



INTERNATIONAL ROMANI UNION

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H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi
The Prime Minister of India

Financial and social instrument of uniting Roma community in the World

Sir Chakrabarti,

Exactly thousand years ago Roma ancestors left from India and begun to expatiate the world. As ambassadors of culture and progress they went from country to country, marking their footprints in the history, culture and economics of many lands and continents. Although Roma people is a nation without its geographical territory and has never claimed rights to one, the total number of Roma in the world now exceeds 20 million.

Many of these people have preserved *Romanipen* or Romani law and spirit. It means that they hold family values and inherited traditions especially high. The system of clans still exists and in some parts of the Europe (particularly Balkan peninsula) Roma people have preserved the living traditions (tabors) that has raised some critical questions and concerns from several countries for many decades.

The issues of social integration and welfare system of Roma people have always been on a political agenda because, until now, there has been rather low involvement from the community leaders and Roma people themselves to tackle these challenges. What we're witnessing now, is quite the opposite. Roma youth is becoming more educated, mobile and motivated. We see that integration policies in some countries are working well.

To help this well-intended process become more widespread across the world, we, the International Romani Union (IRU) which was established in 1971 and is the only official representative of Roma people, had recently made a strong commitment **to create a constructive dialogue with institutions and governments.**

In order to make the first significant step, IRU has decided to create **a financial and social instrument** (working title: *Roma National Bank*) that will manage finances from different social programs, attract external investments, accumulate deposits from Roma people in order to serve following meaningful purposes:

1. To reduce unemployment among Roma people. By promoting micro and small entrepreneurship (with education programs and funding) we plan to decrease the social tensions in many countries. Governments that are willing to invest in programs that can help to lower the social burden (reduce social benefits) and return people in the job market are welcome to be our partners.

2. To improve financial literacy and change the mind-set among Roma people. By educating our people and working with their every-day financial challenges together, we can promote the employer's mind-set among them. Therefore we're looking for funds and programs that support financial literacy and entrepreneurship among social risk groups.

3. To manage our own pension fund. The level of trust to each other among Roma people is significantly higher than to outsiders – especially when it comes to banks and government institutions. That is why the level of non-electronic payments among Roma people is still comparably higher. If we could manage the pensions and deposits even to a fraction of 20 million Roma people around the world, we could create one of the largest pension capital funds in the market that could serve as an additional growth engine for the common economic development.

4. To promote *Romanipen* to younger generations. In today's dynamic world it's important to preserve the cultural heritage and thousand-year old traditions of Roma people among the younger generations. To do this, we have a plan to finance modern villages in several countries. They'll not only include quality residence for Roma people but also promote work values by building contemporary factories, provide medical and educational services as well as give space to the culture – music, theatre, dance and art. It's important to mention that these villages will be open to everyone.

5. To solve identification challenges. By inviting Roma people to become our clients, we'll solve the challenge of identification documents that is an issue in several countries. This process will involve Roma people in tax and healthcare systems and official institutions will have better quality statistics and access to its citizens.

6. To attract additional funds for compensations. By inviting financial investors, developing modern villages, promoting micro/small businesses and attracting social and government funds, we will have a chance to operate in the global financial markets. We are planning to allocate a small share of profits for a special social fund for Roma elders that witnessed *Samudaripen* (Roma holocaust) during the World War II. By our count there are more than 3 000 living witnesses in the territory of the Europe that were robbed and tortured by the nazi regime.

Dear Prime Minister! With this project we want to mark the millenium of Romani exodus from India. It has both - a very symbolic and practical meaning. After many years of failed attempts, IRU has now committed its new policies to solve social and welfare challenges for its people around the world.

In order to discuss the idea of Roma National Bank, potentially headquartered in India, and a potential partnership with the government of India, we are kindly asking you to find a 2-hour window in your very busy calendar during the following months to meet the IRU delegation. We're ready to adjust to your schedule and prepare much detailed presentation / report on our plans. Also, we will respond to all of the questions that you may have in regards to Roma National Bank project before, during and after our meeting.

In the hopes that we'll find a friend of Roma people in India in your person,

Regards,

Normunds Rudevics
The President of the International Romani Union



Normunds Rudevics

Members of IRU:

Vladim Bariev, Head of IRU Court
B. Bariev

Roman Grokholskii, Commissioner of Culture

Vasile Drangoi, Treasurer
V. Drangoi

Wiktor Famulson, Honorary President of IRU
WF

Karol Kazimierz Kwiatkowski, Vice President
Karol Kwiatkowski

Roksana Rudevica, Commissioner for human rights
R. Rudevica

International Romani Union was established in 1971. In 1979 International Romani Union (IRU) became a member of United Nations Organisation (UN) and officially obtained a special consultative status (Category II NGO № D 9424). Today, International Romani Union is the only international organisation representing the rights of Roma people in the world. In 1971 the national flag of Roma people was presented to the world society by the International Romani Union, it was accepted and adopted by the nations of the world. Today the flag of Roma people together with all other national flags is presented at the United Nations and The Council of Europe.