



Brussels, 31 January 2019

Dear Mr. Secretary-General Guterres,

We, Members of the European Parliament, are writing to urge you to take long overdue steps to ensure that the victims of widespread lead poisoning at UN-run camps in Kosovo receive individual compensation, adequate health care and educational support.

The UN's role in the violation of their rights has been clearly documented by the Human Rights Advisory Panel (HRAP), as well as by international and local human rights groups. The affected Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo are struggling to care for sick family members who were exposed to toxic lead for more than a decade. Many of those affected, including children, are experiencing myriad health problems and need financial and social support for medicine or healthy food for their children.

So far, the UN response has been inadequate. In 2017, you established a voluntary UN Trust Fund – falling short of offering individual compensation and specifically targeting those affected by lead poisoning – but as mentioned in a letter to the UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights dated December 24, 2018, no states have contributed to it. On 29 November 2018 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the 2018 Commission Report on Kosovo, calling on the UN “to swiftly deliver the necessary support to the victims of lead poisoning in some refugee camps set up in Kosovo”.

We believe it is essential that the UN mitigate the impacts of lead poisoning on the affected Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in northern Kosovo, ensuring full, effective and transparent remedy, including individual compensation for victims, pursuant to established human rights standards.

We would appreciate receiving a response at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,

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