

**Anna Redko, Ukraine
Association of Roma Women “Voice of Romni”**

Thank you, mister Chair for giving me the floor.

I speak on behalf of the Association of Roma Women “Voice of Romni” from Ukraine. We work with both the Roma community in Ukraine and internally displaced women.

Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, more than 7 million people have been forced to leave their homes and become internally displaced, with over 6 million becoming refugees in other countries. 70% of these people are women and children who were forced to save their lives from shelling, captivity, and torture, as a 20% of Ukraine's territory is currently occupied. Over 140 thousand residential buildings have been destroyed meaning they have no home to return. Millions of women, having lost their homes and jobs, now bear the full burden of responsibility for their families while their husbands defend their country.

Waves of forced migration within Ukraine and beyond; loss of jobs and income, unprecedented security risks associated with active conflict, have created unique barriers for Romani women and girls. According to the Roma Human Rights Center, 70,000 Roma have become internally displaced persons. Lack of education, employment opportunities, extreme poverty, social isolation, and inhabitable conditions create serious barriers to their socio-economic inclusion – this is confirmed by the office of the Verkhovna Rada Commissioner for Human Rights. Romani families live in damaged houses without access to water, heating or electricity. Women cannot find work because there are no kindergarten or schools available, and children lack access to remote learning due to the absence of technical resources.

Voice of Romni has provided assistance to more than 7 thousand of Romani women: financial and humanitarian support, professional requalification courses, and provided educational and developmental programs for children. However, these efforts toward Romani community inclusion are insufficient in the face of this crisis. We have pushed the limits of our experience and we understand how difficult it is for many of you to perform at your best. But let's try to be sensitive to every story, every woman and girl.

Our recommendations for the UN and international organizations:

- Support humanitarian initiatives that enhance the social and economic inclusion of Romani community representatives.
- Implement humanitarian actions not only at the frontlines but also in regions receiving the highest number of internally displaced persons.

Today, Ukraine continues to fight for its freedom and independence, Europe's security, and the democratic values of the entire world — human rights. The most vulnerable among us need your support. Stand with Ukraine!