



## Deportation measures clearly aimed at Romanian migrants are shameful and unacceptable.

The Lega Italiana dei Diritti dell' Uomo, LIDU, and the European Association for Human Rights, EAHR, of which the LIDU is a member, wish to make their position known concerning the “dispute” on migrants, particularly those who are EU citizens residing in Italy.

The LIDU's and EAHR's political initiative is based on the fundamental principles of the universality of rights, equality for all EU citizens, freedom of expression and of thought, personal inviolability and an equitable application of the law and of sentencing.

According to these principles, the LIDU and the EAHR are of the opinion that legislative measures should not be taken under emotional duress, playing on the security of citizens, as this can only lead to blind revenge and maintain and stir up xenophobic tensions.

It is for these reasons that we have no choice but to condemn those who take advantage of certain crimes, such as the unfortunate murder of Mrs Giovanna Reggiani in Rome by a Romanian immigrant. By referring to this woman's murder in its grounds, the government Order dated November 1<sup>st</sup> 2007, dealt with as a top priority, is implicitly aimed at the Rom community and specifies deportation as a security measure. In doing so, an entire migrant community is targeted and people who are indeed not accountable for the mistakes of others are condemned.

Criminal responsibility can only be individual: it cannot concern a family or a community under any circumstances. Tarring everyone with the same brush cannot be tolerated from an ethical or legal standpoint.

Crime must be denounced and punished by the law. The law applies to every person, whether Italian or of foreign nationality. People cannot be treated differently due to their origin. Furthermore, it is unacceptable that generalised deportations should be carried out simply following a crime which attracted large-scale media coverage.

Needless to say that Italians themselves were once migrants, and like those who come to Italy today, went looking elsewhere, in other countries, in the hope of making a living and finding a future, dignity and a legitimate goal in life. Migrants are looking for employment, they rely solely on the support and assistance of charities, the church and local authorities. Conversely, the State does little to promote social integration, to provide proper housing to replace the undignified shantytowns which are growing around major cities and are ideal places for illicit activity.

Implicitly, by conducting collective deportation measures involving identified communities, the Italian government does not meet the real issues caused by a continuing lack of security. All it manages to do is stir up hatred and the rise of xenophobia and contributes to "community" confrontations. This vision could not be farther from that which prevailed in the after-war years when Europe was being built upon the virtues of peace and human rights. They chose a Europe in which citizens can live together and not one with the sort of condemnation that led to atrocities.

The LIDU and the EAHR therefore request that the Italian government take a step back from these measures taken in the heat of the moment and under emotional strain, from the slippery slope to collective denunciation. As must all the other States, Italy must comply with the rules of law stipulated in international agreements or European law, particularly as it has just contributed to European enlargement by accepting the new draft European treaty.

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