



**Visit of the OSCE PA Special Representative on Combating  
Organized Crime, Hon. Eugenio Zoffili, to Vienna**

on the occasion of the

**1<sup>st</sup> Global Meeting of International Network for Legislation on  
Drugs (INLOD)**

and of the

**OSCE Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC)**

*24 -25 June 2025*

**NOTE-TO-THE-FILE**

## Executive Summary

On 24-25 June 2024, the OSCE PA Special Representative (SR) on Combating Organized Crime, Hon. Eugenio Zoffili, conducted an official visit to Vienna. During the visit, he engaged in high-level discussions with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), held bilateral meetings with senior OSCE officials, and represented the OSCE PA at the flagship event of the politico-military dimension of the Organization, the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC).



On 24 June he addressed the **1st Global Meeting of the International Network for Legislation on Drugs (INLOD)** organized by the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and held a bilateral meeting with Mr. Jeremy Douglas, Chief of Staff, Office of the Director-General of UNODC. On 25 June, the SR met with officials from the OSCE Transnational Threats Department's Strategic Police Matters Unit (TNTD/SPMU) at the OSCE Secretariat and attended the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference.



The visit built on SR Zoffili's continuous efforts to **integrate parliamentary perspectives into broader international strategies on fighting organized criminal networks**. During the high-level exchanges, he repeatedly stressed the pivotal role of legislative bodies in addressing complex transnational challenges, explored emerging trends with senior experts and pondered ways to reinforce the global response against serious crime.

Ultimately, the visit proved instrumental in (1) showcasing OSCE PA's priorities and achievements, (2) learning more about the latest security trends, and (3) exploring further synergies among key international stakeholders, including through new initiatives such as INLOD and reinforced partnerships with the OSCE.

## The Global Meeting of the International Network for Legislation on Drugs (INLOD)

On 24 June 2025, Hon. Zoffili participated as a key-note speaker in the [First Global Meeting of INLOD](#), an initiative launched by the UNODC in December 2024 under the framework of its Synthetic Drug Strategy. INLOD aims to empower lawmakers with legal tools, technical guidance, and best practices to address the growing challenge posed by synthetic drugs, including fentanyl and other synthetic opioids.

Representing the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Hon. Zoffili joined the podium for Session II, dedicated to the theme "[Multilateralism and the Role of Parliaments in Responding to](#)



*Synthetic Drugs*." In his intervention, he underscored the urgent need for coordinated and cross-border parliamentary action in response to the global expansion of synthetic drug threats. He highlighted the OSCE PA's [resolution on Fentanyl](#) adopted unanimously in July 2024, which called for dismantling transnational criminal networks and enhancing legislative and law enforcement co-operation. He emphasized that parliaments must complement executive efforts by harmonizing legal frameworks, facilitating international co-operation, and raising public awareness on the risks of synthetic drug use and trafficking.



Hon. Zoffili described the work of the OSCE PA in this domain. He referred to his mandate as Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime, which includes fostering political momentum and advocacy. He also recalled the successful convening of the OSCE PA's Interparliamentary Conference on the Fight against Organized Crime in the OSCE region, held in Rome on 5 and 6 June 2025, which brought together more than 100 parliamentarians and experts to address the intersection of drugs, corruption, terrorism, and human trafficking. During

his remarks, he proposed the creation of a Forum on Legality within the OSCE PA to ensure a structured and continuous parliamentary focus on these issues. He also announced the forthcoming submission of a new resolution at the 32nd Annual Session in Porto (July 2025), focusing on asset seizure and financial investigations, in line with the enduring principle set forth by Judge Giovanni Falcone: "Follow the money!"

The INLOD meeting provided an effective platform for fostering global parliamentary co-operation on synthetic drugs and served to reaffirm the OSCE PA's commitment to multilateralism and inter-parliamentary exchange, building upon the OSCE PA's prior engagement at INLOD's launch in December 2024. It also reaffirmed the Assembly's commitment to multilateralism, exchange of best practices, and enhanced coordination with UNODC and other parliamentary Assemblies. Hon. Zoffili also used the occasion to engage directly with practitioners in the field, including senior representatives from Italy's Direzione Centrale Servizi Antidroga (DCSA), underscoring the relevance of collaboration between authorities and legislators.



### **Meeting with UNODC Chief of the Office of the Director General**

Hon. Zoffili used this opportunity to exchange notes with Mr. Jeremy Douglas, Chief of Staff to the Director-General of UNODC, building upon their previous meeting in January 2024. The conversation focused on enhancing co-operation between UNODC and the OSCE PA in developing coherent policy responses and operational strategies to address organized crime. Deliberations centered around legislative frameworks, parliamentary engagement, and the role of lawmakers in reinforcing the international response against organized crime.

Mr. Douglas provided an overview of the emerging threats related to synthetic drugs in Europe, including their increasing availability and ease of production. Both sides acknowledged the challenges of securing borders against drug trafficking. Hon. Zoffili drew attention to his recent visit to Tajikistan, where instability along the Afghan border exacerbates the issue. He stressed the importance of parliamentary missions in gathering firsthand knowledge, and reporting findings to national assemblies to raise awareness on emerging challenges.



Noting how these issues are still not recognized as priorities by many States, Mr. Douglas welcomed greater parliamentary engagement in broader international efforts to combat organized crime and drug trafficking. Hon. Zoffili highlighted Italy's longstanding leadership in this field and praised the participation of DCSA in the INLOD, underlining how this initiative will provide a critical platform for sharing lessons learned and promising practices.



The meeting concluded with a discussion of potential synergies between the OSCE PA and the UNODC, including future collaboration within the proposed Forum on Legality. Hon. Zoffili reiterated the vision for this forum, as first introduced during the Inter-Parliamentary Conference on the Fight Against Organized Crime in Rome, and explored avenues for UNODC participation in this initiative to further strengthen institutional ties.

### **Bilateral Meeting with TNTD/SPMU**

On 25 June, Hon. Zoffili met with Mr. **Umberto Severini**, Head of the Strategic Police Matters Unit, and Ms. **Mara Garavini Seisselberg**, Criminal Justice Adviser, to discuss current OSCE efforts in combating organized crime.

SPMU officials provided a comprehensive overview of the Unit's mandate and strategic priorities, with a particular focus on emerging trends in organized crime and ongoing preventive efforts. Special attention was given to youth-related vulnerabilities, with the following key trends identified:

- **Recruitment of increasingly younger individuals** by criminal groups, often below the minimum age of criminal responsibility (as young as 14 years old), primarily for drug and weapon trafficking. This issue is particularly acute in Central Asia, where regional instability, especially near Afghanistan, exacerbates the problem,
- **Long-term entrenchment in criminal networks**, where youths recruited at a young age tend to remain within organized



crime structures. Officials noted the disturbing phenomenon of “multiple offenders” – individuals who, by the age of 25, may have already harmed 100 victims. This imposes a severe burden on state systems, particularly given the difficulty in reintegrating these individuals into society,

- **Growing exploitation of social media and emerging technologies** by criminal networks to target young people, exploiting their vulnerability to lure them into criminal activity.

In response to these challenges, SPMU representatives detailed a series of preventive measures being implemented across the OSCE region. These include a multi-layered strategy centered on education, awareness-raising campaigns, and community engagement. The approach involves co-operation with schools, social services, and the training of involved professionals.



An emerging area of innovation involves **collaborating with influencers** to develop counter-narratives that challenge the appeal of crime and extremism among youth on social media platforms. In addition, the OSCE is carrying out research and awareness **initiatives on financial literacy**, positioning it as a crucial tool in countering the economic appeal of criminal enterprises and empowering vulnerable individuals with the knowledge to resist recruitment.

Another growing focus area is **gender-specific analysis in crime prevention**. Moving beyond the stereotype of women as only victims, the OSCE is developing capacity-building programs aimed at identifying and addressing the active roles women may play in organized crime networks, particularly in human trafficking, drug trafficking, and corruption.

To deepen institutional collaboration, several concrete proposals were put forward:

- **Establishing a dedicated communication and information-sharing mechanism** between the SPMU and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Secretariat.
- **Exploring and coordinating on possible contributions** of the OSCE PA Special Representative to SPMU’s activities, including future field visits.
- **Exploring avenues of co-operation within the framework of a new OSCE PA Forum on Legality**, envisioned as an umbrella platform to coordinate and consolidate activities of OSCE PA Special Representatives and Committees dealing with transnational security threats.

## Participation in the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference



Finally, Hon. Zoffili represented the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly at the Annual Security Review Conference, the flagship event of the politico-military dimension of the Organization. His participation provided a valuable opportunity to get more acquainted with the broader security agenda of the OSCE and assess the evolving political-military landscape in the region.

Deliberations focused on the ongoing Russian Federation aggression against Ukraine, which continues to be a major source of division among participating States and a key challenge to the European security architecture. Additional attention was given to developments in the South Caucasus, East Europe, Western Balkans and the Middle East, as well as to persistent transnational threats.

### List of Participants

**Hon. Eugenio Zoffili**, OSCE PA Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime  
**Mr. Marco Bonabello**, Senior Advisor - Director for Economic & Environmental Security  
**Ms. Lorenza Vezzoni**, OSCE PA Research Assistant

### List of Key Interlocutors

**Mr. Umberto Severini** - Head of the Strategic Police Matters Unit of the OSCE Transnational Threats Department  
**Ms. Mara Garavini Seisselberg** - Criminal Justice Adviser, Strategic Police Matters Unit of the OSCE Transnational Threats Department  
**Mr. Jeremy Douglas** - Chief of Staff, Office of the Director-General/ Office of the Executive Director & Strategy Adviser to the Executive Director at UNODC.  
**Ms. Tatiana Jehl** - Drug Policy Officer, Drugs Laboratory and Scientific Services Branch, Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs at UNODC.