



# YUCOM

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## **PRESS RELEASE: City municipality Zemun halted forced eviction of informal Roma settlement Grmeč**

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By the direct application of ratified international convention on human rights, City municipality Zemun, has stopped the forced evictions of informal Roma settlement Grmeč until securing a durable housing solution for the inhabitants of this settlement.

The suspension of the evictions came as a direct result of an action of Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights - YUCOM, which led the European Court of Human Rights to initiate a procedure for indicating to the Government of Serbia, the application of interim measure, due to potential violations of human rights of internally displaced Roma living in informal settlement Grmeč.

The City municipality Zemun has passed the act of suspension of the demolition proceedings, for those members who had the opportunity to file an appeal to the previously mentioned decision. For those who couldn't file an appeal, the municipality has passed an act for an administrative delay until securing durable housing solution. Prior to the adoption of these decisions, Secretariat for Property and Legal Affairs of the City of Belgrade has annulled first instance eviction orders.

The suspension of the eviction of informal Roma settlement Grmeč resulted from the *direct application of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. This is the first case that international human rights standards have been used as the direct instructions for situations of forced evictions of informal Roma settlements.

Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights – YUCOM welcomes direct application of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights by the Municipality of Zemun. In the same time, we believe that this change confirms numerous deficiencies in the Serbian regulations on adequate housing and draws the attention to the problems that many citizens face in exercising their right to the adequate housing, especially those living below the poverty line, refugees, internally displaced and particularly Roma.

We hope that the direct application of the ratified conventions about human rights will become a standard procedure of administrative bodies conducting evictions. Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights – YUCOM also hope that announced changes within the legal system in this domain, will be in accordance with the obligations of the Republic of Serbia in the legal field of the right to adequate housing.

