

Zoffili has visited the Tajikistan-Afghanistan border with the OSCE PA President: 'We have to block the drugs and illegal trafficking route to Europe'

Mr Eugenio Zoffili, President of the Italian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Special Representative on Combating Organised Crime took part in the OSCE mission to Tajikistan from 28 April to 1 May 2025, headed by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Pia Kauma.

The border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan is not only the territorial boundary separating two states, but is also one of the main routes along which drugs, arms and human beings are trafficked to Europe. That border also demarcates the OSCE's region of responsibility.

The delegation of fifteen parliamentarians from fourteen countries, held a series of official meetings and conducted field visits to gain a better understanding of the remit and the activities of the OSCE Office in Dushanbe (POiD). During the mission, the delegates had meetings with representatives of the Government, Parliament, the international community and local civil society.

On 28 April, they held a fruitful meeting with Tatiana Turcan, the official in charge of the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe, accompanied by the Heads of Department, who explained the Office's main activities. Afterwards, the delegation visited the Border Management Staff College (BMSC), a training institute for police officers from the 57 OSCE countries, which is also financially supported by Italy. The BMSC is a centre of excellence for training and exchanging border management and security best practices, and the delegation was welcomed by its Director, Elizabeth Lahiff.

In the days that followed, further meetings were held with important parliamentarians and members of the government, including Shermuhammad Shohiyon, First Deputy Speaker of the Majlisi Milli National Assembly (Lower House), other members of the Assembly as well as the Foreign Affairs Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan, Sirodjiddin Muhriddin. They also visited the Regional Explosive Hazards Training Centre, a facility which, thanks to the high calibre of the training given to bomb disposal experts, supports the OSCE countries of Central Asia to manage risks from mines and weapons of war.

The mission also included discussions with representatives of Tajik civil society and the embassies in the territory. On Wednesday, the delegation travelled to the Nizhniy Pyanj crossing point on the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan, where the Commander of the Border Troops, Major General Rajabzoda Murodali Rajab, explained the main challenges and threats to regional security relating to border issues, as well as the strategies adopted to counter them.

This demonstrated the importance of enhancing the OSCE's activities in this crucial area to ensure security and law and order. The mission provided an important opportunity for in-depth analysis and discussion, enabling the OSCE mission in Dushanbe to evaluate its work in the fight against terrorism, international drug trafficking and the protection of human rights.

Tajikistan, due to its strategic location on the border with Afghanistan, is the first security bulwark against drug trafficking, as the starting point that then branches out to the European region and, consequently, to Italy. The fight against human traffickers, who also exploit women and children, is not only a commitment to civilisation, but above all an essential means of protecting European countries against the threats of international terrorism.

Finally, MP Zoffili emphasised the need for a united effort by the international community to stop this trafficking and prevent it from reaching Europe, by upgrading the fight against all forms of organised crime, and investing in protecting these strategic areas.

Foreign Affairs, Zoffili at the OSCE Bureau meeting in Helsinki: 'Watchwords peace and security also by fighting organised crime'

The Head of the Italian Parliamentary Delegation and OSCE PA Special Representative on Combating Organised Crime, Eugenio Zoffili, participated in the meeting of the enlarged Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, held at the Helsinki Parliament on 25 January 2025. The meeting of the leaders of the Parliamentary Assembly, chaired by Pia Kauma, was also attended by the new Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE's governmental dimension and Foreign Minister of Finland, Elina Valtonen, who illustrated the programme outlined in Vienna at the opening of the Finnish Chairmanship, with reference to ongoing conflicts and with a particular focus on Ukraine.

Eugenio Zoffili emphasised peace and security as the main objectives of the Assembly and that fact that organised crime posed a threat not only in areas subject to political crises, but also in seemingly peaceful areas such as Italy. He therefore stressed the importance of international cooperation as a fundamental means of combating criminal activities.

Last year, during the OSCE Annual Assembly in Bucharest, he had tabled a resolution, which was then adopted, against the proliferation of fentanyl, to support inter-parliamentary awareness-raising among the member states and encourage measures to prevent and combat drug trafficking, particularly of new drugs, which are killing young people and fuelling mafias.

At the OSCE Assembly in Porto, scheduled for June, as the Special Representative, President Zoffili will be presenting a new supplementary item on a key practice for countering criminal organisations which, if taken up with conviction by the parliamentarians from the 57 member States, could prove to be a major means of combating the mafia underworld.

Eugenio Zoffili also met the new Italian Ambassador to Finland, Nicola Todaro Marescotti, at our Embassy's residence. They discussed the main topics of concern to Italy: the local Italian community, the valuable opportunities for strengthening trade, and interesting prospects for cooperation in the defence sector. Energy and environmental matters were also top of the agenda, now that that Italy is embarking on reintroducing nuclear energy, for which Finland, with five power stations producing clean energy, stands as a model.

Eugenio Zoffili has congratulated the Carabinieri on their operation against the 'ndrangheta.

The Head of the Italian Delegation to the OSCE PA, Eugenio Zoffili, has congratulated the Carabinieri ROS operation, coordinated by the Reggio Calabria Public Prosecutor's Office, involving 14 Italian cities and leading to the capture of 97 individuals on 21 May 2025 who are facing mafia-related charges. This result highlights the great professionalism of the Italian police forces in the fight against mafia-type criminal organisations, such as the 'ndrangheta, which, through an alliance between different mafia gangs, are dedicated to domestic and international drug trafficking. In his capacity as Special Representative for Combating Organised Crime, Mr Zoffili stressed the importance of fighting mafias and the need for institutional and international cooperation if this fight is to be successful.

He has also promoted an international conference on this issue at Montecitorio, scheduled for 5 and 6 June, attended by parliamentary delegations from the other OSCE states, at which he will also illustrate the good practices and instruments that Italy is deploying to combat the proliferation of criminal activity, such as by confiscating mafia assets and reusing them for social purposes.

SECURITY: EUGENIO ZOFFILI AT THE POLICE UNION CONFERENCE: PROMOTING LEGALITY AS A AN INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITY

MP Eugenio Zoffili, Head of the Italian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Special Representative on Combating Organised Crime, took part in the conference "The State and legality: their future is in our hands", at the Teatro Sociale in Como on 24 March 2025, organised by the Autonomous Police Union (SAP). SAP is the largest trade union organisation representing State Police personnel and has more than 20,000 members, spread throughout the country.

The conference placed a strong emphasis on transmitting the values of legality to young people: thanks to the attendance of all the civil, military and religious institutions, a group of over 700 students were able to grasp our commonly shared commitment to combating crime, and the value of respecting the institutions as the mortar which keeps our society united.

The conference was also attended by the Vice President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Infrastructure and Transport, Matteo Salvini, demonstrating the government's keen interest in everything to do with spreading the values of legality among our young people.