringen publicerade då en ursäkt riktad till resande gruppen. Men sedan har processen avstannat.

Delegation har som uppdrag att lämna ett betänkande om romers situation, med förslag om hur den kan förbättrats. När vi har diskuterat i delegationen så har vi kommit fram till att det krävs något mer än bara ett betänkande och en utredning för att bryta med fem sekler av förföljelser och marginalisering av romer. Det krävs något kraftfullare för att vädra ut all den antiziganism som finns kvar i Sverige.

Om vi tittar på andra länder så finns det många som har ganska framgångsrikt gjort upp med övergrepp av sina egna grupper i det förflutna genom en vit bok, eller någon form av sanningskommission som har inlett en försoningsprocess.

Och vad det handlar om då är då den enkla tanken, som vi ska få höra mer av de inbjudna talarna är att om man går igenom vad som faktiskt har hänt, lägger fakta på bordet och inte blundar för det så finns det en bra grund för en försoningsprocess. Som kan leda till att såren läks så att man kan börja på nytt med friska tag för att göra något åt problemen på allvar.

Jag tror att det kan vara någonting också för Sverige. Men vi vet inte riktigt i delegationen om hur det skulle kunna se ut och på vilket sätt man behöver utforma det i Sverige. Därför har vi tagit intryck av de processer som skett, inte bara i vårt grannland Norge när det gäller resande, och jag är väldigt glad att Tove Skotvedt har accepterat att komma hit och berätta om det.

För några veckor sedan var det ju väldigt intressant att följa den Kanadensiska processen som vi nu kommer att få höra mer om också, när man särskilt tittade på de indianer i Kanada som blivit tvångsomhändertagna, satta på internatskolor och nu har haft en sanningskommission som då ledde till en offentlig ursäkt från den Kanadensiska regeringens sida och en debatt i parlamentet.

Jag vill hälsa både Julie Roy och Doug Kropp hjärtligt välkomna. Jag är hemskt glad att ni har rest så långt för att dela med er av era erfarenheter. Jag är också väldigt glad över att vi har fått Dick Oosting från International Center for Transitional Justice som kommer att berätta lite mer om vad det är för någonting det här med sanningskommissioner, försoningsprocesser, varför och när de används. För att vi ska få all information. Det är den organisation i världen som är ledande på just det här området och jag ser fram emot att höra mer.

Det finns andra exempel också på länder som har gjort liknande processer som har lett till att man har kunnat börja lägga övergreppen i det förflutna bakom sig. Och jag tänker inte minst på både Nya Zeeland och Australien.

Det finns som sagt inspiration att hämta från andra länder. En poäng med det här seminariet är att visa att Sverige inte är en ö av helgon som simmar omkring i världen. Vi har också förbrytelser mot mänskliga rättigheter i det förgångna att göra upp med. Det är inte bara så att det är viktigt för oss att resa ut till andra länder och tala om för dem hur de borde göra. Det är viktigt för oss att fråga andra länder hur de gjorde när de korrigerade sina misstag i det förgångna, lära oss av det och tillämpa det hos oss. Jag hoppas att vi kan hitta en metod för att kunna slutligen göra upp med det historiska osynliggörandet av romerna. För de mekanismer som ledde fram till förintelsen har vi fortfarande i Europa. Vi kan inte fortsätta ha överseende med den strukturella diskrimineringen mot de svenska romerna, för det är ett hot mot demokratin och de värderingar som ska präglade vår kontinent. Vi måste gemensamt anstränga oss för att göra antiziganismen skamlig.

Välkomna återigen till seminariet och jag hoppas att det här ska inleda en mycket intressant process i Sverige. Tack så mycket.

Rosa Taikon, silversmed: En historisk överblick över förföljelserna av romer i Sverige

Jag är hitbjuden för att visa bilder som ger en historisk överblick över förföljelserna av romerna i Sverige. Då vill jag säga att allt det som Maria Leissner har framfört kan jag ge verifikationer på med mina overheadbilder.

Nu är det ju så här att det finns många olika yrken. Vi har professorer, vi har konstvetare, vi har folk som lär sig om olika folkgrupper. Tyvärr är det väl så att många av dessa har fått mycket om bakfoten. I varje fall när det gäller en yrkeskår – men jag kanske måste tillägga att jag hoppas att antropologer och etnologer inte har samma uppfattning som man hade på 1800-talet. Antropologin bygger på rasideologi. Vad jag vill visa här – den 8 oktober 2006 så sänder Sveriges radio i P3 ut att antropologin bygger på rasideologi i en radiodokumentär. Och då är det ju så här, Maria talade ju om Sveriges regering...

Redan när vi kom in på 1500-talet statuerade man exempel av romer, de som inte frivilligt gick över gränsen halshög man mer eller mindre. Den här yrkesgruppen antropologer, nu är det ju inte bara dem. När du (Maria Leissner) talar om rasismen så är det ju faktiskt så att den inte kommer från Hitler.

Sveriges regering sanktionerar ett rasbiologiskt institut i Uppsala i början av 1920-talet. Den uttalat kände nazisten, rasbiologen och läkaren professor Herman Lundborg (1868-1943) är institutets chef ända fram till 1835. Hans uppgift är att se till att Sverige blir av med negrer, tattare och zigenare, som anses vara dåliga folkkraser.

Lundborg låter undersöka värnpliktiga och samer, han utger en rad böcker bl.a. Rasbiologi och rashygien (1914) och Västerlandet i fara (1934) med propagandistisk inriktning, där han försöker bevisa den nordiska rasens överlägsenhet.

Man mäter skallar för att testa intelligens hos folk, och människor lobotomeras av rashygieniska skäl av oro för att dåligt folkmaterial ska komma in i landet.

Under hela min barndom drabbas jag, och övriga romer i Sverige, av antropologernas så kallade "faktauppsatser" om oss romer, av bland andra Bonniers förlag som publicerar i uppslagsverk och konversationslexikon.

Om det är någon som tror att det var Hitler som började med fördomar om rasism då tror ni alldeles galet. Den allmänna uppfattningen är att rasläran utgick från Adolf Hitler. Ingalunda hörni!

Innan Adolf Hitler börjar ta livet av judar och zigenare, som han anser vara dåliga folkkraser, sänder han sina läkare och professorer till Uppsala där rasisten Herman Lundborg utbildar dem i raslära.

Antropologerna gräver upp samernas gravar för att mäta deras skallar.

1933-1975 steriliseras tusentals människor i namn av "antropologisk forskning".

1975 är socialläkaren John Takman och jag med i ett radioprogram om rasism. John Takman berättar, att fram till detta år steriliseras zigenska kvinnor då de anses tillhöra en dålig folkras.

1997 skriver journalisten Maciej Zaremba om sterilisering, baserat på antropologernas rasbiologi, "Det fanns ett stort politiskt intresse av att sterilisera människor som inte passade in i samhället".

Vet ni vad jag önskar? Att jag kunde prata lika lugnt och sansat som Maria Leissner har gjort. Det kan inte jag! Därför att jag är uppvuxen med den svenska rasismen i samhället. Under mina 80 år har jag levt hela min barndom i gettoläger. Och om jag blir upprörd så är det inte riktat mot er, det är riktat mot det jag har upplevt.

Historisk överblick över förföljelsen av romer i Sverige, jag har tagit med ett material som jag använder jag när jag föreläser på universitet och skolor.

Det är ju våra unga som idag går ut i samhället, som Gisela som sitter här. Pojkar och flickor i hennes ålder som studerar, de kommer en vacker dag att kanske sitta som politiker, kommunalarbetare eller något i samhället där man måste kunna visa humanism mot olika folkgrupper oavsett hur vi ser och var vi kommer ifrån.

Jag har tagit med ett material som belyser den rasism och utsatthet som svenska romer under århundraden blivit utsatta för, såväl politiskt som socialt. Och observera hörni,

att här är det inte frågan om att fördomarna och rasismen kommer bara från folk. Det är sanktionerat från högsta politiska ort. Det är politikerna som har sanktionerat att man ska föra den här fördomsfulla rasismen mot romerna. Detta har skett och sker i ett demokratiskt land som Sverige. Men hörni, den demokratin den gällde aldrig oss romer.

När jag visar det här materialet på föreläsningar på universitet och skolor så får jag frågorna: Hur föds fördomar och rasism, var kommer de ifrån? Bottnar de i rädsla för främmande kulturer, som vi inte vet något om? Har ”vår” kultur ett högre värde än andras?

I århundraden har det funnits människor som ser sig själva som förmer än andra. Går vi bara tillbaka ett par tusen år så fanns det en man som kallade sig Jesus. Var hans kulturella och politiska uppfattning annorlunda, när han talade om kärlek, förlåtelse, empati och humanism?

Vad gjorde man med honom? Jo man spikade upp honom på ett kors efter det att Pontus Pilatus tvätt sina händer.

Idag hänger vi inte upp människor på kors – men människor utsätts för fruktansvärda förföljelser på jorden och det drabbar inte bara romer.

Genom att mäta skallar kom antropologer under 1800-talet fram till att urbefolkningen i Kongo var en dålig ras, de var inte värda att få leva. Då lät kung Leopold I av Belgien halshugga och ta livet av miljontals afrikaner och befästa deras områden.

När det gäller oss ”Le Rom” så har vi alltid varit utsatta och katalogiserade av antropologer och så kallade ”zigenarförståsigpåare” som exempelvis zigenarforskaren Arthur Thesleff, språkforskaren Allan Etzler, författaren Carl Herman Tilhagen och professor Karl-Olov Arnstberg vid Stockholms universitet, som offentligt uttalat att ”det hade varit bättre för zigenarna att dom aldrig blivit födda”.

I artikeln ”Hatets stam” i Expressen den 28 maj 2008 beskriver Lisbeth Lindeborg, filosofie doktor i statsvetenskap, hur Silvio Berlusconi nya regering underblåser hatet mot romerna i Italien:

”Hatet mot romerna –antiziganismen– lever vidare. Rudko Kawczynski, president för internationella Roma National Congress, framhåller att cirka 3 000 romer mördats mellan 1990-2002 i Östeuropa. Enligt opinionsundersökningar ”hatas” romerna av 90 procent av invånarna i Slovakien och Rumänien, där de utgör 10 procent av befolkningen.”

I Göteborgs-Posten den 5 Juni 2008 skriver frilansjournalisten Irka Cederberg i en lång artikel, Häxjakt på romer, varur jag citerar en del:

”Vad är det som händer i Europa idag? Är inte romerna människor? Trots otaliga konferenser, rapporter och utredningar har EU ännu inte lyckats ta ett samlat grepp för att hantera den sekelgama – och växande – antiziganismen i Europa.

Günther Grass har kallat romerna ”de sanna européerna”; de känner inga gränser och de finns i alla länder. Ska EU stillatigande se på medan italienska fascister och rasister bedriver häxjakt på romer? Vidriga stanker från medeltiden sprider sig i Europa. Varför är det så märkvärdigt tyst från ansvariga politiker inom EU? Varför tiger Carl Bildt, Angela Merkel, Gordon Brown, Nicolas Sarkozy?”

Här har jag ett kusinbarn som sitter, Hans Caldaras. Han har gjort ett upprop tillsammans med Jan Ottosson. (*Läser inmantill*)

”Vi i Romskt kulturcentrum i Stockholm reagerar med sorg och avsky på den rasistiska och fascistiska behandling som romer i Italien utsätts för idag. Vi fördömer skarpt det omänskliga och primitiva handlingsförfarande som Italienska makthavare och invånare utövar på människor som tagit sin tillflykt till detta land för att bli kvitt förtryck och social misär.

Vi kräver att EU, regeringar, myndigheter och människor med rättvisepatos runt om i Europa deklarerar sin skarpa kritik i ord och handling mot denna barbariska och helt oacceptabla behandling av romer, och detta gäller även andra länder runt om i världen.

Nu måste EU visa sitt rätta ansikte och ta sitt ansvar och sätt press på sina medlemsstater som begår dessa övergrepp och avskyvärda brott mot mänskligheten. Om inte, så är risken stor att vi snart är tillbaka i 1930-talets Tyskland och 1990-talets forna Jugoslavien. ”

Ja vi kan ju fortsätta med vad tidningar tar upp, som ändå tack och lov ser till att det kommer ut till allmänheten.

På DN debatt, 6 Juli, skriver Ulla Ekström von Essen och Rasmus Fleischer: ”Nazismens rasistiska retorik präglar Sverigedemokraterna. De vill ge sken av att de förflyttat sig in på en politiskt rumsren och icke rasistisk arena, men fortfarande uppvisar partiets människosyn remarkabla likheter med den nazistiska idétraditionens rasistiska retorik”

År 2008 har jag, som tillhörande en romsk folkgrupp, och många med mig all anledning att känna stor oro över att Sverigedemokraterna vinner mark och mandat i ett flertal av landets kommuner och snart är på väg in i politiken.

Är vi med politikernas hjälp åter på väg in i en tid när människor, som enligt antropologernas beskrivning är en ”dålig ras”, ska steriliseras och lobotomeras. Eller är vi tillbaka till det här? När man hänger upp romer som försöker ta sig över gränserna.

Är det någon som lära ut till mig hur man ska kunna tala lugnt och sansat utan att bli upprörd?

Jag klarar inte det, jag blir lika upprörd varje gång jag talar om det här.

Några år innan jag föds så går man ut med den här skrivelsen:

”Då zigenarnas inordnande i samhället hos oss synes vara ett olösligt problem, är enda utvägen att på ett eller annat sätt få zigenarna ut ur landet. Då de flesta av dem torde vara svenska undersåtar och allt fall deras medborgarrätt i annat land svårligen låter sig bevisa, kan deras försvinnande ur landet icke nås på annat sätt, än att så starka inskränkningar läggas på deras rörelsefrihet, att de finna med sin egen fördel förenligt att lämna landet och utvandra till ett land med för dem gynnsammare förhållanden.”
 Detta är taget ut statens offentliga utredningar 1923.

Vad var det de stod här egentligen hör ni! Om vi skippar kanslisvenskan och håller oss till ett vanligt tal. Så står det här att man ska göra livet så outhärdligt som möjligt för romerna så att de själva vill ge sig iväg från Sverige. Det är vad det står här.

Och då var det så, det här är fortfarande taget ut Katarinas bok som hon beskriver. Samtidigt med den här skrivelsen så går man ut med ett A4 dekret som läggs på alla kommuner där det klart och tydligt framgår, att zigenarna får inte stanna längre än 3 veckor på varje plats. Och var det så att vi inte flyttade efter tre veckor, då skickar man ner vaktmästarna som packade ner sängkläderna så att de fort kommer iväg. Ja eller så skickade man ner polismakten. Titta på de människorna som sitter där (**bild på romer i tält eller vagnar med poliser runt dem**) hur förtvivalade de är, därför att de har varit lite mer än tre veckor från platsen och inte har hunnit flytta. Man skickar ner poliserna. Hon sitter gråtfärdig och Jan är förtvivalad.

Ja, hör ni, nu är det ju så här att nu håller jag mig till de svenska zigenarna, som bodde i lägergetton ända fram till 1963. Och då var det ju inte så att det kom ner en politiker och tog sig för pannan, oj jösses här har vi en grupp svenska medborgare som bor i snödrivor, utan utbildning, utan bostäder och utan arbete. Det kan ju inte vara bra.

Samtidigt så finns det en fantastisk journalist som heter Karl Axel Sjöblom. Han tar sin kamera går ner i lägergettot och filmar snödrivorna samtidigt som Katarinas bok kommer ut 1963.

Och jag lovar er, att vi bodde faktiskt på kanslihuset. Katarina och jag, min syster Katarina Taikon, vi var ett rött skynke för politikerna. De sprang när vi kom i gångarna, de ville inte prata med oss. Vi var för besvärliga. Ni kanske hör det på mig att jag kan vara besvärlig. Man måste vara besvärlig om man ska nå någonting. Det går inte bar att skriva papper och tro att det ordnar sig på det sättet. Man måste handla! Och hur ska vi, i vilket land vi än talar om, hur ska vi få en bättre politik, ett bättre liv för alla kulturer om det inte går genom politikerna? All förändring till det bättre i ett land är till ytterst en politisk sak att ta itu med.

Gettoläget i Ekstubben 1964 bestod av tältdukar och plåtkaminer. Det här är en kusin till mig, hon är sjuk och det är 28 grader kallt i tältet. Hennes barn är analfabeter.

När jag ser det här blir jag väldigt upprörd, jag har ju bott såhär själv, och många med mig.

Det här är Nadja. Hon hade lite tur på ett sätt, för någon hade spikat bräder istället för tältduk på henne bostad. Tyvärr finns ju inte Nadja nu.

När jag ser den här bilden skäms jag över att vara svensk medborgare, född och döpt i svensk kyrka. Jag skäms för att min syster Katarina ska behöva stå på Hötorget och få hjälp till zigenarnas utbildning. Kan du tänka dig att du måste stå på Hötorget för att dina barn ska kunna få tillgång till att läsa och skriva? Nej! Men det fick vi som zigenare göra.

Vi borde ha haft en säng på riksdagshuset för vi var där varje dag, och bråkade med politikerna. Jag har en rolig historia, Katarina gick nästan som testbild på tv vid den här tiden. Hon höll ju på i tjugo år med socialt arbete. Vid ett tillfälle så är hon i ett rum och Tage Erlander i ett annat rum, och så ska de sminkas av. Katarina och Tage Erlander kommer från olika håll. – Nej inte hon igen, säger Tage Erlander när han ser Katarina. Och då går jag fram till stadsministern, tar honom i armen och frågar, har min syster varit svår med stadsministern? – Ja, Katarina har varit besvärlig, men hon vet vad hon vill, svarar han.

1965 gjorde vi våran första demonstration för att få igenom en skolutbildning för vuxna romer. Vi hade börjat med att få bostäder. Men jag lovar er det tog fyra år innan vi tömde alla gettoläger.

Man tar inte en vuxen man och sätter honom tillsammans med sjuåringarna för att lära honom a,b,c. Vi var tvungna att ha en vuxenutbildning för vuxna personer och det är därför vi demonstrerar. Här har vi Arne Trankell som var professor på universitetet i Stockholm, och vi hade Arne Wall men han såg för det mesta allt i mörkt. Det ser mörkt ut, det ser mörkt ut, var svaret vi fick hela tiden.

Vi hade många inom teater och film, och författare. Ja, många yrkeskårer var med i demonstrationstågen.

1965 startade vi den första vuxenskolan i Skrekarhyttan. Och det var inte det lättaste, för vet ni vad som hände? Då var en väldigt känd man som gick ut och sade att ”ni kommer aldrig att få zigenarna sittande på skolbänken i sommar för då ska de ut på vägarna och lyssna på fåglarna och så vidare”. Men det var ingen som brydde sig om varken vägarna, solen eller fåglarna. Utan här sitter det fyra generationer och läser a,b,c på Skrekarhyttans vuxenutbildning.

Efter nästan 500 år så borde det vara dags att zigenarna ska få en förändring i samhället. Ola Ullsten ställer upp, Thomas Hammarberg, det vet ni alla vem det är. Han arbetar för mänskliga rättigheter, var med oss under hela 60-talet och arbetade.

Våra ansiktsuttryck visar hur mycket strunt och fördomar som sägs nere i salen. Och Katarina förstår ni, hon var väl lika intensiv som jag. Hon blir så arg när hon hör gubbarna i talarstolen, att hon börjar klättra ner mot talarstolen. Så vi rycker ner henne: ”sätt dig för guds skull!” För hade hon gått ner där så hade de kastat ut oss, och vi hade blivit portförbjudna på regeringskansliet.

Här pratar Katarina med Palme, då var han skolminister. Det var angående romerna. Här sitter vi, här uppe och lyssnar på en massa svammel som politikerna inte vet någonting om. Och fortfarande inte vet någonting om! Borde veta! Nu blir jag arg också. Men det är inte meningen.

Är det någon som ser vad den här mannen här på den här sidan gör. Jag var inte medveten om det. Det var en militär, en överste som påpekade detta för mig. Nu kan det tyckas att han stoppar oss. Det gör han inte. Vi är inte på väg in mot honom som ni ser är vi går förbi honom. Han står och gör Hitler-hälsning, på våra plakat står det om romerna. ”Utvisa inte romerna”. Jag tror det gällde den polska rom-gruppen, som skulle få stanna. Vi sökte asyl. Och en vakt, en militärvakt ska jag kunna gå fram och peta på. Men han får inte röra en min. Men den här karln, han stod och visade vad han hade för ideologi.

Glädjen kan ta sig lite olika uttryck. Katarina har fått besked om att de Polska och Italienska zigenarna får stanna. Hon gråter, jag hoppar och skrattar. Så kan man uttrycka glädje.

Här kramar de Italienska barnen Katarina och tackar. För de bodde på sophögarna i Italien. De polska romerna som kom hade faktiskt kvar några av sina gamla som hade lyckats krångla sig ut Hitlers gasugnar.

Här talar Katarina med Ola Ullsten angående Polska rom-wishewski gruppen.

Här kör man bort Katarina, det är någon ”handhavare” för staten som ber Katarina avlägsna sin skylt.

Ja det är ju inte bara. Även i den värsta misären så finns ju glädje. Här är det någon som ska gifta sig. Här sitter Arne Frankell. Det är en kusin till mig som ska gifta sig så då underhåller jag med dans.

Det är ju väldigt svårt att få människor i hög ålder, som har tillskansat sig en ideologi som inte är hjälpsam mot andra människor, att ändra sig.

Katarina ledsnade för de vuxnas fördomar. För det är ju så här, nu är det ju inte bara romer som blir utsatta här. Vi har invandrare i vårt land, invandrare som kommer till det här landet med kunskap. De har inte kostat Sverige fem öre i utbildning. De har kunskap från sina länder, de har lärt sig. Det är bara språket de ska lära sig. Men om en invandrare bär sig illa åt, nu står inte jag och talar om att våra svenska romer skulle vara änglar. Självklart har vi även bland le rom romer som inte betar sig ärligt, som är både oärliga och har en massa hyss för sig. Men vi har inte rätt att gå ut och dra över en kam. De som betar sig fel ska dömas individuellt för vad de har gjort. Vi får inte dra alla över en kam, varken romer eller invandrare eller någon annan grupp för den delen.

Katarina ledsnar på de vuxna och börjar skriva Katitzi-boken, som började läsas i alla skolor.

Vi gav ut den första zigeniska tidningen, där konkurrerade vi med dig Fred. Det var länge sedan och den behövdes. Men vi fick inget stöd, varken från det ena eller det andra hållet, utan vi var tvungna och ta våra egna intjänade pengar och hålla den här tidningen vid liv. Ibland fick vi ringa till HSB och televerket och säga ”kan vi få uppskov med hyran kan vi få uppskov med telefon”. Vi hade inte pengar, vi la dem till tidningen och stack den sedan i händerna på politikerna.

Jag vill visa det här, det är lite om yrkena. Det här är min farfar **Korian Sheski** och Kako Damo, Hans Caldaras morfar och så är det mina farbröder. Nu är det ju så hör ni, att de flesta tror att zigenarna är sådana som tänder en lägereld, knäpper lite med fingrarna och själ lite höns. Det här folket har haft yrken som har varit väldigt kända. De har arbetat med kopparslageri, förtenning, de har varit träslöjdare, mattvävare och keramiker. Det är ingen seriös etnolog som har beskrivit yrkena som le rom har haft och sysslar med.

När farfar föddes i Ungern så flyttade han så småningom med hela sin familj till Ryssland och där uppträdde de på Bolsjojteatern. Naturligtvis, jag glömde bort att säga att de har ju varit showmen, sångare, dansare och musiker såklart. De gav sig iväg från Ryssland innan revolutionen.

Det där är min far, Kako Joshka och Grancha. Bältet som min far har på sig har han tillverkat själv. Han gick i lära som tolvåring hos guldsmederna i Samarkand.

Jag har en bok hemma som jag är väldigt stolt över. Den visar jag till alla journalister som kommer och frågar om vad zigenare arbetar med.

Min far fick ett intyg från artilleriregimentet i Norrland. Här med intygas att det arbete Herr Taikon fört för reglementets räkning, förtenning och så vidare. Och man är alltså nöjd med arbetet. Det var han inte ensam om! De flesta romerna var hänvisade till den här sortens arbete: musik, dans och tivoli.

Här har vi gettolägren som jag talade om i snödrivorna. En kusin till mig som är född i Sverige och fick flytta in i hus först 1966.

Familjen Dimitri arbetade i en gruva i norrland, Kiruna.

Vi var ju tvungna att försörja oss. Jag betalade stimpengar, man betalar för att man sjunger andras sånger. Jag var nio år gammal när jag satt och spelade dansmusik på dansbanor och betalade stimpengar. Men sedan tog musiken slut, då gällde det ju att försörja sig denna gång med film. Det värsta var replikerna som man skulle säga. Jag hoppades att jag talade ren svenska, men de sade till mig att ”Nej Rosa du får bryta lite. Bryta? Ja men det blir inte trovärdigt att du är zigenare om du inte bryter.” Fördomarna förstår ni, de finns på alla håll.

Jag fick börja på konstfack. Min far var den sista bland romerna som var silversmed. När han dog fanns ingen som kunde ta vara på den lilla skärvan av silversmide. Min bror Paul Taikon blev mördad av en soldat som armén hade skickat tillbaka från Kongo för att han var rasist. Han klarade inte av att vara i Kongo för han gav sig på människorna där. Så det var inte min bror som kunde ta över utan jag fick lära mig artilleri.

Det silversmide som jag håller på med är en teknik som heter filigramteknik som etrusker, egyptier, fenicier, romare och le rom från Indien använder sig av. Det är en teknik som är väldigt tålmodskrävande och ställer stora krav.

Min kusin tog jobb på sjukhus, S:t Görans sjukhus. Han talade inte om att han var rom, han sa att han kom från Ryssland och var adopterad. Det går inte att heta Taikon eller Dimitri och tro att man kan få en bostad eller ett jobb.

Anna Lindh läser samma artikel som jag innan hon blir mördad. Romerna förföljs över hela Östeuropa. Då frågade Anna mig, ”Rosa vad kan vi göra för romerna i Sverige och i Östeuropa?” Jag sade: ”Du som utrikesminister, du träffar alla utrikesministrar. Du får inte falla undan för den här vanliga klyschan som ministrarna använder sig av, att vi kan inte intervensera i andra länders inre angelägenheter.” Här var det inte frågan om inre angelägenheter, man tog livet av dem.

Romerna i Slovakien bodde hemskt, här bor tre familjer som delar på ett kök i ett fallfärdigt hus. Samtidigt så vill jag säga att vi svenska romer och de finska har ett himmelrike jämfört med romerna i Östeuropa.

En romsk familj i Polen bodde i plywoodhus, de bor förskräckligt, jagas och mördas.

Miranda Vuolasranta – anförande på engelska

Diskussion

Rosa Taikon

Jag har lyssnat på mycket här nu, så vitt jag förstår så vi alla som sitter här ense om att vi måste alla bekämpa rasism och fördomar. Jag hänvisar till Dick Oosten som talar om att man i en sådan här sanningskommission måste ha fakta. Och om det är någon här som tror, att den här förändringen som skedde på 60-talet då le romer hade stått i bostadskö i över 400 år. Om ni tror att det skedde utan fakta i målet, så har ni väldigt fel.

Katarina skrev sju sociala böcker, hon gav fakta i målet, visade på lägergettona, skolor som barnen inte fick, diskriminering som vi romer var utsatta för. Hon skrev bland annat en bok "förlåt att vi stör" med Thomas Hammarberg. Det gällde folk som flydde från hemska förhållanden i andra länder, romer som kom från platser där de vart väldigt utsatta. De kämpade för de politiska flyktingarna.

Vet ni vad jag tänker när jag ser oss alla här, allting är ju för att få förändring till det bättre i ett samhälle. Så är det en politisk fråga. Tänk om vi alla skulle göra som vi gjorde på 60-talet, be om att få en audiens hos våra styrande politiker. Det är ju de som ska hjälpa oss fram. Vi har fakta i målet, vi har böcker, vi kan berätta vår levnadshistoria, vi har material. De vet, men de vill inte låtsas om det här. Men tänk om vi alla skulle göra en demonstration och be om en audiens hos politikerna. Hur tror ni det skulle uppfattas? Det tror jag skulle vara någonting.

För vad vi än skriver, vad vi än säger, vad vi än gör så hjälper det inte om vi inte får politikerna med oss. Det är ju de som ska sanktionera, registrera ett lagförslag om hur man ska bära sig åt för att inte vissa kulturgrupper ska behöva komma i kläm i samhället.

Hans Caldaras

Jag tycker att vårt möte här är väldigt givande, men det är en fråga som vi måste tänka på som är den viktigaste frågan. Det här är inte ett romskt problem utan det är ett europeiskt problem, som dessutom sker i andra delar av världen. Vi måste få våra makthavare att inse att så länge de omöjliggör möjligheterna för oss romer att kunna etablera oss i de länder vi lever, och har levt i generationer. Så kommer vi aldrig att få en chans att kunna få leva som alla andra medborgare i samhället.

Det handlar om att man omöjliggör för oss möjligheten att få våra rättigheter tillgodosedda, att kunna stå på samma nivå som övriga medborgare, kämpa på samma villkor som övriga medborgare. Men istället så omöjliggör man ideligen för oss möjligheten och rättigheten att leva som alla andra medborgare i samhället. Så länge man gör detta så kommer man att förhålla till nästa generation och nästkommande generation. Det kommer inte att ske en förändring så länge man omöjliggör för oss möjligheten att kunna leva som andra medborgare i Europa.

Victor ?

Jag har arbetat sju år i Roman Union. Det är en världsorganisation som arbetar politiskt. Vi har fått erkännande genom EU som folkslag 1996. Då har vi fått status som nation, Roms Nation, av Kofi Annan. Vi ser nu vad som händer i världen i dag, det ni har sagt i dag och det går i linje med vad ni har sagt. Men frågan är varför detta görs mot oss romer. När vi har fått den här statusen som då romer så var det konstaterat att det här skulle gälla. Men tyvärr så är fortfarande antiziganismen stor.

Alla länder har som ansvar att berätta och nämna det här till sina respektive regeringar, vilka vi är och vilket status vi har. Jag som har upplevt det här med nazismen. Nu får jag uppleva detta igen i Sverige, där vi har fred och folk har det bra. Jag vill tacka Maria för att du har tagit upp den här frågan och försöker göra något åt den här situationen som vi har i Sverige. Jag vill inte att den här frågan slutar här. Jag ber er allihopa att föra detta vidare, det får inte stanna här. Det ska föras ut till hela världen, hela Europa om vad som händer och görs. Och att det blir känt överallt att vi fortsätter med det här arbetet och inte stannar. Jag vill tacka er. Tack.

Hans Caldaras

Jag ser i dag inte bara vanliga medborgares rasism som finns ute i Sverige och andra länder, utan jag upplever att vår största fiende i dag är media som förmedlar en negativ bild av romer och som inte är intresserade överhuvudtaget om att förmedla en positiv bild av romer i vissa länder. Vi hade en demonstration här i Stockholm för några veckor sedan mot Italien och inte en enda från media var representerad. Jag är säker på att hade vi gjort något negativt som hade bekräftat människors fördomar så hade media mangrant ställt upp för att förmedla detta.

Jag har varit i Rumänien många gånger de senaste sju, åtta åren. Där har man förändrat bilden av romer. Som brukligt hade man i slutet av varje nyhetssändning ett reportage om romsk kriminalitet. Nu har man förändrat den bilden, nu visar man istället romer som lever väldigt bra, är välbärgade. Det finns tyvärr människor som vill ha status, så de visar upp sig i det finaste de har. Man visar upp alla förmögenhet man har, för att få status. Det här gör också att folk får fördomar. Folk som har det svårt till exempel i

Rumänien de får självklart en negativ bild om romer. Att de finns romer som har det gott och som lever bra. Det här är också en typ av att propagera fördomar och rasism. Det är precis vad media håller på med idag inte bara i Rumänien utan i många andra länder också. Jag upplever media som en av våra största fiender idag. Vi måste göra något för att sätta stopp för det.

Stefan ?

Vi har fått höra väldigt mycket idag, det som har kommit fram är känt bland oss romer. Vi vet vad som sker i Sverige och hela Europa vad som gäller romska frågor. Jag håller med talarna om att detta är ett gemensamt problem. Det är inte ett romskt problem utan det är ett europeiskt problem som finns bland romer i hela världen, inte minst i EU där vi lever i Europa. Det som jag känner måste göras är i nästa steg, vi har stått i denna situation, inte bara en gång utan flera gånger. Vi vet att detta har pratats om och diskuterats många gånger om. Vi vill inte riskera att frågan återigen hamnar i ett skåp, läggs undan.

Det här måste på något sätt göras till en gemensam fråga som ska vidare ut i Europa. Vi behöver inte skapa nya modeller, ny politik. Vi måste göra folk medvetna om det som finns, det vi redan har. Det som Rosa säger att vi har fakta, det måste bara ut och tas in av medborgarna. Och det måste ut i ett gemensamt dokument som gäller i hela Europa om det ska bli någon effekt. Annars är risken stor att vi återigen om något år samlar igen och talar om samma sak.

Rosita Grönfors

Jag jobbar på Romresande som är en kvinnoorganisation. Vad jag vill lyfta fram är romska kvinnors situation i Sverige, och romska barn, därför att det ser katastrofalt ut i sociala frågor. De är mycket utsatta och barnen blir omhändertagna, utan stödpersoner från varken socialen, kommunen eller ett minoritetserkännande. Kommunerna använder inte stödpersonerna till socialfrågorna, de går istället till familjerna och omhändertar barn. Häromdagen tog de fyra barn från en romsk kvinna. Vi har anlitat en advokat för att försöka få barnen tillbaka. Det var stor chans att vi skulle lyckas, men socialenheten tog lägenheten från kvinnan så att barnen inte kunde återvända.

Sedan har vi unga flickor här i Stockholm som är narkomaner, använder amfetamin. Jag försökte prata med socialmyndigheten och narkotikaenheterna för att lyfta dessa frågor och hjälpa ungdomarna att få vård eller avgiftning på Mariatorget. Flera dagar i veckan sitter jag i Mariatorget med avsikten att hjälpa kvinnorna att komma in, men det är dold diskriminering bland socialmyndigheterna här i Stockholm. Jag är berörd, för får det inte förekomma i dagens samhälle. Det är katastrofalt.

Ett år åkte jag bussen från Philadelphiakyrkan klockan sju på en fredag kväll. Jag jobbade från klockan sju till två på natten med att hjälpa romska ungdomar att få dem till behandlingshem. Där är alla romska katoliker. Men socialbyråerna tar inte emot dem, de säger att de inte har pengar till det.

I dag finns det både rika och fattiga romer i Sverige, men ingen av romerna orkar hålla fasaden. I dag är det nådarop bland romska föräldrar, deras barn använder narkotika. Vi har inte makt att få hjälp till dem för myndigheterna tar inte emot oss.

Maria Leissner – anförande på engelska

Dick Oosting – anförande på engelska

Julie Roy och Doug Kropp – anförande på engelska

Katri Linna, Ombudsman mot etnisk diskriminering, DO: Förutsättningar för upprättelse – DO:s syn

Tack för att jag har fått tillfälle att komma hit och dela med mig av mina tankar kring processen. Vi har hört från många utav inläggen tidigare i dag att romerna även i Sverige har blivit utsatta för många år av statsanktionerad diskriminering, förföljelser och övergrepp. Därför tycker jag att det är en välkommen gest av regeringen att ge Romadelegationen i uppdrag att undersöka förutsättningarna för en sannings- och försoningskommission kring de brott mot mänskliga rättigheter som romerna har utsatts för.

Som jag har förstått Romadelegationen så tänker man sig att en sådan process skulle utifrån en kartläggning av de historiska oförrätterna kunna leda till en upprättelse och försoning mellan romerna och majoritetsbefolkningen. Och att man därigenom också ska öka kunskapen och förståelsen hos majoritetsbefolkningen om romernas situation. Då tänker jag mig att ett väldigt viktigt första steg i den processen är att konstatera att romernas historia har en dagsaktuell spegelbild. Vi ska bara ta till oss att de som sker i Italien tillexempel har sin grund i europeisk historia. Även i Sverige, när vi pratar om de dåliga boendeförhållandena som många romer hänvisats till har det en grund i svensk och europeisk historia.

Det faktum som beskrivs i alla de ärenden, anmälningar som kommer till DO, framförallt sedan vi började definiera problemen tillsammans med romerna gjorde att vi också fick ett ökat förtroende att driva romerna sak. Alla de ärenden, och senast de två som jag tog ställning till i går att driva vidare rättsligt som beskriver kränkningar av romska familjer i samband med väldigt vardagliga butiks- och restaurangbesök. Alla de händelserna har också sin grund i svensk historia. Romernas situation idag är alltså en följd av flera hundra års statsanktionerad diskriminering, som har förskjutit romerna till utkanten av samhället och man har vägrat dem återinträde.

Trots att de direkt diskriminerande lagarna nu har avskaffats så har de lämnat spår både i majoritetssamhället, som i dag präglas av en öppet negativ syn på romer. Liksom de gamla oförrätterna också har lämnat romerna i ett socioekonomiskt underläge. Det är något som ytterligare fortlöpande förstärker den stigmatiserade negativa bilden av romerna. Det här är en komplex situation, det kräver komplexa åtgärder. Därför tycker jag att det är viktigt att vi har en bred syn på vad en försoningsprocess skulle kunna innebära. Hur påverkas möjligheten till försoning av romers utsatta situation idag? Hur påverkas försoningsprocessen av den diskriminering och segregation som är en del av många romers vardag än idag. Då tänker jag mig att en försoningsprocess måste bli en strategi i strävan att uppnå jämlikhet för romer. Den vägen vid en upprättelse som inte bara bör innehålla individuella lösningar, till exempel genom en effektiv tillämpning av diskrimineringslagstiftning eller individbaserad ersättning i form av ersättning för tidigare övergrepp. Utan det behövs också lösningar som lyfter hela grupper av romer. Och lösningar som då ska formuleras med romer och inte för dem. Det måste vara åtgärder som bryter igenom de historiska kränkningarnas aktuella konsekvenser i fråga om utbildning, boende och framförallt arbetsliv.

Till exempel kan man säga att den tidigare lagreglerade diskrimineringen har lämnat många, särskilt äldre romer i en situation där de har en mycket låg utbildningsnivå om någon. Vilket därigenom påverkar deras möjligheter till egen försörjning. Det har också indirekt format deras barn, deras i dag kanske vuxna barn som har präglats av öppet förakt och ständig flykt. Men vad som är ännu värre är att den påverkar även den kommande generationen. Man kan inte få ett boende som är stabilt påverkar hela familjen situation till delaktig het och också den kommande generationen ständigt måste flytta. Inte som tidigare att man inte fick bosätta sig inom kommunens gränser, men för att man saknar möjligheter att få en boendeform som är stabil. Detta leder till ständiga flyttar mellan skolor, vilket påverkar redan idag en möjlighet att som vuxen komma in i samhället på jämlika villkor. Det här är en segregation som befast generation till generation och det fortlöper om inte samhället tar sitt ansvar för den situationen som vi har i dag. Därför tänker jag att en kartläggning av de historiska oförrätterna och en ursäkt som är kopplad till dem kan möjligen vara ett första steg inför en försoningsprocess.

För den processen ser jag tre saker som är viktiga: dels med delaktighet med romer definiera de problem som finns idag och som på olika sätt kan kopplas till tidigare oförrätter. För det andra så måste vi öka medvetenheten hos majoritetsbefolkningen om den kopplingen som finns mellan dagens situation och de som har varit, alltså beskrivningen av historien och dagens situation. Men inte bara genom att vi tar fram en publikation i form av en offentlig utredning som man sprider till de redan initierade kretsarna i bästa fall. Utan för reella kunskapslyft som handlar om att man kan se det i skolans undervisning. Den statliga skulden, det kommer ju kanske att handla om andra grupper också kanske, inte minst samerna, även i Sverige. Man borde ta in den här delen i historieber beskrivningen så att man får ett rejält kunskapslyft i samhället. Det

tredje jag tänker mig är tydliga politiska beslut, med uppföljning så att man ser att de verkställs. Man ska definiera de områden där det krävs åtgärder. Man ska peka ut ansvariga myndigheter för att åstadkomma något på områdena. Man ska följa upp så att det blir gjort och man ska samtidigt också förstärka det civila samhället så att man har resurser att bevaka frågan. Här har vi en särskilt problematik också med romer för att det här är ju inte på svensk folkrörelsevis välorganiserad grupp som man kan närma sig genom att lägga pengar på de gängse kanalerna, utan det krävs kanske lite mer här. Men det är de delarna som jag känner att man måste ha med direkt i det här arbetet.

Jag tänker mig att om man börjar med en ursäkt och en kartläggning så är det en ingång till den här processen. En ursäkt utan konkreta åtgärder som baseras på samhällets ansvar kan faktiskt ses till och med som ännu ett svek. Om man bara tittar bakåt och håller sig där så kan det i värsta fall leda till att ytterligare diskriminerande struktur skapas. Därför tycker jag att man måste vara väldigt noggrann med att definiera från början vart man vill landa med de här åtgärderna.

Rosa Taikon

Jag vill anknyta till vad Doug Kropp sa om att alla länder är olika. Men det finns knappast några länder som har velat ta ansvar för sina minoriteter. Helst har regeringarna velat utplåna de etniska kulturerna och man har velat assimilera. Vi söker inte assimilation, vi ska ha rätt att klä oss till vårt eget språk, vi ska ha rätt till våra traditioner. Om jag vill klä mig i zigenisk dräkt så ska jag kunna göra det. Om jag inte vet var jag kommer ifrån, hur ska jag veta vart jag är på väg. Det är ju det som är vår styrka, vår tradition och bakgrund så länge vi inte går över någon annans huvud.

När Hitler orerade som värst på ölhallarna i Tyskland så fanns det förnuftiga människor som varnade för honom. Men då sa man ”nä men den där lilla korpralen är väl inget att bry sig om”. Men den där lilla korpralen lade många människor i aska, miljoner människor tog han död på.

Varför säger jag det här, historien är känd att alltid upprepa sig. Vi har i dag ett parti, jag har nämnt det tidigare, och jag kommer att tjata om det så länge jag lever, om de inte avgår. Det är Sverigedemokraterna. Ska vi vänta tills det politiska anhanget får stöd i regeringen och får bifall från regeringen att regera. Då kommer de att utrota många olika kulturer i det här landet. När man talar om rasdiskriminering, man går inte ut direkt och säger rasdiskriminering. Det finns inga olika raser, det finns bara en enda ras och de är människan, sedan kan vi vara vita, svarta, gula eller röda vi har olika traditioner och språk, men vi är en enda ras och det är människan. Vi måste visa humanitet emot varandra.

Det här är en jättefin bild som jag har här. Det är hela min familj som är fotograferade. Vet ni varför de blev fotograferade? Det är fotograferat på 30 talet. På 30-talet får

Amanuens Tillhagen ett uppdrag av regeringen att ta reda på vart zigenarna bor och om de är helzigenare, halvzigenare osv. Därför togs den här bilden, för att man ska kunna veta vad de heter, vart de bor, om de är hel- eller halvzigenare. Det var många här i Sverige som trodde att Hitler skulle inta Sverige också. Då hade vi inte suttit här idag om han hade kommit till Sverige. Därför att Tillhagen hade uppgiften att samla uppgifter om vart alla fanns. Om Hitler hade invaderat Sverige också så hade jag inte suttit här, och inte ni heller.

July Roy – kommentar på engelska

Doug Kropp – kommentar på engelska

Tove Skotvedt – kommentar på engelska

Miranda Vuolosranta – kommentar på engelska

Hans Caldaras

Jag instämmer med Miranda med om att det har vart ett nöje att få träffa er och ta del av era kunskaper och erfarenheter, som jag hoppas att vi alla kommer att få nytta och glädje av.

Det här med sanningskommission och sanning, vad är det som vi egentligen vill, jo att man ska sluta skuldbelägga oss för vår utsatta situation. För det är precis vad man gör, man skuldsätter oss hela tiden för hur vi lever och är som människor. Att man ser hela vår situation som någonting negativt, och det är negativt, men vår kultur är inte negativ. Det är det man vill framhålla hela tiden, att vårt sätt att leva, vårt sätt att tänka är något negativt. Vi måste jobba för att tala om att vi har varit och är offer för en systematisk diskriminering och isolation från våra medborgerliga och mänskliga rättigheter. Det behövs inget mer, för det är precis vad man har utsatt oss för.

Göran Johansson

Jag skulle vilja spinna lite på der där med sanning eller rättvisa och vad är syftet med en kommission eller en vitbok. Då vill jag betona att de individuella berättelserna, som jag tror är nödvändiga. De är sanna för individen och de kan tillsammans bidra till en mer fullständig bild för hela nationen av situationen. Den bilden kan i sig på sikt innebära rättvisa.

På sikt så medverkar alla dessa berättelser, som vi skulle kunna publicera i en vit bok till att vi jobbar för rättvisa för romerna i det här fallet. De som inte vill vara med på offentliga hearings måste ges en möjlighet att berätta under sekretess vad de har varit med om. Det är värt att publicera. Vi har ganska mycket erfarenhet från min nuvarande utredning och tillsammans blir det en sorts narrativ sanning.

Annika Öquist

En sak som slår mig när vi pratar om det här med hearings och de frågeställningarna som vi har att lösa, så för mig blir det lite otydligt vad hearingarna ska handla om. Ska det handla om det som har varit, som bygger mycket på lagstiftning som jag har hört mycket om eller ska det handla om det som händer i dag? För det handlar om två olika saker. Det som handlar om lagstiftning som är historia kan man få en ursäkt för men om det kommer upp berättelser som handlar om diskriminering på ett annat plan som pågår i våra dagar så räcker det ju inte med en ursäkt, för där behövs det ju någonting annat. Det behöver vi vara klara med när man sätter igång med en sådan här hearingar, vad det är man är ute efter. För jag vet i den utredningen som Göran leder så pratar man om att det måste vara preskriberat för att komma upp där.

Vi behöver nog tänka och prata om syftet med de här hearingarna: vad är det, vilket årtionde, nu eller dåtid.

Johanna Mannergren – kommentar på engelska

Karin Brouneus – kommentar på engelska

Soraya Post

Jag tycker också att det har varit en väldigt intressant dag. Jag ser fram emot fortsättningen av det här arbetet. Jag tycker absolut att det är tid för en försoning. Den framtid som jag vill presentera till mina barnbarn, det är en ljus framtid. Jag vill inte att de ska ha i bagaget det som jag har, det som min mamma hade. Det är det som jag tror att alla föräldrar vill ge till sina barn, om man är fattig eller rik spelar ingen roll. Man vill ge dem en ljus framtidstro. Det känner jag att man kanske kan göra om man lyckas med en försoning. För det är vad som behövs, det är det som vi har förmedlat tidigare från generation till generation.

Vad jag däremot inte tror på, men hoppas av hela mitt hjärta är att folket i Kanada, att det löser sig efter fem år. Jag har svårt att tro det för effekten efter 500 års förtryck, där alla har varit enade om samma aktion till förtryck, kyrka, stat, kungahus, alla. Jag tror att man måste ena likadana krafter idag för att kunna förändra det här. Så man måste alltså väcka en opinion, ta död och rasera den stereotypa bilden på romer.

Jag tror att det är väldigt viktigt att majoritetssamhälle och även romerna i Sverige får känna till effekten av förtrycket. Många gånger så bekräftas fördomar idag utav romer. Men de är frukten av förtryck, det är frukten av att ständigt bli tryckt ner i skorna.

Mr Smith (?)

Vetenskapen har med rätta kritiserats för sin roll tidigare i historien och även i nutid. Det är viktigt att säga det som Rosa har framhållit. Sanningskommission behöver dock fakta och här spelar vetenskapen givetvis en viktig roll. Vi på Stockholmsuniversitet planerar att försöka hålla en vetenskaplig konferens. Planeringen är rätt långt framskriden, den sker delvis oberoende av den här kommissionen, det är nog viktigt att hålla det i bakhuvudet.

Men vad jag vill säga är att jag tycker att det är väldigt viktigt att alla fakta i målet inte är kända. Jag tror att det finns mycket att lyfta upp, undersöka och få fram. Men det viktiga är för att undvika de misstag som vetenskap gjort tidigare är att forskning och konferens sker i samarbete med romska organisationer. Det är en helt avgörande och central punkt.

Charles Westin

Jag tycker att vi förefaller ganska överens om att vi ska ta och blottlägga historien som en avstamp för en bättre framtid. Då ska jag hänga på det som Annika pratade om, jag tror nämligen inte om att man i en sådan process kan hoppa över nuet. Då tror jag att mitt svar på en sak som vi måste göra nu, som du frågade om Maria. Det är att vi måste se på hur vi ska hantera det. För historier som berättas i nuet måste hanteras som det de är, en diskriminering som ska bestraffas, ett brott som ska bestraffas och utredas. Därför så tror jag att klargöra hur vi ska hantera nuet är en av de viktigaste frågorna innan vi tar nästa steg.

Mats Delan

Bara för att fylla i det som Charles sa, jag hjälper Charles med att arrangera vad som förhoppningsvis blir en väldigt bra konferens på Stockholms universitet. Men det är ju så också att vi kan säga att vi har fakta och vi vet definitivt om diskriminering och förföljelser genom århundradena. Men den forskning som finns är fragmentarisk, det finns stora luckor och det är skiftande kvalitet. Vi kan inte ens garantera att vår vetenskapliga konferens kommer att leda till mer forskning i Sverige. Vi har en situation där Norge genomförde stora forskningsprogram i slutet på 90-talet, Finland har inlett det nu. Jag undrar om vad vi skulle behöva är en riktad satsning också, att man åtminstone säger det innan man säger att vi har alla fakta.

Rosa Taikon

Jag vill anknyta till vad Soraya sa här, att vi måste se fram emot en framtid där våra barn ska slippa uppleva vad vi själva har gått igenom. Det är en önskan. Men sedan

vill jag också anknyta till vad Göran sa, alla talar om att vi måste ha fakta om vi ska presentera det här för en sanningskommission. När det gäller fakta så finns det en otrolig massa fakta både bland andra romer och hos mig själv. Jag har under fyra år arbetat med att beskriva en romsk 70 årig historia, med bilder och fakta som skulle behöva publiceras.

Eftersom att jag har anklagat Bonnier för rasism och fördomar så har de tackat nej. Men vad man önskar här är att det här som vi har samlats här om nu ska kunna bli stadfäst på så sätt att det når ut till våra politiker. Så att de kan granska vad det är vi håller med här, människor som kommer långt ifrån andra länder som visar på samma diskriminering som indianer och andra kulturer varit utsatta för. Det borde finnas en möjlighet i ett demokratiskt samhälle att detta ska kunna sanktioneras på högre nivå. Jag tjarar hela tiden om att vi måste bearbeta politikerna. För vi tycks ju alla vara ense här om vad vi tycker.

Fred Taikon

Nu har ju de flesta riksförbunden lämnat lokalen. En fråga kom ju ifrån Maria, hur ska detta förankras hos romer? Ingen har tagit upp det här utan man har hela tiden talat om processen och hearing. Men jag tycker att det här är väldigt viktigt att man måste förankra det här hos romerna, för har ni inte romerna med er då blir det ingenting. Inte ett dugg, ni kommer få romerna emot er.

Hur ska man bäst göra det här då? Man skulle kunna arrangera konferenser för romer genom de olika riksförbunden. Informationskampanjer måste till, SVT bör frigöra tid för romska nyheter. Vilket det är en absolut avsaknad av. Det finns nu en möjlighet, vi har fått kontakt med utbildningsradion. De har tagit till sig att man ska börja arbeta med romerna. Nästa sak som ska göras är att man tar upp samtalet på nytt med SVT som bland annat frigör tid för att få romska nyheter upplästa. På det sättet skulle man kunna engagera romerna på ett mycket närmare och bättre sätt. En informationskampanj i det här det är vad man ska satsa på först och främst, gör ingenting bakom deras rygg. Jag tror inte att det är många som har vetskap om det här, jag försöker genom tidningen men det räcker inte.

Transkribering av anföranden och inlägg som hölls på engelska

Miranda Vuolasranta, vice Chair of the European Roma and Travellers Forum, ERTF:

The situation in Europe and Human Rights

Into Europe thousand years ago, already 1334, the first legislative instrument was created by Winfred Queen Isabella and Ferdinand in Spain, which was declaring Roma as unlawful to be deported and discontinued more than 600 years. In Romania, Roma was kept as slaves more than 400 years. We had used to learn that slavery was a reality in America or in Africa, but actually slavery has been formally existing in Europe several hundreds of years. This is again one of the facts, which the majority all over the Europe are not familiar with. Roma has a shameful history and Europe has a shameful history of repression and violent atrocities against the Roma and this has of course left scars in the Roma communities as well. There have been little in the way of official recognition of these cruelties, only meager reparation and minimal apologies. The recent decision to establish a memorial in Berlin in respect of the Roma victims during the Nazi era is a welcome exception to this norm. The Roma are the only Pan-European minority and the estimates and facts about the quantities, the figures of them are different very much. We could say that Roma are afraid to be recognized still today as Roma. Why? Because they are not accepted. The racially loaded ideology of a lower race is still existing though we are enough civilized today not to speak officially formally about it, not to admit it in our presentations or speeches, but if we compare the situation today and for lets say 600 years ago we remain in one point, almost in exactly the same situation and that is there hasn't become anymore information, facts or recognition of Roma as equal citizens in respective countries.

Because of antagonism many Roma have been afraid to display their Roma identity openly. This is one reason why there aren't any Roma national census because it's usually much lower than the real figure. The stereotypes, which reduce the voice and identity of the Roma people must be exposed. We must move to recognize the contributions of Roma, which they already have made to European societies and cultures. Maybe not many of you know that one Roma, Romanian Roma originating philosopher Mr. (*inaudible*) made about 10 years ago, a booklet for the council for Europe where he is analyzing how, where and when the Roma when they arrived on European soil, how they have influenced the European culture. The languages, almost everything, music paintings, culture and I recommend you warmly to read a bit about that maybe not many of you know either that the person who has been called as the father of the European civilization the Spanish, what is his name Cervantes. Yes Cervantes. He has been called as the father of the European civilization, he was Roma

related 16th century, but he couldn't tell that openly, he wrote a book with name *La gitanilla*, which is quote and learned by many other writers and in that book he was describing the life of Roma at that time. This book has influenced for example to the many big symphonies like *Carmen*, the *Notre Dame*, how do you call it in English, *Ringaren från Notre Dame*.

I'm listening today to this wonderful presentation and it makes me a bit upset as Rosa was describing as well because when I was listening to her presentation I get reminded somehow that we had to go on, as I said it is not always easy to go on because there is not much changes in the atmosphere. The social marginalization of Roma in Europe is almost complete and total today still, but Roma are ignored. The problem has been place on the political agenda throughout Europe and a number of international organizations have developed programs for the Roma. For example council of Europe promotes a special forum for Roma (*inaudible*) the European Roma and Travelers forum while OSCE the office in Warsaw for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights ODIHR is assisting in member countries in implementing concrete development programs, which we call action plans for Roma. Among the non-governmental organizations we have European Roma And Travelers forum, which was established in 2004, have 75 Roma representatives all around Europe in all council of Europe member states and which is the first democratically elected representation forum of Roma themselves in Europe. We have European Roma information office, a lobby office existing in Brussels.

We have the Roma education fund. We have Open Society Institute and the Roma (*inaudible*) which is working mostly in the eastern European countries, working very efficiently in particular in equal access to quality education for Roma. We have Roma rights center in Budapest. We have many actors but at the same time as we know and we recognize what are the problems in particular human rights problems, problems in the lacking fundamental basic social rights like right to free movement, right to healthcare, right to housing, right to education, right to employment all those rights are known and I think that we could fill in this room with all those reports, all those surveys, publications, recommendations, resolutions, which we had created during the last couple of decades.

We know exactly what are the mistakes or what we lack here regarding human rights and social rights. The evaluations of these results so far have been disappointing. Some of the aid programs have not been well designed and for instance fail to pay sufficient attention to the crucial need for partnership with the Roma themselves. However, it is also clear that these problems run deep and cannot be resolved in a few years. There is no simple solution for these. While Antiziganism is a treat to all efforts to ensure the Roma for their rights, several existing and acute social problems are interlinked. If you cannot get a job you cannot improve your housing, poor housing conditions in turn affects ones health and also the education of ones children. If Roma children do not receive sufficient schooling they will be disadvantaged in the job

market and so on. So, we could say that we lack the fundamental human rights. Who are the actors? We have the international institutions such as council of Europe, office for European Security and Co-operation, which I have already mentioned here, the European Union and the United Nations. All these international institutions have produced during the 20, last 20 years a lot of reports.

Council of Europe have even a specialized Roma expert where we have for example the Norwegian representative here today Tove Skotvedt is a member of this MG-S-ROM group, which is a specialist group of Roma experts inside of the council of Europe. The office for The European Security and Co-operation and the human dimension, which had their office in Warsaw, they have as well Romanic contact going, and European Union has as well done quite a lot already. The fundamental rights agency has the national right let's say conduct points (*inaudible*) network, which is following up the discrimination phenomena and reporting annually to the EU about it. You know, even United Nations and the Commission of Human Rights have produced a recommendation on the 27th regarding Roma rights, basic fundamental human rights and also social rights in particular right to education. In other words, we have comprehensive programs but we have less implementation, it is depending about political high-level goodwill and decisions, which are taken by the head of states and high-level politicians. Not only by them, but let us say that we need those politicians like Maria Leissner and some others who are recognizing and admitting that those who are leading and who are given the trustee position have to take responsibility of those as well who are the weakest in the society because the democracy appears actually in a way how the general society is treating the weakest in the society.

If we tell that Finland and Sweden are Nordic welfare states, very democratic view and at the same time these democracies are ignoring the weakest like Roma who are less educated and who cannot fight for their own rights as efficiently as others then we can question the democracy, which we have. Many Roma children remain outside national education systems altogether. There is a high drop rate among those who enroll and achievements in general among Roma peoples are low. One explanation is of course the high levels of illiteracy, which already has been mentioned here among parents. We have here in Sweden and we have in Finland not even to talk about Romania and Slovakia and Czech Republic. We have illiterate Roma, a high number of illiterate Roma. My parents were illiterate, almost all those who more than let's say fifty, sixty years are more or less lacking in the ability to read and write. And this is one of the core problems and which requires more analysis based on relevant data, a clearer policy and stronger actions. It is important to recognize the value of both pre-school and normal school education in order to lower the entry threshold for children coming from a background where studying has no traditions.

If we know already so much about Romanic rights and the lack in Romanic rights, why there is no changes. One of the answers to this question is that there is not enough goodwill and seriousness among those who have the power, and who have the power; of

course these international institutions have power because the head of states are annually and regularly meeting each other. They create policies, they give instructions about against combating inequality, intolerance, against discrimination, awareness raising but at the same time we are recognizing and we have to admit those policies are not targeted to Roma. They never reach the root level Roma reality, every day reality. Roma have to be treated, as equal citizens in the European countries and the countries have to protect them as efficiently as other citizens in conflict situations. We have today here both Mrs. Leissner and Rosa Taikon mentioned it, the situation, which we are living through in Italy, the situation, which has existed in Slovakia because of hunger, because of poverty because of unemployment. Parents are going on to streets and marching asking for food and bread in today's civilized welfare Europe. We have a coin where we have the welfare Europe and then we have the other side of the coin where we have those who are not capable to fight still today about their rights.

The government and the local authorities have to take the responsibility with a new seriousness and change the processes, which are not reaching out to Roma. There has to be a button up and down processes. Policies made on the European level are not enough if the national government, if the regional and local municipalities and authorities doesn't accept or see their responsibilities. Fourteenth of December 2007 the European Council of the EU decided, made a decision to make a research what has happened in the EU member countries regarding Roma integration and a task was given to the commission to make a research and survey and give out the communication, this communication is actually coming out, we are now in 24th, this is 24th, this is 25th okay, this is the day 25th of June when the communication from the commission regarding the general prospects on how the Roma should be integrated in Europe will be given out and published. This is the day. We just had a high level meeting in Brussels where France took over the Chairmanship. The Roma issue was not very seriously discussed on that discussion. It was taken up, but according to friends let's say EU political agenda, the issue of Roma and the integration issue question of Roma was seen as a social issue. Of course it's a social issue, when you are suffering of poverty and you are a victim of discrimination, xenophobic actions, violent actions it's also a question of human rights, fundamental human rights, but this as we all know is a bit difficult question because we have such countries in Europe and inside of EU borders as well, which do not recognize any minorities and France is unfortunately one of those countries. There are just citizens, no minorities, no historical past, no ethnicities, no cultural differences, no language differences, just citizens and because of this policy, which is linked with the constitutional act of France it doesn't have a possibility to admit even that they have minorities, which might have some specific rights. So this is why I will say that there is a need for clear national human rights policy and there is a need for education, media and politicians to raise up awareness, visibility and recognition, civics and history teaching of the Roma existence.

It is not long ago about one month when we had an annual, very visible seminar in the Castle of the Finnish President, which is called the Presidential forum once a year it is organized and I was invited here and I took up an example, which I was familiarized with and couple of months ago when in one seminar a lawyer, a human rights lawyer in Finland stood up in a seminar when we were speaking about awareness raising, recognition of antiziganism and acceptance of equal citizenship of all people in our countries. And this lawyer stood up and she said, “I have gone through the highly qualified and valuated Finnish education system more than 20 years. I have specialized myself to human rights and I’m leading one of the national big human rights organizations today and during my education process 25 years, I never heard a word about Roma. I never heard or read about Roma not about (*inaudible*) indigenous people, not about Tartars not about Jews. I became, I came out from the Finnish highly valuated and (*inaudible*) education system without hearing any word about minorities not to even talk about Roma. I didn’t know how many Sami we had, I didn’t know how many Roma we had, do they have their own language or any kind of specific cultural characters, nothing and she became human rights lawyer.

This is the explanation why we’re still here today. In the same situation as let us say 50 years ago, there is no awareness raising, Roma was not existent in our education structures. There are no historical remarks about our participation in our societies and the schoolbooks, in the majority schools there is no mentioning about Roma because you are not existent, you are not accepted, you don’t belong to our society, you remain the foreigner. Europe should be aware of the historical and moral responsibility regarding the past persecutions; extermination policies such as the holocaust started it with Roma and through its utmost to avoid any such kind of political directions anymore. Regarding the holocaust, I recommend you warmly to read Jana (*inaudible*) book “The Gypsies”. He takes up, for the first time actually he was one of those who took up for the first time the past holocaust extermination targeted to Roma and very few knows today still that during the Nuremberg trial after the second world war, after the Nazi era many I would say 100s of Jewish eyewitnesses, which was given testimonies during the Nuremberg trial. They mentioned it within their eyewitness testimonies that inside of the concentration camps we were together with gypsies, the Roma. In the end of the Nuremberg trial all the remarks or references made to Roma as one group of the holocaust victims was removed. Why? Because nobody was interested to fight for the recognition of their holocaust at that time and the Roma themselves were not enough educated and civilized. We didn’t have writers, we didn’t have moviemakers, we didn’t have enough high position in our societies to be able to fight for the recognition of our holocaust. According to recent research, which only started in the beginning of the 19th, the archives of Simon Weisenthal Institute and (*inaudible*) Institute was reopened and researchers went through quite a lot of those old Jewish eyewitness testimonies and according to those eyewitness testimonies, the number of exterminated Roma during the Nazi era is not the 600,000 official figure, which has been recognized by Germany.

It is more likely to be up to 1.5 even 2 million Roma who were victims of the holocaust. What we need are sustainable national integration strategies for Roma. We need action plans and resources for implementation and we need to be aware about the grant, which was loaned by the Council of Europe and the European Roma And Travelers Forum. Do no policies for Roma, do policies with Roma, together with them because until nowadays we have been victims, we have been objects of policies, different kinds of policies. Assimilation, slavery, persecution, good willing, passivating policies, giving welfare support to Roma families, uneducated Roma families putting them in modern apartments, silencing them down, making them passive, taking from them the belief that they can survive themselves. They have abilities, they have professions, which could be modernized and which could fight and fit in, in this today's modern society. I mentioned it very shortly about this communication, which is coming out today. The discussion is starting from now on from today, and this discussion should be encouraged in the national member states of EU, among the government, members of the Parliament, the members of the European Union Parliament or the representatives of Sweden, Finland all the other European countries and of course the heads of states, the high level political decision makers. We have now the communication I cannot say what will how it looks like because it has come out today. I haven't seen the final communication, I have seen a draft of it.

The final communication will be discussed during this year and if the national states, the member states like Sweden Finland and all the other 27 EU member states, if we are not taking a serious look of this communication, it can remain just a political communication, but if we are acting and if we are shouting out, if we are demanding the Roma, equal Roma rights, rights, which are not for Roma but which are also for Roma. We have to do this work and I am challenging you, I'm ending my presentation by challenging you. I'm asking you to be active to write to your government to be in contact with your European parliament delegates, to ask them to raise this issue inside of the European parliament discussions. There will be on the 16th of September a high level conference organized in Brussels where the communication including the discussion will be presented for the rest of Europe and during this year if the Roma politicians are active enough we can put this issue into top high level and ask not only for communication but an integration strategy for Roma, which should be implemented on the national levels, which should be resourced into national budgets even in the EU structural funding because we know exactly what are the human rights problems of Roma in today's Europe, what are the explanations not to implement this is very often not enough of organized Roma collaboration partners or not enough resources.

There is money, of course of course there is money there is always money existing. Three hundred million euros has been spent during the last ten years in European Union for the accession of the new democracies as the members of EU and what is the outcome? Not a visible change for the Roma rights and this is why we need targeted

policies, clear political directions to be made on the European level, in the EU level, on the national level, on the regional and local level. Thank you very much.

Domino Kai:

Thank you very much for those words Mrs. Miranda Vuolasranta. We thank you and also the board of European Roma Travelers Forum for your doing a really important work for the Roma issues in Europe but also more internationally.

**Mr. Dick Oosting; Europe Director, International Center for Transitional Justice, ICTJ, Brussels:
What is a Truth and Reconciliation Commission? What can be achieved – which are the risks?**

Thank you very much and thank you for inviting us at International Center for Transitional Justice, and for inviting me to come here and speak in trying to explain what is a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. But I don't think you need a lecture on what is a truth commission. I think, what is more relevant and I will talk about truth commissions, but what is I think called for here is, to try and figure out how the mechanism of a truth commission that has its own, lets say, has found its own existence in the last couple of decades in particular settings of post-conflict, post-repression where you look at, at legacies of mass abuse, how that tool, as it were that instrument could be used, could be relevant for what we're talking about today, the Roma in Sweden or the Roma in Europe or the Roma more generally. I come to this with, with let's say more traditional human rights background. I joined the International Center for Transitional Justice at the beginning of this year, before that I was Amnesty International's representative in Brussels. I headed its office in Brussels for eight years during the European union and human rights. In the course of those eight years, I found it to be rather disappointing is a very, very, is a euphemism I found it rather shocking in a number of ways to see how human rights within Europe can be violated and that ranges from problems around immigration, racism, discrimination of course what we're talking about here also the way the war on terror has been fought and Sweden knows a little bit about that.

In Europe – Europe of course is a relatively good place in the world when it comes to human rights, but there are problems and there are serious problems and certainly as Amnesty and we've come to work in the last years that I was there, very closely with Open Society Institute, trying to focus on the Roma as well and, and basically our line has become the Roma situation, discrimination, inequality, exclusion is the biggest human rights problem in Europe today, and that says some thing. Now, how bad it is in Sweden? I wasn't quite aware of that, of course most of the attention goes to, lets say central eastern Europe the countries that joined the European union more recently,

we heard about Slovakia, Czech republic, Poland and so on well, Sweden sounds pretty bad too. My own country Holland, you don't hear much about it, but again it's the same problem. It is a hidden, it is a hidden issue, nonexistence of the problem, it was the most damning ,damning aspect of it because it precludes the kind of public attention, political attention, political will to do something about it. It is significant, nevertheless that in, in Sweden there is now a, a concerted effort through the Roma delegation to come to grips with that. It is really a, a enormous challenge because having, having sort of trying to deal with it for sometime myself although as part of the much larger brief within Amnesty International, I'm very aware of what Miranda set out, the tons of paper, policy report, surveys, the money that is available and yet it doesn't add up. It doesn't add up at the European level, it doesn't add up at the national level and it doesn't add up mostly at, at the local level although there must be success stories as well, but they are the exception rather than the rule.

So how do you, how do you break through that? Can you, can you throw in a Truth and Reconciliation Commission? When I first heard about it I thought they must be crazy out there in Sweden because, so truth commissions have been sort of designed and the idea of a truth commission is really related very much to trying to uncover a past of mass abuse or very serious gross human rights violations that is contested, that is in part unknown still and it goes back to, to, to for example lets say the, the first real truth commission's started in Latin America, after the, the, the dictatorships in Chile and Argentina with massive human rights violations, killings, disappearances. They were designed to uncover that truth and through uncovering the truth be able to do justice to the victims or the survivors or their relatives in due course. Often that takes longer because it's the Pinochet for example in Chile was still in power for quite a long time but gradually and eventually the real, the, the, main perpetrators will be brought to court as well. There will be opportunity and, and evidence to, to do compensation, reparations, material, financial or symbolic and it will, it will give, give grants and insights into how to, how to transform institutions, how to build a stable not just stable society but a stable state, a democratic state, with reliable institutions with the reliable security system, police, the justice system. That, that is the whole idea of transitional justice you could say. How do you, how do you deal with, with these massive legacies of, of past abuse in a way that is not just okay we have fees and we move on as is often the case. Then, what does it do to society and what does it do if it is 10,000, 30,000 people are effected, what does it do? If, if millions have been victims the most, the best known truth commission was the South African truth commission that was set up in the 90s after the fall of the apartheid regime and it ran for a number of years and it was, and it still is in many ways the model of how you can use that kind of mechanism to address a range of issues that the society confronts when, when going through that kind of transformation and we have to as it would keep things together at least to the extent that it doesn't erupt into, into violence and chaos. So that truth commission went very much on the, on the line of, and of course that was, that was, that was the situation in South Africa of, of if not reconciliation, at least bring out the grief of the majority that had been, that had been afflicted by apartheid, not just as a

system that excluded and marginalized them but also that prosecuted, tortured and killed to bring out the truth and too so to as it were begin some, some, some form, some process of, of healing, of cleansing.

The South African truth commission is, on the one hand still emblematic it is very much the example to the rest of the world. It is also very controversial because it had and it's the only example of the truth commission over the past 20, 30 years really it have the, the power, the form of power to grant amnesty to perpetrators of, of human rights, gross human rights violations. This was, this was enforced by the, by the white regime. They would not seek power, they threaten to create, renew its violence and reparation if, if there was not that sort of promise of amnesty for the perpetrators and even though the truth commission in South Africa really, really laid down fairly strict conditions to the, the, the judgment afterwards at a time when international criminal law has advanced very much with an international criminal court and so on is that, that the truth commission, the truth effort, the transitional justice effort that, as it were grants, impunity, immunity and impunity to the worst perpetrators is illegal in fact, it's not right there must be accountability.

Okay this is, this is about legacies of past abuse in the recent past, how does that translate to, to the situation here. Well let's, let's first go through the basics of what a truth commission is and then I will try and, and sort of relate that to the situation of the Roma of Sweden and the ideas that have, that have sprung up here and to see well what can you make of that. I'll just go through basics, what is a truth commission? It's different ways of looking at the truth commission. I've situated it in let's say the general discourse on transitional justice, which tries to come to terms with the past in order to build a sustainable future and mind you it is, it is important to, to acknowledge that the past can be suppressed, the past can be, as it were put aside but it will come back, it will come. In Spain, Spain went through a horrendous civil war in the late 30s and then 40 what 35 years of, of dictatorship by General Franco, who died in the mid 70s. Spain, after Franco's death moved very swiftly to a state of democracy and it is viable and, and solid democracy in Spain one would say in the face of it. The past was swept under the carpet, but it's coming back. It is now coming back and it comes back with very existential questions not just what would happen in the past but how, how can the state be built on the fundamentals that are, that are so questionable when it comes to, how it came about. You see, you see it happening now in Northern Ireland. I spent the last couple of days in Belfast. Where in Northern Ireland, 30, 40 almost years of, of enormous violence resulted and was ended finally with the peace agreement, the Good Friday agreement 10 years ago and the good Friday agreement basically said we have had a lot of suffering but lets move on, lets move on and now it's coming back. There is a group that has to advice on, on how to deal with the past as the enormous amount of activity at the civil society level. There are enquiries going on, it is coming back and there is the feeling more is needed. You need to grapple with the past and that is I think what, what the truth commission is really is about. Its an effort to, as it were establish a, a more definitive and agreed narrative of the past even

where you may have very different perceptions and opposing, opposing myths like you have in the former Yugoslavia, like you have in the Cyprus, like you have in the Northern Ireland.

Contribute to historical record or to justice often it is a truth commissions effort that paves the way later on for accountability through the courts, through prosecution. It is also, it is also a basis to look at how can we, how can we create appropriate reparations, compensation. What is the truth commission normally? It is an independent autonomous body, in most cases it is set up, you can have a private truth commission, but a truth commission in the sort of regular parlance is normally set up by the state in a situation where there has been a past that, that has had some closure but where it is felt the state needs to take responsibility to address that past in order to setup a better future. It is often usually setup by decree or by law with a formal mandate. It's a temporary exercise, it's not something that goes on forever, you have to, as it were, make an effort to determine what happened, draw conclusions and recommendations and then move on, then that commission has done it's job.

What does it do, a truth commission? It investigates patterns of abuse, it collects information, it hears people, victims, representatives of institutions, perpetrators, media, etc., etc. The first truth commissions in Argentina were sort of private affairs in the sense of nonpublic. South Africa broke it open with a very, one could say dramatic method of televising hearings and they went right through the country and that country was riveted to the box for weeks and months and years on end, and sort of by making it public as it where you contribute to hopefully that sort of healing and cleansing process that is so important that reconciliation objective. A truth commission also should look at let's say the broader implications of what happened in the past for the future for society. I was just talking to my colleagues from Canada about what they're going to talk about, the Canadian Truth Commission that is to look now into the, into the, Indian Residential Schools problem. I was saying well if, if, if it had to look into that particular problem you don't need a truth commission because the truth, basically the facts are known, but how do you, how do you put that in a larger context, what does it stand for, that thing, and we'll hear more about that and I think that is the key also when you look at the Roma issue and could a truth commission be relevant. It's not to find out the facts. Of course there are always more facts to be found, but the facts are known, the reports are there, there are tons of them, what do you do with them?

So, why a truth commission and how a truth commission then here in the situation. It's important not to, not to see a truth commission too dogmatically. In my field, there is a tendency to say well, truth commission has to be this that and that and everything else, there's whole books written about truth commissions, how you set them up, how you, how you appointment commissioners, how you, how you, how you give them, how you give them particular powers, how you conduct their business etc., etc. I mean we'll hear from Canada how it took a couple of years to setup that truth commission

for that particular problem. So and it costs a lot of money, a lot of people so first contact with Maria Leissner and through her colleague sort of, I gather sort of made them slightly sort of taken aback because a truth commission, no it's not something you do in a couple of months with a few people but then what's in a name, I mean what is the prescription after my sort of initial, sort of, sense of hey, how would you fit that sort of model on through a situation that is not dealing with a recent legacy of mass abuse, a society very much unstable like you have after violent conflict; now Sweden is one of the most settled, stable democratic countries in the world and yet and yet, given the facts that the Roma exclusion discrimination, as I said at the beginning it can be, it can be referred to or it can be called the biggest human rights problem in Europe today and a big human rights problem in Sweden. I would say anything goes, if so many things have been tried and have failed or have at least not be insufficient if there could be a way in a country like this, to devise a model around the idea of a truth commission that looks at the powers that tries to draw out lessons and somehow uses that to not create new policies because I think the policy ideas are there, but to actually make them work how do you do that, that's the concept. If a truth commission or truth and reconciliation commission could work for them by all means let's, let's go for it because we can't afford to, I would say to miss any, any options because so much has been tried and has failed.

Like we've seen, the situation in Canada is not one that fits a traditional truth commission mold either. There had been truth commissions in other places that are sort of very much as it were tailored to a particular situation or event in the past. There has been and an official truth commission in Greensboro in the United States, a town in, in, well, I'd say it is in the South where 1979 or 1985 civil rights activists were killed by Ku Klux Klan and associates, and decades later the people in that town felt it was necessary to, as it were addressed that enormous stain on their town in their community and they setup a truth commission. Anything goes I would say, but then what do you, what do you want to achieve or what lessons can you draw from what has been tried and has failed or has been insufficient, what do you need, what kind of truth commission do, it can, it can provide the facts right, the facts are well known and of course there's always more to be had, well, but you can, you can, you can as it were complete or create a more complete and comprehensive account of what happened in the past or what the current situation is historical record, the current situation but then what do you then do with a white paper in itself that sort of just lays that out again. I did say that to someone who asked me from Swedish radio what is the, what is the biggest risk of a white paper truth commission, it is another effort that doesn't (*inaudible*). So facts yes but what do you then do with it, how do you, how do you place that into, into the larger, into the larger picture of what today's society is like, how do you create awareness of them that is one of the biggest problems it is just not known. How do you draw from that policy recommendations and how do you ensure that finally that much sort for participation and inclusion by Roma can be developed and achieved, how do you breakthrough, yeah, five centuries of discrimination and marginalization, how do you indeed act and how do you break

through that nonexistence. This is where a truth commission should be seen or an approach, truth commission should be seen as something that is, that really has to be, you know, holistic it's one of those jargon terms, you have to tailor it to this particular situation, but it also has to take into account and that is the opportunity I think that you create for yourself if you setup something like this. It is an opportunity to have a comprehensive and overall approach against something which looks not just at the problems and the financial resources and the policies in the political role, but the whole package and that in particular I would say how you, how you would bring this into society in a different way because that I think is what is needed. Often it is called outreach well, that, that's a jargon term too, but somehow if you talk, if you talk about a truth and reconciliation commission for Roma and Sweden I think the truth element would be that on the facts you actually lay an element of acknowledgement, apology is maybe not the right way to go about it, we know there have been apologies in Canada and Australia, you could have an apology but that could easily be meaningless it's much better to say okay we established a truth and we accept, we acknowledge that is the reality, the truth of the past and the present and we accept responsibility and we'll do something with that responsibility. Then reconciliation, who should be reconciled with whom, you know, I think society needs to be reconcile with itself. It's not the matter of the Roma and the rest of society, society has to understand more at large not everybody will ever do that but society more at large would have to understand that there is this nonexistent "group in their midst" it is indeed not in a position to make it's voice heard and to, as it were, act for it's, in it's, in it's own interest that needs help but at the same time that can only be helped if it can, if it can be made, be made to help itself.

How do you create reconciliation, that sounds (*inaudible*) if you do a truth commission it needs to be much more than a commission that looks at a lot of paper and (*inaudible*) writes a report. It's a mechanism, it's a process and it will only work if that kind of mechanism can be used to reach out into society and through society into the political sweep because you will only get that political will if it comes from below. I mean there will always be politicians who are driven and who will act, but if you want to, as it were, engage the politics of a country like this one and through a country like this one, the politics of Europe; it has to become much more of a, of a civil society effort and this is where I would say okay, I don't know exactly what their, what their engagement in Sweden is but the Amnesty International, Sweden and other organizations in Sweden should be engaged because if you cannot engage, civil society organizations that have a human rights and equality, legitimacy and force I don't think you'll make it. A commission alone will not be able to do that. It's very good that the media are interested I mean it's fascinated to see they're all here.

Let's see how sustainable that is, that interest. Sure, Italy has been a real wakeup call, it's already been referred to for many in Europe of what actually can happen. Nowadays, and Rosa said that much better than I ever can, there's a, there's a big article in The Economist this week about Roma exclusion so, there is interest, but I

think you need, you need more than an occasional report in a newspaper or magazine. You need more than a European commission communication. I was glad to hear that it's finally coming out today and I'm sure there will be full of very worthy considerations and proposals, but then again how, as Miranda said, how do you then make sure that it doesn't sort of get shelved with the all the other reports. I find the idea of a truth commission and maybe you can, you have to come up with a different name but that's, that's not the point. The idea of that kind of vehicle that pulls together all these different elements and tries to, as it were, bring it back into society in a way that, that society cannot so easily sort of turn it's back on it and that the politicians cannot turn their back on it. I find it very, very interesting and worthwhile idea and we'd be very happy to try and cooperate with that. As I said, the transitional justice approach, truth commissions, prosecutions, reparations a lot of that doesn't apply here, we're going to prosecute anyone, but the core idea of really finally facing up to a serious problem that this society has, has had and still has and try and finally deal with it I think that is very much in the spirit of yeah, always building societies and even if you have such a well established, welfare democracy as in Sweden as long as you have people who need that kind of protection who are still nonexistence you can indeed put questions to the quality of their democracy and I hope that in the society like the Swedish, that can, that can be sort of shaped into a wakeup call and if it can be done in Sweden and that could be a model for other countries to follow. So very, very happy to be here I hope this isn't too much of a lecture on truth commission as I said there's a lot that you can draw from it. The value of what we found over the years is that every situation is unique but you can draw on all these different experiences and use them and make something that really tailors. Here you need to do a lot of tailoring but it's worth the effort. Thank you.

Domino Kai:

Thank you very much Mr. Dick Oosting for those interesting words. Thank you very much. I will pass the word further to Mrs. Maria Leissner for maybe some questions or discussions.

Maria Leissner:

I think that, let us use the time now, some 25 minutes to ask questions to all the different persons who have been talking now and because we didn't have enough time before the coffee break so you are most welcome now to address all the different issues that we have discussed during this morning and the word is free and anyone would like to ask, (*inaudible*)?

Speaker?

Thank you, all of the speakers for your good interventions. I have just one question first for you. I'm thinking about the meeting in Brussels on the 16th of September where all the Roma leaders before are going together to present a common statement or vision at this conference. Is it possible to have an EU truth commission or does it have to be a natural one or can it be, can it be presented like this conference as an ID

and then take it (*inaudible*) from the EU because as I see the problem the Roma problem is an EU problem and it is a society problem, it's not the Roma problem. I also wanted to add to what Miranda and what the other said, the fact of this hidden discrimination and hidden races, and I'm sure that all of the high politicians are well aware of this, at this time because not only Roma leaders or organizations have been loud about this, but still the political will and political stand is none. I think about institutions like Fundamental Right Agency, they have in their mandate to fight antiziganism, it's not a word about antiziganism, for example, and this is just one. We can see it everywhere, at all the institutions. There are separate departments breaking on these, but when it comes to regulations letter, there is never mentioned antiziganism, for example, and still they have a Roma social problem. This morning I heard on the news that the Fundamental Right Agency gave critic to Sweden, Finland and France about, how to say in English, how to combat discrimination and how to punish, the punishment for discrimination is too low in our countries so can we ask you of a truth commission?

Dick, before we continue I would like to give the floor to Miranda and Rosa.

Miranda Vuolasranta:

Just a very short comment to Mr. Oosting because he was bit analyzing the, the meaning or the possible outcome of the truth commission and reconciliation commission or both then, when you have done this work you have looked in the mirror and you have the collected past facts of the history together and you have it on in front of your eyes what about then, what could be done and I'm thinking about a resolution, resolution actually, which is clearly recognizing the inexistence of Roma, the existing antiziganism in Europe and recalling the member states in particular the educational structures. There is an article in the Roma related latest resolution of EU, which is recalling the member states to take clear actions on behalf of the education responsible (*inaudible*), which means the Minister of Education, the whole general educational, minister in educational structure where shuts truths of the past should be including in all levels of the curriculums like mother tongue, teaching like general civic teaching, like geographic teaching where you are recognizing their charts, minorities are existent. They have their historical past in our country. They came into country in let's say in the beginning of 15th century, they have their own language, they have their cultural characters such kind of figures, numbers of them are living here and such existent facts in the schools books, teaching books and the general teacher training would make a change for the future otherwise if we just trust that we have made some reports or some truth commission and there is a declaration somewhere, which says the truth but nobody remembers it then it's nothing. In my understating, EU resolution on Roma pointed exactly to the crucial point when it said, the educational structures on the national member states have to take the responsibility, include the existence and recognition of Roma and their historical past and passed an existence in the national curriculums, teacher trainings, teaching materials because in the future in such a way,

we train up a new generation which are fair of Roma existence and which doesn't deny their existence or their rights.

Thank you Miranda.

Proscovia Svärd:

Maybe I should maybe I should present myself. I come from the Nordic Africa Institute which is a research institute in Uppsala, which is under the Foreign Minister of Sweden. I thank you so much Mr. Dick Oosting for your presentation on the truth commissions. I have a particular interest in truth commissions and of course and I reorganize the potential that they have on the fact finding and of course having mobilizing the resources to address the social injustices, but what I would like you to enlighten me about is how one can extract whatever is good about the truth commissions and apply it to the Swedish situation of the Roma people here. In order to get away from this situation I've been following the process in Sierra Leone and I have also read about the one in South Africa and right now I'm following the one in Liberia where the truth commissions have brought up the traumatized people together but at the end of the day they don't deliver, they don't address the social injustices that they've been subjected to. Now, these are already traumatized people that have brought that I engaged in a process under the name of Reconciliation on Healing the nation, which are very important issues, but we want to see that organizations that I involved in transition of issues they follow up the process and that and don't just leave it after they pursued their interests. We want to see change in the life of those, the minorities or the excluded, I hope that this process, the Swedish process can come up with a motto or the rest of the European countries, which will, we will sell by having the Roma people at the center of the process and thereby bring about policies that will create another generation of the Roma people engage them in the society in a meaningful way by empowering them with education. Thank you very much.

Domino Kai:

Thank you, very much Ms. Svärd. Please, Tove Skotvedt.

Tove Skotvedt:

Thank you. I'm on the speakers list later on so I will not, I will be brief, but I only wanted to agree to Rosa Taikon's statement that it is a political question and also to add on this that it is a European question and problem. In my opinion I've been working with minority affairs for the last 35 years on the Roma questions (*inaudible*) especially in Eastern Europe and particularly in Romania and what I say is you have a huge number of plan, action plans (*inaudible*) councilor of Europe and now the European union but you lack the political will at nation level, you also have a lot of national plans of actions and rules and regulations that you see at the national budget

with lack of money, so the national will, political will for implementation, I'm not talking about Sweden but I'm talking about the particularly the result of this that we have seen in (*inaudible*) for last years Romania and Roma coming to know where to beg or to work as a street prostitutes and this is just simply the affect of the lack of political will to implement either the international obligations or their national action plans in other country concerned, thank you.

Thank you very much.

MARIA LEISSNER???

Thank you. I would just like to add a few comments before asking you to answer some of the questions being addressed. You were basically saying that one should apply the concept of the truth and reconciliation committee or the process with the a light hand not being too rigid about it but just use some of the mechanisms worked out and some of the processes already established and adapt into the situations and this is precisely, why we asked you and the other international invited experts here today to listen to your advice how could we adapt this mechanism to Swedish circumstances. A very important thing that to say is that, we would not necessarily look at prosecutions we would not have that function, but the two important aspects of truth commission or a white book project would be first to establish the facts and even though facts are well known not the least through the books, and through the work of boiling around the table and many, many others, they're well known in a very small group. They are not known, people like myself who've spent six years in the Swedish parliament working with human rights issues and they are not acknowledged by the Swedish government, so the idea of having an official investigation would not necessarily be to find facts that were previously unknown to the Roma's, but to acknowledge the facts this sender being actually the Swedish government. Then also, the second important function of such work would be to look, as you said, at the broader implications now what do we need to do with these facts in order for the situation not to occur again and in order to start a healing process. So, thank you very much for your comments, they're extremely helpful and I also would like to agree with some of the issues being raised about the possibility to have something on a European scale because the more we look into it the less it is a national problem in Sweden and the more you find it is a European problem.

Tove Skotvedt:

Thanks. Well, to pickup from the last point yes, it is a European problem. A couple of years ago I was in the meeting with the Romano Prodi who was than the President Of The European Commission and we went to see him about Turkey and after five minutes, Turkey he turned to the Roma issue and said, the Roma issue that is the real biggest human rights problem in Europe I mean that was the President of the European Commission, this was five years ago, so it is a European issue, yes. So, by all means a truth commission type exercise at the European level I'm not sure because I think the essence of that sort of truth recovery, endeavor or idea and not as you said to create a

Rosa, it's not about the facts, the facts are known but what do you do with the facts, how do you, as it were, make them work, make them known to reach that into a society that you cannot do at the European level in the same way as you can do at the national level, but you can do other things. A resolution by European parliament we got tons of them and not to say that they shouldn't keep doing that, a communication by the commission who knows, a resolution or decision by the joint action whatever you have all these formalisms by the European council I don't know you still need as it were, the pressure from the member states. I've become rather cynical about Europe's, and particularly the EU's ability and political will to act on something like this. I haven't seen it on the range of issues be the most silence fear or the way they fight terror and kidnap people and no one wants to know even Sweden had problems with that I think it comes back, I mean you have to do those things and I'm happy to sort of advise on that because I happened to have been sort of doing that over the last years now in a slightly different position, but I mean I'm skeptical, but yeah you have to keep trying, but I think it's at the national level that you have an opportunity as it were break some new ground and here the idea of a truth and reconciliation commission could be, could be useful. How do you tailor it I'm not quite sure? I think it is indeed making the facts into truth that is acknowledged by government and that sort of forces that political will beyond let's say good meaning and driven politicians like yourself with all due respect, I mean I don't see yet Sweden's political system embracing the Roma issue that you need more for that although they have set up a Roma delegation, but then setting up the delegation could also be a nice way of as it were partly the problem. So it's, you're landed with the baby, you have to, you have to give it back, how do you give it, how do you give it back and how do you ensure that whatever you do is indeed not just another report that ends up on the pile how do you ensure your point...

Julie Roy and Doug Kropp, Legal and Senior Counsel, the Department of Justice of the Government of Canada: Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Canada.

Julie Roy:

And many of those children never returned home. Thousands of them died in schools, you know from neglect or from disease. You know, estimates of thousands of deaths from tuberculosis or other problems just because they were not properly cared for. Many students never came home, so many people lost their children. So you can understand, you know, the distrust that there was. We got around that largely by making sure that the aboriginal people were directly involved in every aspect of this consultation, involvement, participation was critical. This could not be something that would be imposed, decided by the government and then imposed on aboriginal people. This was something that had to be coming from them, something that they fully

supported. So we needed to listen to them. They wanted truth as a part of this and they wanted reconciliation as a part of this. So the idea that this was not just about looking backwards, that this was not just about coming to terms with the past and history but also about how to move forwards, forward together and to try to reconcile and heal those relationships.

This is a long list. I won't go through each of these, but it gives you an idea of some of the consideration that you might look into when you are considering setting up a Truth Commission or whatever you might want to call it. You need, in terms of the mandate you need to be clear on the objectives or the goal. You know, is this about the truth, finding out the truth? Is it about the past? Is it about the future? Is it both? Is it, is the focus on, on justice or is it on, on healing, on reconciliation? These things aren't necessarily mutually exclusive but I'm just saying it's important that you have a clear vision of what you want you to accomplish because that will help inform the scope of the undertaking. Are you going to be looking at the whole period, you know, the situation in, for the Roma in Sweden goes back hundreds of years? Or, you know, will you be looking at select periods of time, timeframes, select issues or is it going to be comprehensive over the whole period? Because this will then have implications for how long you will need, the duration, the life span of the commission. It will have implications for resources, for personnel, for costs, for all kinds of things. You know, is the goal here about education, raising public awareness, which is, in our case, that's what it large, a large part of it was. Like we've heard the facts are there for those who want to find them. You know, but we realize we need more to bring this to broader public awareness. So it's very much about, about educating, of raising awareness. You want to ask about the powers that this body might have? Is it fully voluntary or would it have powers to compel attendance? Would it be able to compel the production of materials? Access to government documents is a critical resource, in Canada at least, and the school records, for instance, that we had. So we wanted to make sure that anybody in the commission looking into this would have full access to all the official records that are available. We have certain legislation in Canada that allows for access to government documents. We also have legislation that allows or that protects the privacy interests of individuals and this is something that comes into play as well. So sometimes there's a balance here of the privacy rights of individuals and I am not just talking about those who may have been involved in perpetrating some of the abuses. But we realized in Canada, for instance that if a commission was going to be studying the schools and the abuses that took place and it was making a report in that report there may be individuals who were themselves abused, who might not want their personal information to be made known. And so we needed to find ways to make sure that those who came forward to speak at the commission, those who wanted their stories to be told, that they would have the option of allowing that information to be kept off the record. You know, they might want, feel the need to speak and to unburden themselves in whatever way they wanted in their own languages, in written format, in spoken format, in a public hearing, in their community whatever but they may also choose to not have that information used publicly. So we needed to balance

those privacy interests. We wanted to make sure that access to materials would be available but there was always that, those questions of balancing. You need to, would need to think about whether the commission would have the power to name names, to identify people and individuals who were involved or is the focus going to be more of a systemic nature. You know, not focused on finding blame or laying blame but more on, you know, what could be done now moving forward to make the situation better and to prevent things like this from happening again. You'll want to think about questions of evidence and proceedings. You know, these are all the kinds of questions that you might want to ask. Will the proceedings be public or will it be private or will there be the option of both? The committees, commissions report and recommendations you'll want to think about the scope of the report in the recommendations, the nature of the recommendations. Will they be focused on just what happened in the past or will they also have a broader mandate to make recommendations about, for instance, the social or economic conditions that, of the people today? Will the report, will it, you know will it have a fixed time frame in which to report? Would it be, how will, will it be just findings or will it be recommendations will it be? What about its dissemination? Will it be public? Certainly for us that was important because our key goal was the education and awareness raising to the broader public. So if the report just is private and shelved somewhere that wasn't going to do the trick. So and then how to disseminate that? What languages to put it in? Nowadays, you know, with modern technology there are a number of more options available as well. You know the media but we don't have to rely just on the media any more. I mean, there is the Internet, there is the web, you know, things can be made, disseminated much more broadly than perhaps they could be in the past. And so we were exploring the use of those alternative media, the Internet, for instance, in both, in how the commission could run its activities? How it can outreach to communities? Canada is a very, very large country as you know and the commission will have seven national events focused on sort of big picture of the policy and the programs but it will also have community and regional events and hundreds of those would be expected and we would, there would be also I imagine opportunities for people to contribute directly and through chat boards on the Internet or through postings and e-mails and web cams and all kinds of other use of modern technology that's available. Accessibility again to the report is an important question. We are setting up a national resources center which will be staffed and will be resourced and would be part of the, an ongoing commitment but, of course, that takes some resources but making this report available and a living testament to what happened would be important. After the report and the recommendations are made, it is very, very important to think about what would happen and what, how to insure that the work means something and that it has an impact and who will carry that work forward. You know will it become government responsibilities for the government need to respond to the recommendations? Will it be obligated to respond or will it just, you know accept or thank the commission for its work and then move forward? You'll want to have the same groups that were involved in putting the pressure to get a commission in first place, continue to be involved in making sure that its

recommendations go somewhere and don't just sit there. In our case we are looking at, you know, developing, the National Resource Center would hopefully develop curriculum for the schools, the education would then continue so that future generations of the Canadian public would be informed of what had happened and so the commission's work would continue and to have an effect afterwards.

One of the core assumptions that we worked with when we established the commission was the sense of independence. And this was as much objective or real independence as perceived independence and the two are not necessarily the same thing. Given the amount of distrust that aboriginal people have in Canada it was understood that the commission would need to have and to be seen to be operating independently from government to be able to carry out its mandate without political influence. But for various other reasons including economic, financial ones it was viewed necessary to make the commission a part of the government structure but to be independent politically and to have its own operating independence and its own budget. This required sufficient resources to allow for that and it meant that the commission had to have its own authority over its budget decisions and over its financial decisions. This is something, this is a lesson that had been observed in many other commissions around the world that the legitimacy of the commission, in the eyes of the public, especially in the eyes of those for whom it's supposed to be working for, for the group that's, that were the victims it's imperative that it be seen as having legitimacy, independence and that is often tied to financial independence. Because if the group has to be coming back constantly asking for more money or if it's not sufficiently funded in the first place the perception maybe that, you know, it's given a mandate that it can't fulfill and that it's frustrated, it will lead to more criticism or frustration down the road and it would be seen as just an effort to try to cover it up or, or not to give it the support that it really needs in order to fulfill its mandate.

Some sort of technical considerations that you'll look, you'll want to look at would be, you know, how big to make the commission. The South African commission had seventeen commissioners. When we started our work there was talk that we might have twenty commissioners. Some of the concern was that they wanted to have representation, diversity on the commissioners that we wanted to have regional representation and representation from aboriginal groups, representations from the churches, representation from government. All of this, we wanted to have commissioners who had personal backgrounds in history and qualifications that made them very respected individuals, not in, especially in the aboriginal community but also in the broader community because it was recognized that the truth commission would be needing to feel this wasn't just for the aboriginal people themselves but this was for all Canadians. And so we needed to try to find people and individuals who would have that kind of respect in both communities and that kind of a reputation and legitimacy. We ended up, as Julie said, with only three commissioners and I think some of that was due to, you know, resource considerations and other things but the three, they compromised there with the three commissioners would be supported by

committees that would be representative of, from the former students themselves and as well they would be supported by regional representations, regional representatives. So while there would only be three commissioners at the top it would be a whole structure and organization beneath them.

Some of these considerations relate to proceedings I've already touched on so I won't go through them in detail. You know it's, the second one there access to, assessment of community and victim needs and support this was something that we realized was very important. Because as people would come forward and talk about their stories, many of them would be reliving the experiences and that would be very painful and we needed to make sure that we had a proper health supports, psychological and health supports for people. Accessibility of the proceedings, the format had to be seen as a safe place for people to come and speak. We would need to run them, allow people to speak in their own languages. We would need if people couldn't come to us, we would need to go them, so the commission will be, outreaching will be going into communities. These are the kinds of things, you know, how many hearings? How many meetings? What kind of meetings? The role of the communities themselves in participating and in designing the meetings will be important. Who would be coming? Who would be speaking? For, as, was it just going to be the former students themselves? Was it government officials? People who had some involvement in the policies? People from the churches, you know, who would you be engaging?

The last slide here I just sort of sum up some of what we found to be the main lessons that we learned from this process. First and foremost the importance of consultation, of involvement, of participation of the communities affected, the individuals and communities affected.

For us we realize if we didn't have that that this just was not going to succeed. This needed to be as much developed together as possible. This, the ideas needed to come from the aboriginal groups themselves and from the leaderships and from, and also from the communities directly affected. And so not just in setting up and establishing the commission but also in the running of the commission once it starts. The, so partnership is key there. Expectations, it's important to be clear on what those are, so that you don't create unrealistic expectations. That's not to say that that you shouldn't have some important goals to achieve but the TRC doesn't need to be seen as an end, a final end of, it's not going to be the solution to everything but it can be a good start. It can get the dialogue going, it can get the information disseminated. It can get those facts that are out there more broadly known and it can lead to discussions about what needs to happen from then on, what the next steps need to be. Legitimacy, again I spoke about that earlier is a critical role of independence. This is essential, must be able to carry out its work without political interference. Financial independence is key to that. Transparency, accountability, again because of the distrust, the historical distrust, realize that commission will need to operate in as transparent a way as possible. I've already spoken about resources that the, it was also important that the

TRC would be victim-centered at all times, that it would be appropriate culturally, respectfully culturally sensitive, that there would be provision for health support for the victims, for the families and for the communities and that we wouldn't just be the, to use an expression, pouring salt on wounds. Just making people come forward and tell their stories and leave at that and not provide some follow up with them and with their communities to make sure that we weren't actually making things worse but that we were contributing to the healing. So those were some of the things that we've taken from this experience. Some of the things we pass on to you but like I say every country is different, you know, so many of the things that we considered might not be appropriate consideration for you. You might have other considerations to take into account that we didn't but that gives you a sense of some of what our thought process was and we'll see they have a long mandate, we'll see what happens when they make that report but there is a lot of hope and optimism right now in Canada that this will be the start of a new relationship between aboriginal Canadians and other Canadians and that we will really be moving, by dealing with the past fully and properly that we will be able to move forward together into the future. So thank you again for inviting us and I look forward to further discussions with questions.

...Contribute in a permanent and lasting manner to the, to former Indian residential school students. I will now turn the matter over to my colleague Doug Kropp who will, who will talk about the world models exploit and how to establish a truth and reconciliation commission.

Doug Kropp

I'll try this one. Can you hear me if I speak through this? Okay, let me know if you can't and I'll switch over to the handheld. Before I start on the slide, I just wanted to make a few comments about some of what I heard this morning and some of the parallels that arose in my mind as well as some of the differences between the situation here and with the residential schools and our aboriginal people. I found it interesting that to a large extent the approach taken in Sweden and in Europe and other countries that we've heard about towards the Roma people has been to deal with them by trying to exclude them as much as possible so, you know, not giving them voting rights, not educating them, not providing them with housing etc., etc., in the hope that they would move away, go somewhere else, disappear. The approach in Canada that we're still coming to terms with now, with our aboriginal people was to try to deal with them by assimilating them into the dominant culture and to get, to in a sense get rid of them, just I heard you talking about how it's, it's not accurate to refer to the Roma problem as the Roma problem, it's not the Roma problem it's the larger society's problem. In the same way in Canada, historically we often refer to our aboriginal people as the Indian problem and ways to deal with the Indians and how to get rid of them and the idea was to try to assimilate them, if we could destroy their culture, their identity then they would just become like everybody else and we no longer have an Indian problem and the thought and the rationale behind the Indian residential schools was that the adults in the aboriginal communities were perceived as

being beyond helper or it was too late, they were too, their cultures were already engrained in them and they would not be able to unlearn them. So the approach, the best way would be to try to get at the children and then if they could take the children away from their families, from the influence of their families and their communities early enough, forbid them in the schools, send them away to residential schools where their contact with their families would be limited, if not completely restricted, they would be forbidden from speaking their languages, from practicing their cultures, their religious beliefs in the hope that and our prime minister in his apology last week mentioned the goal was to kill the Indian in the child.

So, while the individual might survive the person's culture, their identity would be destroyed and of course this happened to something like a 150,000 or maybe more aboriginal children over a 150 year period, and the affects were not limited just to the individuals, to the children but of course to their parents, to their siblings, to their families, to their communities because they, what they didn't learn in school was how to be a proper parent themselves and/or what it meant to be part of a family or part of a community and so many of them unfortunately when they became adults themselves and had families themselves, the cycles of violence that they were exposed to in the schools, the physical abuse, the sexual abuse unfortunately began to be repeated as victims because perpetrators themselves and so many of the social problems, community problems, substance abuse, alcohol abuse many of these things are and have been attributed directly to the legacy of the Indian residential schools, and the policies, and the practices that took place.

So, while this was a different approach in Canada to exclusion, it was still an attempt to deal with the problem by getting rid of it and destroying people in a different way and education what was denied to Roma people here, education was used as the tool to accomplish that but one of the similarities that struck me was that underlying these two different approaches is the same sense of racist or discriminatory attitudes that led to it and the sense of superiority that in Canada was felt that aboriginal cultures and peoples were inferior and not equal. So when we, we're now looking at a truth commission it's not only about coming to terms with the history and facts and truth of what happened, but also trying to understand the attitudes and beliefs and perceptions that allowed things like that to take place in the first place and to try to ensure that things like this could never happen again. So, that is indeed a large part of the mandate that our commission will have. I'll turn, I'll speak more about some of this later and we can of course continue with questions; I'll return then to the slides here.

Since the 1970s or thereabouts there have been at least 20, probably closer to 30 truth commissions worldwide. Now, when we began our own, look at what was, what we might do in Canada, we did want to learn from the experiences of other countries. We looked at many of these but we did find that each country had its own unique circumstances and its own unique considerations unlike many of the other countries where truth commissions have been used. We heard this morning from Mr. Oosting

that in many of those situations they are in countries where there is a transition to democracy, where there has been a dictatorship of some sort or whether they are emerging from a long period of civil war and in our situation of course, we like you are an established democracy, we pride ourselves on being a democracy and we have all kinds of laws respecting equality of everyone before the law and nondiscrimination and yet, you know, we have our own human rights abuses and problems. We realize that looking around, there were things we could gain from the experiences of other countries but we realized that there was no prescription. There was no one size that fits all that would work that we could just, you know, adopt. It would have made our job easier for you to just take a model and plunk it in. We certainly looked, we looked at Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala. We looked at South Africa of course probably the best known. Our country of course has some history there in the sense that an un-proud history, if you will, that South Africa modeled its homelands on the reserve systems that Canada setup for its aboriginal people in Canada, this is something they came. I was interested to learn this morning that the Nazi's learned from you, did some of their work here, their initial work before they instituted those policies in Germany well we, we also were very instructive and informative to the South Africans apartheid regime when they came to Canada to learn what we had done with our aboriginal people putting them on reserves and they setup their homelands.

So now, history has a way of coming around, so now we were learning from South Africa in terms of what they did with their truth commission and how they were coming to terms with their past and there were many things there that we liked but there were differences for instance, Julie mentioned we don't, we didn't allow for the amnesty or immunity from prosecution, this is something that we heard this morning from Mr. Oosting as well. This is something that has been criticized in South Africa with our better understanding now of sort of war crime prosecution and that perpetrators of severe human rights abuses should not go, go immune, but in Canada also we realized we being an established democracy, we already had a rule of law, we already had courts and other processes available to us to allow for prosecutions when prosecutions were appropriate. We have many, many, there had been many prosecutions, the prosecutions continue for the individuals who have been identified as perpetrators of physical and sexual abuse against children. There is no intension through our truth commission to give those persons any kind of amnesty or immunity if they wanted to come forward and talk, they are free and welcome to come forward as is anybody to speak, but that would not make them immune from any, from any prosecution. We also have courts that allow for civil suits to be brought for compensation and those kinds of activities have continued as well.

So we wanted something, we realized we already had legal processes in place to deal with legal aspects. We needed a non-legalistic format, we didn't want it to be a public enquiry as Julie mentioned, a public enquiry in Canada is very much a legalistic type of process. We wanted people to have a safe environment where they could come and speak and share their stories and tell their stories. For many of the former residential

school students, their own individual healing process was being prevented because they felt that they had never been heard, that their stories have never been properly told and so similar to you the facts, there's lots of facts about what happened, they're out there, there's been books written but they're not known, they're not known to the Canadian public generally, they're not taught in our schools, they're not, you know, myself I went through our wonderful education system I heard this morning, somebody was talking about having gone through, you know, the education system here and not learning anything about the Roma. Well, you could go through the education system in Canada and not learn about the Indian residential schools and the impact and legacy, legacy of that. Individuals who went to those schools feel they need to unburden themselves by having their story told, allowing them to tell it in the way that they want so the truth commission will be very victim center orientated to allow a safe place, culturally appropriate place for them to come forward, tell their stories and feel that they had been heard. Their stories will not be judged, it's not a legal process, they won't be cross-examined, they won't be questioned. The problem with our courts right now, if somebody want, a former student wanted to take their situation to court is it they would be cross-examined by lawyers and in many ways they would be revictimized by the legal process, many of them would be, you know, questioned on whether they were telling the truth and it would, it would bring up for them much of the same problems and they would relive the experiences and again it would be a very unpleasant experience to be confronted again by the power, and authority and abuse of the state. So, we felt we needed a system, some place where they could come, so that was the sort of genesis behind the idea of the truth commission.

Now, so as I said every country is different, every country has it's own circumstances to think about, but I'm going to the next slide. When we looked at our situation we did look at the other countries, we spent about, I was just thinking this morning it's been a little over four years since I started working almost fulltime on this, it was about two years of preliminary discussions around the country with aboriginal groups, talking about what kind of an approach might be appropriate and then another two years of actually working that out and setting it up before the launch last, earlier this month June 1st, but before I was involved there were years of studies, reports, I was hearing about, you know, all of the reports that have been written and recommendations that have been made in over the years about the Roma people, we had many of those as well, some of you were talking about what do you, how do you create that pressure, the impetus to get the government to move on something like this. In Canada we had a number of pressures that began to build, that made the government feel that they, that they really needed to move forward on this. We had, there were pressures from aboriginal organizations themselves, political pressures, public pressures but we also had these legal pressures that were growing, the individual claims that were being brought that Julie spoke about.

We also had reports been written, we had an organization called the Law Commission of Canada, which made a report that recommended that a TRC be set up among other things. We had a Royal Commission in Canada that made, which had a broader focus on aboriginal people generally in Canada, but also made specific recommendations in terms of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission for residential schools. We had our legal associations; there is an association of lawyers and candidate, Canadian Bar Association, they became active and they made their own recommendations to the government. Mr. Oosting spoke about the need to generate support among organizations in civil society to pressure the government. We also, people put pressure, created political pressure, put pressure on not just those in power but also those in opposition so that by trying to work with the opposition parties and getting opposition parties to raise it in our parliament put political pressure and caused embarrassments for the government and so all of these, as well the media. Interestingly, many of you spoke about the media has not been supportive in the past about this or has ignored it, that was also the case in Canada for many, many years, but the more that, there was a process, a realization that the media themselves needed to be educated about what had happened and the media began to take a more active role in publicizing what had happened and so all of these pressures came together to make the government realize that it finally needed to move. Now, all those pressures may not be available to you here, you have, you know, different systems, different considerations, but those are some of what went behind ours.

So what I'm talking about here is the, you know, the political or the legal context in which you find yourselves, you know, and again I can't speak to your situation or to what might be possible but these are some of the kinds of questions or considerations on if you were to do a TRC, you know, what would you be looking into, is it part of a larger package of responses. In Canada, the TRC as Julie mentioned was one element of a broad settlement package that was reached, that was used to settle legal actions but also included non-legal aspects like the TRC, it did include compensation, it included other things and then separately from that, there was an official apology that was given. You know, every country is different; in some countries compensation is something that might be possible, reparations, it's not necessary that all these things go together. In some countries or that they go together at one time. A truth commission can be start of a process or it can be the end of a process, in our case it's part of a process but it won't be the end either. At the end of it, there will be recommendations made as to what should happen next, I'm not sure what they will recommend but you can expect that there will be further discussions about what other elements need to be put in place, what other programs, residential schools is only one part of what affects our aboriginal people. There's a realization that they are not sharing equally in the benefits of Canadian society, there are social needs, economic needs, there are a lot of other issues, which I'm sure it would be not possible for the truth commission to deal with the Indian residential schools, question in isolation of all these broader social issues but so there maybe recommendations that come out of that.

We will also be setting up, as Julie mentioned, a resource center, a research center that would be permanent existence at the end of the TRC. All of the materials and information that the TRC gathers as well as its findings and its report would be deposited there. It would be a public resource for everyone to use and hope would be that this would be available to develop curricula for the schools, you know, that it would be disseminated broadly and that it would be there so that, you know, no one will ever be able to forget or to say that these things did not happen.

So again, it could be a part of something, it could be the start of something, it could be part of a larger project, it could be, we heard this morning some discussion about whether a truth commission per se is the right model, I wouldn't get too worried about some antics about words whether you call it a truth commission or something else. We looked at other models as well in Canada, I don't know if you have things like this, we have legislation that allows for public enquiries, we have something called the Royal Commission that can be government can set up. Different mechanisms also have different limits, different restrictions, pros and cons, different advantages disadvantages, costs can be a consideration; some models would be more costly than others. We also considered setting up an (*inaudible*) person type office to deal with this as one possible format or model, really you're not, you're limited only by your creativity and your imagination. We did end up settling on the term truth and reconciliation commission for what we chose, there was discussion about whether that was the appropriate model and title. The concern was that it would conjure up the South African model for people because that, it shared the same title, but it was felt especially by the aboriginal groups that truth was very important, having it in the title was significant, it was pointed out that their, while this would be in attempt to get an official version of what happened and an understanding of the attitudes that led to this, there would be the truth in the large sense of the word that truth, but that also there are, there would be 1000s of individual truths that would also be spoken and individuals could come forward with their own stories. So, truth was an important part of it but it was not necessarily seen as being just an official truth, you know, one truth that everybody could necessarily agree on, but individuals would not be challenged on their own truth, they would not have to prove, you know, like through evidence that these things actually happened to them. I heard this morning...

Domino Kai:

Thank you very much Ms Julie Roy and Mr. Doug Kropp for the interesting model of Canada, really interesting. We are a little bit late to the schedule but we will take five minutes short break now and for those who smoke I will just say nobody are allowing it down because there is still speeches on the yet, on the agenda. I am sorry. Please be sharp, five minutes. Thank you,

Domino Kai:

We will hear first Tove Skotvedt, Senior Advisor at the Norwegian Minister of Labor and Social Inclusion. She will present a Norwegian experience White Paper and a composition sheet, and after her there will be a shorter speech from the Swedish Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination, Katri Linna and before the planned joint discussion we will have a short coffee break because of the delay and after that the discussion. Thank you. Tove, please.

Tove Skotvedt, Senior Adviser at the Norwegian Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion: The Norwegian experience – White Paper and a Compensation Scheme.

Okay, can you hear me? It is loud enough? Yes? No objections? Normally at this kind of a meeting I would have spoken Norwegian because very many of you know Norwegian and that but I will make it easier for the interpreters. It's easier for them to translate from English to Swedish than from Norwegian to English. So first of all, thank you very much for the invitation. Dear participants, I will talk about the history situation in Norway mainly regarding the Romani Travelers (*inaudible*) and the reconciliation process between the group and the Norwegian authorities. My name, as you have heard, is Tove Skotvedt. I work as a Senior Advisor in the Ministry of Labor and Social Inclusion, and this ministry is responsible for all the minority affairs, refugees, asylum seekers, indigenous people, the Sami, the national minorities. I'm also a participant in the committee of experts on Roma questions in the Council of Europe and as I mentioned earlier today I have been working with minority questions for the last 35 years and on Roma questions for the last 18 years. My presentation will partly be based on a report called "Compensation to Romani Subjected to Coercive Sterilization." This report was carried out by a working group set up by the authorities and ...okay, now it's louder. Okay, yeah. Okay, here we go again. My presentation will be based on the report called "Compensation to Romani Travelers (*inaudible*) Subjected to Coercive Sterilization." This report was made in cooperation with Romani Representatives and presented in 2003 and it describes the process of how allegations regarding coercive sterilization were raised, how the authorities reacted leading to acknowledgment of responsibility, apology and compensations. Norwegian Roma gypsies they number only 500 persons while the Romani Travelers top of that number approximately 4 to 5 persons and probably much more but they have no ethnic statistics in Norway just estimates, and these two groups they are all considered national minority in Norway since 1999 and thus covered by the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. And I would like to underline according to their own wish the Roma and the Romani they consider themselves two different groups and they also have histories that differs in significant base. The Romani, they traveled within Norway and they were much more easy to reach by then the Norwegian authorities while the Roma gypsies they traveled to and from Norway and escaped very much

larger extent the abuses by the Norwegian authorities. This I will come back to. The current policy of, when it comes to the national minorities was outlined in 2000 and these measures, policy measures are coordinated by our ministry. Formal meetings between the authorities and national minority representatives are held regularly and this is to try to keep up with Article 15 in the Framework Convention of Effective Participation. So little about, a little about the minority history in Norway, which is not a very flattering one I'm afraid. The indigenous population in Norway, the Sami, they were traditionally Sami, semi nomadic reindeer herders and they were the first to know the effects of forced assimilation and racist ideology. Sami language was prohibited at school, family names had to be changed from Sami to Norwegian in order to buy land but Sami organizations were strong and the situation changed. The Sami have during negotiations with the authorities as well as by actions all the civil disobedience reached the high degree of self-government and the feeling of being discriminated has gradually diminished. The Sami is recognized as indigenous peoples and the Sami parliament was opened in 1989. Since then several academic institutions for and by Sami have been established, all these by State funding. The Sami were, of course, blaming the authorities for the assimilation policy. However, the process of reconciliation was and is being helped by the strong Sami organizations and Sami activists. The Romani were much more vulnerable to the Norwegian assimilation process and the goal of the assimilation process was to change the culture and the way of life of the Romani from traveling to settling. And the public explanation was, of course, to like help the Romani to become part of the Norwegian welfare system. And the underlying motive was, of course, clearly racist, considering Romani way of life and culture as inferior to that of the Norwegians. The most dramatic and by some called genocide efforts was the forced sterilization of Romani. Other measures included children forcibly taken away from the families and families placed in working camps in order to train them to settled life. You even have the law forbidding them to keep horses and all these activities were carried about by a Norwegian organization called 'The Mission Among The Homeless' but, of course, the Romani they knew very well the intentions of the State and this part of Norwegian history has caused wounds that have been very hard to heal between the Romani and the authorities and many Romanies still suffer from the long term effects of previous discrimination. The other side effect is they're very deeply rooted skepticism towards Norwegian private organizations dealing with minority issues. It is a long process to make up for previous discrimination, to adjust the policy, to admit injustice, to apologize and to seek reconciliation and to establish trust, And in this process, the authorities they have the main responsibility. Ten years ago the Minister for National Minority Affairs expressed on behalf of the authorities an apology for the injustices and the abuses suffered by the Romani in the past. She also underlined the importance of the research going on and that she said shedding light on these dark chapters of Norwegian history. How did this research start? At the beginning of the 1990s people from the Romani group together with the Helsinki Committee in Norway questioned the way the Norwegian authorities had treated the Romani during the 20th Century and they insisted on reviewing the policy from a Human Rights perspective. Therefore the

Ministry of Social and Health Affairs appointed the Norwegian Research Council to do a major research project on possible human rights violations regarding the Romani. A series of reports were published and a special one was on the sterilizations but also the situation of the children and identity questions. So this helped, the research policy proved the culpability of the State and, of course, that was helpful for the Romani but on the other hand the role of the State being evident, the Romani felt even more the reason to look upon the authorities with despise and distrust. It did not matter very much that other and previous governments were responsible. Neither did matter that the policy had changed. The policy of the past could not be forgotten in the contact with the authorities. An apology from the Minister for Minority Affairs on behalf of previous governments was welcomed by the Romani but considered only the beginning of a very fragile reconciliation process going on for the last ten years. The Romani felt the need understandably enough to underline, over and over again, the sufferings they had endured and the anger they felt and still feel towards the authorities. The politicians and the civil servants have had and still have to understand the frustration and be able to listen to the accusations for actions taken by others than them. The main responsibility lies with the authorities and they must allow the Romani the time the Romani feel necessary for creating an atmosphere for trust. The authorities needed dialogue partners representing the Romani. This was a slow and difficult process. Romani were not used to organizations but used to their family network. And being a member of a minority organization exposed your ethnicity and this is a challenge. In the local community a person who is known to be a Romani still suffers from discrimination. In contact with the authorities the Romani are still, were and are still skeptical.

(New tape)

...like exempting, exemption from list of names, you usually have member lists when you give subventions through the organizations, but not for the money because we know only too well of what these kind of lists and registration might be used for, but while confidence was built between the board of the organizations and the authorities, they were trust and skepticism between the board and the members of the Romani group. Was the board really acting on for the best for the Romani or would they be fooled by the authorities, clear mandates have to be given from the members to the board, negotiations between the board and the authorities have to be checked by the members over and over again.

Since sterilization was one of the most serious parts of the violations towards the Romani and the most difficult obstacle to the reconciliation, I was going through some details, due to their allegation of forced sterilization, as I said, a particular subject was, a particular subject of study was founded in 1995 and the project report as I also mentioned called sterilization of Romani (*inaudible*) a historical study of Law and practice 1934 to 1977 was presented.

During these years described in the study, the ideology have been to make the travelers renounce of their traditional way of life and turn them by force into certain regions. Here it is the contradiction by Romani traveling within Norway were subjected to this and the Roma migrating from Norway were not affected by sterilization. Why did some Romani women apparently agree to sterilization without really wanting to? In the medical sphere, Romani women often faced situations where they were not given adequate information related to their medical condition. They were not involved in the decision-making process concerning their treatment or they were treated as objects instead of clients. They might also have felt forced to agree of the fear for the children taking away from them. This threat was usually used if you did not agree to be trained for settling family life, or the children could be placed in Norwegian foster homes or orphanages, but summing up all these various measures they all were suited for the intension of wiping away the Romani culture and way of life. What about the number of persons or women sterilized; their report states, this may indicate that more than 330 Romani women were sterilized outside of the sterilization act. If you add these to the number of interventions with statutory authority this means that over 300 Romani women may have been sterilized from 1930 to 1970.

I will talk a little bit about the compensation. Of course money cannot compensate for lost lives and irreversible sterilization and broken family ties and lives ruined by racism and opportunities are not remedied by some money, but this being said compensation does, however, represent for the Romani a sign of reconciliation. So in corporation with the Romani, guidelines have been setup for individual and collective compensation and this system in the ministry was done in the ministry of labor and social inclusion. This was a very serious and difficult work because very many Romani had and still have problems to deal with the emotions attached to discussing at a very private and person level. At the same time, certain subjects like the female body and sterilizations are delicate questions. All this combined with the effort to estimate sums to compensate for atrocities was almost an impossible task; still the working group presented the report I mentioned earlier, used as background material for individual compensation. I will mention briefly the individual and collective compensation. A report published in 2004 states the outline for this compensation scheme called a compensation scheme for war children and compensation scheme for Romani people, travelers and (*inaudible*) who have received deficient education.

So there were several groups and the compensation through the Romani would be both for sterilization but also for being placed in foster homes or being forced to go to settling camps. The principles of this report was endorsed by parliament in 2005. The idea with this new rules and regulations were to make it as easy as possible for the Romani to ask for re-compensation, and I will not go into the details because this report, this I can explain to you but it was not to have the burden or proof too difficult to apply for compensation. The Romani individuals, they must seek help for preparing applications for compensation from a special secretarial setup and also by their own

organizations and the organizations they receive government grant for this purpose of assisting people, writing applications, and then last, the collective compensation the government established in 2004 a fund of approximately 9.5 million euro for collective compensation for previous injustice and this is supposed to be used for cultural purposes. The annual return amounting to approximately 500,000 euro is administered by a foundation. The board of the foundation consists only of representatives of Romani organizations. The authorities, they have one member, but without the right vote and this was a very clear condition set by the Romani representatives to organize this work.

I was asked to be brief and I think I managed, I will conclude now Mr. Chair. To conclude this overview, what happened in Norway, I would sum up as follows. The Norwegian experiment, no experience has shown that we need governments ready to meet allegations with fact-finding investigations. We need governments to acknowledge wrong doings and plead guilt, we need governments to apologies, we needed to qualify Romani as dialogue partners, we need time and patience to take sufficiently small steps to reach reconciliation and we believe such a process is necessary in order to reestablish confidence and create an atmosphere of trust. I will like to add because I see that the next speaker is mentioning that you'll not only have to excuse but I have to follow up and I would like to mention something regarding the Roma because they were not to the same extent exposed to these abuses, but they have been, as mentioned earlier, they have been excluded from the Norwegian Society and that's not a part of I would say neglect more than assimilation.

So now a plan of action is now being worked out by the Norwegian authorities, that was just to add the latest event, thank you for your attention.

Domino Kai:

Thank you very much Mrs. Tove Skotvedt and I do really apologies because of the lack of time. We will follow the Norwegian coming action plans also for the Roma groups in Norway and we have already discussed a little bit earlier so we will give our thoughts to you what we can in the future. Next speaker on the agenda is Mrs. Katri Linna, the Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination, Prerequisites for Redress to View of the DO, please Katri.

Katri Linna – speaks Swedish

Domino Kai:

Thank you very much Mrs. Katri Linna, Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination for those words. There is one person Mrs. Rosa Taikon but I will give you the floor very shortly, before we take a coffee break for 15 minutes.

Rosa Taikon – speaks Swedish

Domino Kai:

Ladies and Gentlemen, so we shall continue with the program again. We will have a few questions about Canada and Norway, where all of you in this room can, if you have some questions for the guests, so they will answer your questions and I would first like to ask all of you who are sitting next to the walls to join the inner circle now since there is more free seats, please. So, the floor is open for a few questions, please.

Discussion in Swedish

Thank you (*inaudible*) for that. I will give the floor to one man, one question more before you can answer and there is a reason why, because (*inaudible*) has to go out very soon before starting the working discussion, which Maria will lead, but Mr. Fred Taikon please your question.

(Fred Taikon – Swedish Language)

Thank you **Fred**. So please, if we start with Tove to answer the questions, which Suraya Post raised and then we go further to Canada and then Tove again.

Tove Skotvedt:

First the question from Soraya Post, yes it was the representatives from the Romani (*inaudible*) demonstrations in Norway that started the discussion and they used strategically enough; they started with representatives in the parliament, interested in the situation of the Romani and there the representative asked in 1995 how the government felt about the compensations for ethnic abuse. Then parallel to this the Romani organization also contacted directly the minister responsible for these affairs. This combined with the research result on standardization question led to this working group where the Romani organizations were participating, concentrating on stabilization first and foremost and then secondly they asked for a special, a special compensation scheme because their normal so called regular compensation schemes for (*inaudible*) compensation scheme that is belong, belongs to the parliament actually and for various situations, but difficult to apply and so then instead of having a special scheme you adjusted the existing scheme, but that was just the process when it comes to role of the Romani representatives. Does that answer your question? Okay, thank you.

Julie Roy:

Okay, so hello (*inaudible*) I guess I'll start with your second question regarding my reference to the churches. When I mentioned the churches, it is important to note that the churches were involved with the government of Canada for the operation of Indian

residential schools, so when I mentioned the involvement of the churches as outlined in my map, that I showed of Canada, there was a joint operation of the schools and as a result of that it was important to involve the churches in the negotiations of the settlement agreement in order to get their perspective and also it was important because the students who attended these schools, who they saw were the church representatives in the sense they saw the nuns and the priests and they had direct contact with people in religious organizations. So it's, it was very important to involve the churches in the negotiation and have them also involved in what I call reconciliation because of the apparentness of the religion in the schools because of course these schools, as I mentioned, not only was, was not only to educate them, but also, it was also to, like Doug mentioned, assimilate them into society and that involved having them join or become part of our religious organization that is recognized predominant in Canada, which is primarily Catholics at the time. So that is why the churches were involved in the negotiation of the settlement agreement and also for the truth reconciliation commission we also wanted to have the churches involved in that because of healing and reconciling with the aboriginal people, so we wanted to get the churches involved with not only the government to ensure that there is a full sense of reconciliation in healing with aboriginal people because a lot of the... Unfortunately a lot of the abuses perpetrated on the children were from people who were part of the religious groups. So that was, so although the government was not as apparent in the operation because it was primarily funding these schools and the religious organization was, in the forefront it was important to get them involved, so I hope that, that answers your question and clarifies the roles of the churches with respect to Indian residential schools in Canada.

With respect to your first question about what is truth, I have had many people ask me that question when they realize my involvement because I've been involved with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for the last two and half years and I've been doing it practically fulltime, so I get that question asked a lot about what is truth. The way the Truth of Reconciliation Commission was designed, it was designed to have people, as Doug mentioned, having former students come and tell those stories and that is part of healing. It also gives the commissioners of the commission an opportunity to hear what happened at these schools, but also one another important element to is it not only invites former students to attend, to tell their stories, it also invites people who worked at the schools, the people who are part of the churches, who attended, who ran these schools, also invited to come and tell the stories, so the hope is and so in addition to that is the records of the Indian residential schools and the letters are primarily held by the churches, so the churches kept very detailed records of what happened at these schools and who attended them and so and so forth. So it's, the hope is that by having representative of the church and people who were at the schools or worked at the schools and religious peoples in addition to former students telling their stories, the hope is that with all that together the commissioners will be able to get a full picture of what happened in residential schools. The hope is that by doing that "truth" will come out because there is all perspectives in there. You have the

church, the former students and you also, it's also open to anybody who was suspected at the schools and including people who worked in governments. So the hope is that by having everybody come and tell the stories to the commissioners and the commissioners having access to all these historical documents and records that they will be able to, to determine and write the history and the truth of the Indian residential schools and that's, I hope that answers your question.

Speaker?:

Just a repeat, it's not the question exactly to you Julie about what is the truth. It's only, it might be, my speech started like this, what is the truth, it's a not question to you, but the Canadian Government accepted the churches to be involved in this work.

Julie Roy:

Yes, that's correct.

Doug Kropp:

I would just add a couple of things to what Julie said. Yes it wasn't, it wasn't just a question of the government accepting the involvement of the churches, but that the involvement of the churches was seen as an essential element because of their very large role in the history of the schools because as, if you think about it in the history it was the Government of Canada and their desire to assimilate the aboriginal people along with the churches desire to Christianize and to expand and that made for an alliance, if you will, each saw in the other an opportunity to work together, so the Government of Canada provided the funding for the schools and the churches did the day-to-day running of the operations of these schools and the residences for the most part that's how it worked. The churches, there were three main churches in Canada who were involved, a couple of other smaller ones, but the main churches were the Catholic Church, United Church and the Anglican Church of Canada.

So any attempt to come to terms with the legacy and history of IRS in Canada necessarily would need a government participation and church participation along of course with aboriginal people and former students so it's a very much, but I would say even if they had not been involved as perpetrators if you are part of the problem they may well have been part of the solution as you have suggested and as we heard earlier when we talked about the need to engage all partners in civil society who maybe be supportive of your goals, I mean if, I don't know of the situation here but if the church is in Sweden do that, have that kind of a social justice ministry as part of what they do, you may well find groups there who can work with you to create the kind of pressure that you will need. So, you know, by all means, if that's, if that's an option open to you, you know, I would agree. On the question of the truth, I know that wasn't a direct question to us, but it's a fascinating one that comes to mind, you know, what is truth, is yours the same as mine, you know, that sort of thing, truth, a truth, the truth versus, you know, multiple truth. As we said, the Commission will be exploring both of those senses of what means to be true and I'll paraphrase something that a Canadian

philosopher and writer and now a Member of Parliament, Michael Ignatieff said he has written about this area, when he was talking about, you may not be able to, so the thing about truth commissions, they may not ever really arrive at the truth, you know, or we might not agree on what the truth is, but what we can do is, we can limit the range of permissible lies.

Right, so in other words it will no longer be acceptable to say certain things or to give a history, to paint history in a certain way or to ignore certain realities and certain facts and certain history and so if the, if your commission can accomplish that it would have gotten as close to the truth as anybody could. There was a question about the fear in communities and, you know, some of that I guess stems from the distrust and the history and the legacy of dealing with the government in ways that, that has only hurt them, of course we had, you know, very similar reality with aboriginal people, we did not, we did not go to the aboriginal groups with this idea of the truth commission or of the other aspects of the package, the resolution package that we developed. This very much originated from the aboriginal groups and sounds, and then through partnership and collaboration working with them and working with the churches and working with as many groups as we could within society, we arrived at the resolution we did, but that's not to say to that they don't remain, that they weren't throughout that process and don't remain till today, dissenting voices, concerns, individuals and groups who are skeptical, who are even critical, who feel that for them, there has just been too much pain, too much sufferings, too much history, that there is nothing that can be done to set it right, it's too little, too late, that it, you know, they're not the majority by any means, but they are a voice, and we have had to acknowledge that voice, that's a perspective, you know. We have freedom of the speech in Canada and, you know, we need to allow people to express their concerns. We can understand why they would have that, given the history and the legacy and how they've been treated by the government in the past, but we have, you know, tried to encourage, and the aboriginal groups have worked extensively in their communities with their people to try to, you know, make sure that it's understood that this is an initiative that is not coming, you know, from the government down, that it's not ill will, that is not going to be used for some other purpose that it's truly, it is what, what we say it is, and that we have certain protections in place, I mentioned earlier about privacy protection, health support programs. There'll be opportunities, all of the programs that you see will have to be culturally sensitive programs will be made available in local languages. There will be as many efforts as possible to make groups feel and individual feel welcome and safe and providing a safe place is part of this to make sure that we don't re-victimize people or don't perpetuate the harm that has been done in the past and cause them to continue to fear in distress.

Just related to that, there was the question about the risk of backlash. I forget who asked it but, you know, is there not a danger that, if we, if you force the government to apologize or force the government to do something or to give compensation or to give (*inaudible*) to see that those elements in society might not be supportive, may increase

their level of intolerance and discrimination against the Roma people, that's a reality that we were aware as well. I guess there's always a risk, I mean because we recognize that there are attitudes that continue, but that the goal at least in our case of the TRC was educative and to raise awareness and to, if we're successful, it will, it will make it less acceptable in society for people to have those views or at least to express those views or to act on those views and the media as well is playing a role in Canada, it's part of that educational process. Our national media announced a couple of weeks ago that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation that they will be covering the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings and activities throughout its mandate. They have been launching long programs, several evenings in a row running on different aspects and it's all part of raising the public awareness so that, you know, if there is unfortunate instances of backlash that society will condemn those and it's part of that learning dialogue about moving looking forward but there's no assurances.

Tove Skotvedt:

Fred, you asked the question about the Roma and whether or not they could get any compensation, if I understood you right, yes. Because, as I explained earlier, there was a difference between the Romani, (*inaudible*) and the Roma Gypsies. The Roma traveled in Norway and it was that visible practice that the authorities wanted to stop and it was the Romani who were forced, I mean exposed to forced sterilization through these working camps, whereas the Roma, they were not, which means that they have not been exposed to these abuses and those not asking for compensation for those reasons, yes.

Domino Kai:

Thank you very much for this. I will give now the floor now to Mrs. Maria Leissner.

I would just like to say that if we could continue with the closed session for about half an hour because unfortunately then a couple of us will need to rush and after that I know Rosa would love to be able to show her beautiful silver jewelry, but first of all let me thank you very much, the media is now leaving, for your kind attention during the day and I propose that we move on. (*inaudible*) I propose that we move onto just a summing up, and let us just sum up before everyone leaves. Yes...

Swedish Language

Domino Kai:

Okay, I'll give the floor first to Mrs. Miranda.

Miranda Vuolasranta:

Thank you, it has been a really interesting day. In particular, the afternoon presentations, Dick Oosting and Julie Roy, Doug Kropp, Katri Linna, Tove Skotvedt all of your observations have been really interesting and I think at least I've learned as

well I had the opportunity to maybe give something. Well, in particular I felt when I heard Dick, no Julie Roy and Doug Kropp I recognized that we had in Finland precisely the same experience regarding Roma Children who had been taken away by church bound organizations in order to make them good Finnish Citizens and assimilate them about 25% at that times Roma Children was taken away and it concerned about 1000 Roma Children and a big amount of them have committed suicide because they didn't, they were not allowed to speak and they never got the opportunity to get healed or that anybody would listen to them. I've been one of those in Finland who have taken the risk and lift up this issue in publicity and until today it has been not so easily to say that that I have (*inaudible*) about my courage in this issue, but I'm, I'm looking forward to get re-conversion of your report and maybe get it translated into Finnish, so that we could maybe use it also in our process in Finland.

I have a question to you how important you will see the role of the education taking into consideration that the education, schooling has been used as a tool to assimilate and now you mention it that you would like to infiltrate the results and recommendations of your truth committee to the general education and curriculum systems in order to make vice versa, the other hand side of issue, make people fear about the past and this is one of the answers also to Maria's question what should be done. I am quite confident that fact finding would mean that you would collect chronologically and individually the historical facts of the Swedish Roma, whatever groups they are, and then I find it very good to organize these hearings, big joint hearings, but also give a possibility to people who are not able or willing to tell their stories individually. It might be difficult, it might take time, but there are a lot of Roma people, which I learned this is from my own experience from Finland, who have such personal individual stories that they're not able to talk about them in public situations, but which might be of great importance when building the whole truth of the history past.

The written report of course to be left to the government is really important. I think your work here is not the closing and its suppose not be a washing hand, but its supposed to be an opening as you yourself was looking on it, that you take the first step and you leave it to the government and that will naturally be followed with the seven steps, which would be reconciliation, maybe compensation, whatever kind of compensation should be then clarified afterwards. Political reform, I see myself as a larger much more larger thing, which could be at least mention it though it's another let's say kind of approach. I mentioned it this morning when I held my presentations that, presentation that the, the European Council, EU, has made in their December meeting conclusions. European Council is the strongest decision making body in Europe, which means it's another thing done if a parliament is discussing and making a resolution as Dick Oosting said, "Resolutions are also one thoughts, a good direction, wishes, which might not be listened at all" and which is the case with Roma issues mostly. If the European Council is doing a remark in its final conclusions, as it has now done, it can lead to more committing approaches and they said actually that,

and I would like to read a couple of lines just because I think my next proposal will be lined with your truth commission. That the conclusion said, “The European Council welcomes the results of the European year of equal opportunities for all and invites member states through strength and efforts to prevent and combat discrimination inside and outside the labor market.” In this connection, the European Council is conscious of the very specific situation faced by the Roma across the union, invites member states and the union to use all means to improve their inclusion. To this end, it invites the commission to examine existing policies and instruments and to report through the council on progress achieved before the end of June 2008, which means 25th of June is today, but this article continues by saying, in Article 15 it states, “European Council stresses the importance of involving local authorities to ensure effective implementation of efforts to promote Roma inclusion and combat discrimination” and here I’m referring to local authorities, which are the reality actually.

We might be doing good things, even the truth commission and the results if it’s not well thought in the end it might be as here has been stated already just an end of an (*inaudible*) story, but it should be allowed to be that, and this is why I am proposing that you would include in your recommendation part, for example of the truth commission outcome proposal...

...to create a Swedish national Roma inclusion strategy and weak action plan, which would be resourced from the annual state budget. They might seek money from the structural funds or they already actually have quite a lot of funds from the social ESR structural funds budget line. The problem with this is that there are no clear directions, political directions, how the Roma policies reconciliation, compensation further developments of the future should be implemented, thank you.

Domino Kai:

Thank you Mrs. Miranda. The clock is ticking against us, I’m very sorry to say this, but I will only give you one-minute period. So make yourself really short because there is train and flights, which people have to get. For those who want to stay a little bit more there is, after this there is the possibility for that and now I will give the floor to **Hans Cladaras**.

Discussion in Swedish

Speaker?

Okay. I just want to bring up one point, which I think concerns criticism that’s been more or less universal when it comes to I think all I think, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, commissions and that’s that, the feedback to the local level has been too weak. It’s always been considered to be too distant and not relevant for the people in the local communities and I would suggest that in the planning of these hearings, well,

right at the planning stage to think about including a local level at a sort of maybe a municipal level for example. Especially, if we think about the aims and being education, acknowledgement and also change because I think a lot of the, the discrimination today happens in the local communities, at a local level and then I think it's also a possibility to create lots of attention and interest in this, in a local community because you can involve the schools, you can involve the police, you can involve the social welfare system and so on and in that case get very comprehensive process and it would be (*inaudible*) right now but it would be interesting to hear about how you work, the issue of local hearings in Canada, thank you.

Thank you Mrs. (*inaudible*) and next on the list is Mrs. Karen.

Karen Brounéus:

Yes, thank you. My name is Karen Brounéus; I haven't been here before at your last meeting. I work at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research Uppsala University. I agree very much with (*inaudible*) and my comment was going to be on the same lines. As I have understood the meeting and the very interesting both presentations and reflections and comments from the participants, but the, the key aim of such a process in Sweden would be to raise awareness and to educate the majority in Sweden of issues that many of us have not been aware because, you know, the truth. You have so much documentation, so to lift this and to make it accessible to many people that would be I think a central aim of such a process. Then we could discuss what do we call this process maybe it's not really a truth, truth commission maybe it's a Roma Truth Commission, well Roma Commission. I don't know, but to really to, to focus on what is the aim as Maria said earlier I think is very important, and just a thought of, a point that came up earlier about the security risks. I have done research, my research has focused on the gacaca process the reconciliation process in Rwanda, the village tribunals in the Rwanda and they...

Domino Kai: I'm sorry Karen to interrupt you but conclusion very, very short.

...Okay. There the conclusion is that insecurity as a result of the reconciliation process is one of the most critical issues that haunt.

Thank you very much, Mrs. **Soraya**.

Swedish language

Mr. Dick Oosting:

Just very briefly; the purpose I think, create awareness yes, but also create political necessity on the government, I agree with your analysis Maria that if you, if you go through a stage of, of review, mapping, testimonies, etc., and report on that you have to, as it were aim, count on unofficial truth being acknowledged and creating a political necessity to act but it has to, to my mind then be brought back down as

several I've said, and no one is **conclusive** obviously to the local level and involve the local community somehow. What is also important to my mind, and this may sound a bit, bit provocative now at the end of the day but it should also create a political necessity for the Romani community itself. Yes, victims victimized, survivors three, four, five hundred years, at the same time the outcome of this process should be that indeed the voices there, the truth is, is in the open and you don't need to feel victims anymore. There will still be, there will still be problems and there'll still be catching up, education, these things don't, don't take three, four, five, ten years, twenty years to break that cycle into the next generations and open it up but it is important I think in that that you create a new balance of political necessity on both sides and awareness of that is so and that can then generate the self confidence to, to actually be that equal partner and that is what I've heard earlier today as, as may be even the most critical aspect of this whole let's say ambition to solve the Roma problem and make it a society's, society issue.

Thank you for those words Mr. Oosting, Mr. **Sean Smith**.

Swedish language)

Domino Kai: Thank you. And next on the list I will the last word to Mrs. The Chairwoman of the Delegation for Roma Issues to Mrs. Maria Leissner.

Maria Leissner - Swedish language

Domino Kai:

I'm terribly sorry because we are suppose to stay until 5.30 but since we give so high priority to media, we're going to run away and Domino will continue for a few more minutes. I, I want to thank you every single person who has been here today, our invited guests who have been traveling very far indeed from the other side of the globe in a couple of cases and all of you who have been participating from, from (*inaudible*) and (*inaudible*). I, I really do agree with (*inaudible*) it feels like a historic moment. As you know, we are not here a decision-making body; we are not going to make any decision today. This is the start of a debate and a discussion and we all know that we have here in a moral sense committed ourselves to doing something whatever we would call it and whatever form it would take that would fulfill the requirements of a truth and reconciliation process and thank you so much for helping to start this very, very important journey again.

Thank you for those words Mrs. Maria and now the next on the list is Mrs. Rosa Taikon.

Swedish language

Thank you Mrs. Rosa Taikon and now Mr. **Fred Taikon**.

Swedish Language

Miranda Vuolasranta:

When I was listening the representative from the universities, which lifted on the table the need of scientific research to continue maybe in another direction than which was referred during the morning, the anthropological research based on the race physiology. In Europe, there are three universities, which are now researching antiziganism and it's a very important and interesting aim at the same time it brings in the light the past, the historical past, the factual chronological past, (*inaudible*). Hamburg University and Berlin University, there are the group of scientists and researchers who are doing this. So I would recommend to the Stockholm University in order to be in contact with them maybe open this new guideline here in Sweden in order to really change the direction from the past race physiology to a new kind of antiziganism research, which is very needy in the whole Europe, thank you.

Thank you very much for the tip Mrs. Miranda and now we will give the floor Rosa Taikon and those of you must leave thank you for being here and yeah the discussion will continue in the future.

(Swedish Language)

I really, really thank you Mrs. Rosa Taikon for this lovely presentation of your jewelry work and thank you. I just want to say a few last words before we end. I will tell a few sentences in Romani first.

Romani language

I would like to thank all the guests from abroad, Mrs. Tove Skotvedt, Mr. Doug Kropp and Mrs. Julia Roy for coming among, and also the other speakers but you come and made a really good effort and it's inspiring to continue from here and I'm sure that we will be in contact by mail in the future. Thank you also to the others who have... they had a possibility to come here and yeah as we say in Romany when we say goodbye or farewell so I will say in that way but in English. Go with God. Thank you.

Thank you.