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## **HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISORY PANEL**

**Press release issued by the Secretariat**

### **COMPLAINT AGAINST CONDITIONS IN THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS CAMPS IN NORTHERN KOSOVO DECLARED PARTIALLY ADMISSIBLE**

In a decision adopted on 5 June 2009 during its session in Prishtinë/Priština from 2 to 6 June 2009, the Human Rights Advisory Panel (the Panel) declared the complaint of N.M. and 142 others (Case no. 26/08) partially admissible.

The complainants comprise 143 members of the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian community in Kosovo who are, or have been, resident in five UNMIK administered camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) throughout northern Mitrovica/Mitrovicë as well as three non-governmental organization (NGO) employees working in the camps. All complainants claim to have suffered lead poisoning and other health problems on account of the soil contamination in the camp sites due to the proximity of the camps to the Trepça smelter and mining complex and/or on account of the generally poor hygiene and living conditions in the camps.

The complainants contend that their human rights have been violated under certain provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), namely: Article 2 (right to life), Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment), Article 6 § 1 (right to a fair hearing), Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life), Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) and Article 14 (prohibition against discrimination). Breaches of the following human rights instruments are also alleged by the complainants: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

The Panel found that the complaint raised issues of law and of fact the determination of which should depend on an examination of its merits.

The decision on admissibility is available on the Human Rights Advisory Panel website, at [http://www.unmikonline.org/human\\_rights/cases.htm](http://www.unmikonline.org/human_rights/cases.htm).

Complaints for the Advisory Panel should be sent to the Secretariat of the Human Rights Advisory Panel, Building D, UNMIK Main HQ - TSS, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo.

**For further information, please contact Mr. John J. Ryan, Executive Officer of the Secretariat of the Human Rights Advisory Panel, Tel: + 381 (0) 38 504 604 Ext 5847, Email: [ryanj@un.org](mailto:ryanj@un.org). Interested persons are also referred to the website of the Advisory Panel, at [http://www.unmikonline.org/human\\_rights/index.htm](http://www.unmikonline.org/human_rights/index.htm).**