

News from Copenhagen

Focus on migrant children in OSCE PA field visit to Serbia



Ad Hoc Committee on Migration members meet with Serbian migration officials in Belgrade, 11 June 2018.

Members of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Migration, led by Nahima Lanjri (Belgium), on Tuesday completed a three-day visit to Serbia, where they met with representatives from the Serbian government, the international community and civil society. Improvements in the accommodation of migrants and refugees in Serbia were welcomed by the delegation, with parliamentarians noting that other OSCE countries can learn from these positive developments.

During the visit, topics of discussion included developments in improving the legislative framework as well as ongoing challenges in implementation, with a special focus on the needs of unaccompanied and separated minors. The delegation included Committee Vice-Chair Pascal Allizard (France), and members Kyriakos Hadjiyiannis (Cyprus), Stefana Miladinovic (Serbia) and Georgios Varenmos (Greece).

Lanjri noted that Serbia's efforts in supporting migrants are commendable, pointing out that almost 90 per cent of migrant children attend primary school in Serbia regardless of their legal status. She highlighted Serbia's new Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection as a positive step but said there is a need for a more objective and systematic approach to age determination in order to ensure that minors are not accommodated with adults.

Ad Hoc Committee members also met with the Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, Amb. Andrea Orizio, who, together with his colleagues, gave a comprehensive overview of the migration-related activities of the field operation in Serbia.

OSCE PA visit to BiH highlights counter-terrorism efforts



Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism members visit OSCE BiH Mission in Sarajevo, 6 June 2018.

Led by Chair Makis Voridis (Greece), members of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism (CCT) conducted a two-day visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) last week to learn more about local and regional challenges in countering terrorism and violent extremism. In Sarajevo on 6 June, members met with colleagues from the BiH Parliamentary Assembly, the OSCE Mission to BiH, civil society, government ministries, and law enforcement officers to exchange best practices and promote the role of parliamentarians in the field of counter-terrorism.

The delegation visited Zenica and Travnik, meeting with the Police Commissioner of the Central Bosnia Canton to get better acquainted with terrorism-related threats at the local level, and visited Zenica prison, where a number of convicted terrorists are incarcerated. At the prison, members met with the Director to discuss rehabilitation efforts in places of detention. Members also paid a visit to the OSCE Field Office in Travnik.

The delegation included CCT Vice-Chair Stephane Crusniere (Belgium) and members Aude Bono-Vandorme (France) and Abid Raja (Norway). The delegation had a briefing with the Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH, Amb. Bruce Berton, during which the members learned more about the mission's counter-terrorism activities.

Voridis commended BiH's efforts and encouraged authorities to further their border control efforts, ensure timely information-sharing among relevant stakeholders, and implement sound reintegration policies to prevent terrorism.

Secretariat hosts former NATO SG and Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen

Anders Fogh Rasmussen, former Secretary General of NATO and Prime Minister of Denmark, visited the International Secretariat Wednesday for discussions with OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella and staff that focused on the crisis in and around Ukraine. Rasmussen, who now heads the international consulting firm Rasmussen Global and focuses on Ukraine, spoke about the status of anti-corruption reform efforts in the country and the prospects for the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation in the Donbas region.

SG Montella discussed the Parliamentary Assembly's

engagement with Ukraine, the numerous debates that the Assembly has held since 2014 and the PA's recent visits to the country.



Anders Fogh Rasmussen meets with Secretary General Roberto Montella and staff, Copenhagen, 13 June 2018.