

**ITALIAN MP
EUGENIO
ZOFFILI**

**SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE
ON COMBATING
ORGANIZED CRIME**



REPORT
September 2023
June 2025



ITALY



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BIOGRAPHY

OSCE PA President Pia Kauma (Finland) appointed Eugenio Zoffili (Italy) as Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime in September 2023.

Engaged in politics since his youth, Eugenio Zoffili has been a member of the Lega-Salvini Premier group in the Chamber of Deputies since 2018. He is currently a member of the Chamber's Defence Committee and of the Committee on Elections. Since 2018, he has been the Chairperson of the Italian section of the Italy-Japan IPU Friendship Group. Additionally, Eugenio Zoffili serves as the Head of the delegation of Italy to the OSCE PA. Former Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee for monitoring the implementation of the Schengen Agreement, overseeing Europol's activities, monitoring and supervising immigration, he was also a Member of the Committee on Foreign and EU Affairs.

I am a staunch believer in multilateralism, our Organisation, its initiatives and its role aimed at achieving Peace and upholding the values of democracy:

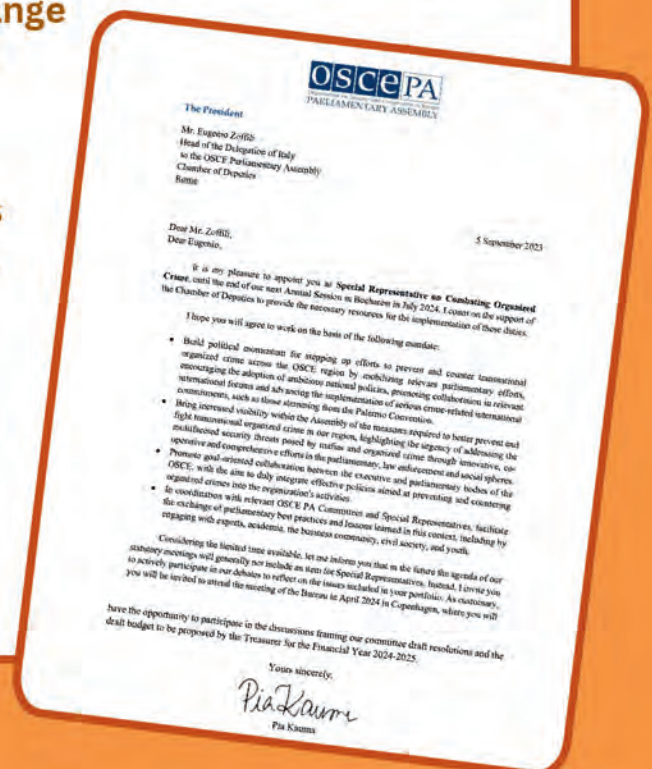
- to support the position of Ukraine as the victim of unjustifiable Russian aggression;
- to support a negotiation process aiming at a two-state solution in the sensitive Middle East scenario;
- to counter the despicable trafficking of human beings that is fuelling migration flows and which, together with the traffic in drugs and illegal substances, is the very lifeblood of the mafias and criminal organisations that are making immense profits from it;
- to put the Mediterranean question, too, at the heart of the debate.

Eugenio Zoffili



MANDATE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE

- Build political momentum for stepping up efforts to prevent and counter transnational organized crime across the OSCE region by mobilizing relevant parliamentary efforts, encouraging the adoption of ambitious national policies, promoting collaboration in relevant international forums and advancing the implementation of serious crime-related international commitments, such as those stemming from the Palermo Convention.
- Bring increased visibility within the Assembly of the measures required to better prevent and fight transnational organized crime in our region, highlighting the urgency of addressing the multifaceted security threats posed by mafias and organized crime through innovative, co-operative and comprehensive efforts in the parliamentary, law enforcement and social spheres.
- Promote goal-oriented collaboration between the executive and parliamentary bodies of the OSCE, with the aim to duly integrate effective policies aimed at preventing and countering organized crimes into the organization's activities.
- In co-ordination with relevant OSCE PA Committees and Special Representatives, facilitate the exchange of parliamentary best practices and lessons learned in this context, including by engaging with experts, academia, the business community, civil society, and youth.



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON THE FIGHT AGAINST ORGANISED CRIME IN THE OSCE REGION.

On Thursday, June 5, and Friday, June 6, the Interparliamentary Conference on Combating Organized Crime in the OSCE region will take place in the Parliamentary Groups Hall. The opening session will begin at 9:30 a.m. with the reading of a message from the President of the Chamber of Deputies, Lorenzo Fontana, followed by speeches from the Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Pia Kauma, the Undersecretary of the Interior Nicola Molteni, and the President of the Italian Parliamentary Delegation and Special Representative of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly for the fight against organized crime, Eugenio Zoffili.

The event, organized by the Italian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, also includes the 4th Interparliamentary Forum of the South-Eastern European Delegations to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the meeting of the ad hoc Committee on Counter-Terrorism, with a focus on the social reuse of assets confiscated from mafias and organized crime. The initiative—broadcast live on the web TV and the Chamber’s satellite channel—is expected to host over 140 parliamentarians and representatives from 33 countries.



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INTER-PARLIAMENTARY
CONFERENCE
ON THE FIGHT AGAINST
ORGANISED CRIME
IN THE OSCE REGION

Rome, 5-6 June 2025
Palazzo Montecitorio, Chamber of Deputies

PROMOTING THE RECOVERY AND SAFEKEEPING OF ASSETS CONFISCATED FROM ORGANISED CRIME

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM

PROMOTING THE RECOVERY AND SAFEKEEPING OF ASSETS CONFISCATED FROM ORGANISED CRIME

Proposed by Eugenio Zoffli, Special Representative of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly on combating organised crime

1. *Reaffirming that the primary mission of the OSCE is to promote peace, security and stability by compliance with democratic principles and the rule of law.*
2. *Recognising the OSCE's active role in combating organised crime, which may include establishing specific ad hoc committees and adopting multilateral strategies to combat the illicit trafficking of property and fostering transnational co-operation to safeguard it.*
3. *Noting the importance of the United Nations Conventions, including the Palermo Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and the Convention against Corruption, which emphasise the importance of confiscating the proceeds of crime and recovering confiscated assets;*
4. *Emphasising the importance of the Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism (CETS No. 198) and European regulations and directives on freezing and confiscating assets (including Regulation 2018/1805 and Directive 2014/42/EU);*
5. *Stressing the importance of "following the money", as advocated by Giovanni Falcone, the late Italian Judge killed by the mafia, as a crucial means of identifying, freezing and confiscating the proceeds of organised crime;*
6. *Reiterating the fact that the proceeds of crime constitute a major threat to the integrity of economies and societies, undermining the rule of law and fundamental rights;*
7. *Recalling the strategic value of effectively managing confiscated assets to promote social justice and reinforce confidence in the public institutions;*
8. *Recalling that the confiscation of illegally accumulated assets not only prevents the reinvestment of the proceeds of crime by breaking the criminal cycle based on accumulation and money laundering, but also makes it possible to compensate communities affected by crime by repurposing the property for institutional and/or social ends;*
9. *Concerned that the full potential of confiscated assets is often not being exploited due to legal, administrative and financial obstacles that prevent*

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5- Stressing the importance of "following the money", as advocated by Giovanni Falcone, the late Italian Judge killed by the mafia, as a crucial means of identifying, freezing and confiscating the proceeds of organised crime;

6- Reiterating the fact that the proceeds of crime constitute a major threat to the integrity of economies and societies, undermining the rule of law and fundamental rights;

7- Recalling the strategic value of effectively managing confiscated assets to promote social justice and reinforce confidence in the public institutions;

8- Recalling that the confiscation of illegally accumulated assets not only prevents the reinvestment of the proceeds of crime by breaking the criminal cycle based on accumulation and money laundering, but also makes it possible to compensate communities affected by crime by repurposing the property for institutional and/or social ends;

9- Concerned that the full potential of confiscated assets is often not being exploited due to legal, administrative and financial obstacles that prevent their recovery, restoration and reintroduction into the public domain and their re-purposing for institutional and/or social ends;

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM

10- Noting the importance of cross-border co-operation to identify, freeze and confiscate assets originating from criminal activities, as well as the importance of mutually recognising the measures adopted for this purpose;

11- Recalling the principles of the Helsinki Final Act, which emphasise the importance of promoting cultural exchanges and protecting cultural heritage as a means of enhancing mutual understanding and co-operation between the participating States;

12- Mindful that money laundering by mafia-type organisations often finds fertile ground in the business of buying and selling cultural and artistic property, used as a means of concealing the proceeds of crime;

13- Noting the significant efforts deployed by a number of participating States to confiscate and re-purpose assets and buildings, including cultural and artistic property, seized from criminal organisations for the benefit of society;



The Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation:

14- **Urges the OSCE participating States** to strengthen their legal and institutional frameworks to facilitate investigative techniques for tracing and identifying assets deriving from organized crime that are susceptible to seizure and confiscation, adopting a ‘follow the money’ approach;

15- **Reiterates the symbolic importance** of repurposing confiscated assets, by demonstrating that their use for social purposes represents a message of victory by the state over organised crime and a sign of hope for the affected communities;

16- **Recommends** to the OSCE Participating States that an Agency be established to manage and allocate confiscated assets, and to encourage their use for social purposes, encouraging the participation of local communities by submitting suitable projects;

17- **Recommends** to each Participating State that legislation be adopted introducing procedures for assigning these assets that ensure the participation of all potential recipients on equal and transparent terms;

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM

18- Urges the participating States to adopt measures regarding immovable and movable assets, including registered property, to ensure:

a) as a priority, their assignment to State Public Administrations and local authorities to be used for institutional or social purposes, also with the involvement of associations and cooperatives;

b) their sale in the event that the parties referred to in subparagraph a) above, allocating the proceeds to the State Treasury;

and with reference to confiscated businesses:

(c) their reintegration into the healthy production sector, creating employment opportunities also by favouring their assignment, free of charge, to cooperatives of the workers of these businesses;

19- **Urges the OSCE institutions and field missions** to support the participating States by providing technical assistance, capacity-building and best practices in the areas of asset recovery and management,

20- **Urges the participating States** to enhance international co-operation mechanisms, including the provision of mutual legal assistance and information sharing, in order to tackle the transnational character of organised crime and ensure the rapid tracing and recovery of illegally acquired property;

21- **Calls for the development** of regional platforms within the OSCE to facilitate dialogue, the exchange of expertise and enable the participating States to coordinate their actions to seize and manage confiscated assets;

22- **Requests the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly** to continue monitoring the progress made by the participating States to improve their measures to confiscate these assets and advocate for the inclusion of this issue on the agenda of future meetings of the Assembly.



REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES

Special Representative Zoffili underscores the importance of prevention and interparliamentary co-operation in addressing synthetic drug trafficking

June 26 2025

In observance of today's International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, which is marked every year to strengthen international co-operation in achieving a world free of drug abuse, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime, Eugenio Zoffili (Italy), urged parliaments, governments and international organizations to redouble efforts to eliminate the scourge of synthetic drugs through multilateralism, with a focus on prevention.

In this regard, Special Representative Zoffili has participated in a number of events in Vienna this week to strengthen international engagement. Speaking on Tuesday at the First Global Meeting of International Network for Legislation on Drugs, Zoffili noted that the demand for synthetic drugs is on the rise in the OSCE area. Highlighting the evolving techniques of criminal organizations that are diversifying and using new technologies and crypto-currencies to finance their operations anonymously, he stressed that as OSCE PA Special Representative, his focus has been on three closely interconnected matters: drug trafficking, human trafficking and migrant smuggling, and terrorism.

"The main area of concern has been the fight against drug trafficking, which is one of the major sources of income for financing crime, indeed, its very lifeblood," Zoffili said. He pointed out that the PA has been working closely with its international partners to tackle these issues.



To effectively respond to the growing threat of synthetic drugs, Zoffili highlighted the importance of reinforcing cross-border co-operation between law enforcement agencies and legislative assemblies. “I am firmly convinced that there is an urgent need for updated legislation, shared and innovative investigative methods, and above all, the promotion of a culture of prevention—especially among young people. This is the core principle driving Italy’s intervention plan to prevent the spread of fentanyl throughout the country and to make our citizens, particularly the younger generations, aware of the threat posed by synthetic substances,” Zoffili said.

During his two-day visit, the OSCE PA Special Representative also met with Jeremy Douglas, Chief of the Office of the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and with Umberto Severini, Head of the OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit, to strengthen ties between intergovernmental and interparliamentary authorities in tackling transnational organized crime.

On Wednesday, Zoffili represented the Assembly at the opening of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, the flagship event in the politico-military dimension of security in the OSCE area.



Zoffili speaks at the UN in Vienna during the INLOD Meeting on Synthetic Drugs and takes part in the Annual Security Review Conference: "The role of Parliaments is crucial – We must work together on prevention and law enforcement"



June 24,25 2025

Eugenio Zoffili, in his capacity as Special Representative of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly on Combating Organized Crime represented the Organization at the first global meeting of the United Nations International Network for Legislation on Drugs (INLOD), held at the UN Headquarters in Vienna.

During his speech, at the session focused on the role of Parliaments in the fight against synthetic drugs, Zoffili emphasized the need for joint and timely action against a rapidly evolving and increasingly dangerous threat. He shared information on the Italian experience, Italy was one of the very first countries in Europe to adopt a national prevention plan against the spread of fentanyl, and reiterated the importance of strengthening cross-border cooperation between law enforcement agencies and Houses of Parliament. Zoffili highlighted the urgent need for updated legislation, shared and innovative investigative methods, and above all the promotion of a culture of prevention –especially among young people.

During the mission, he also held a number of important bilateral meetings, including with Jeremy Douglas, Chief of the Office of the Director-General/Executive Director and Strategic Advisor to the Executive Director of UNODC, as well as with senior OSCE officials. On June 25, Zoffili took part in the Annual Security Review Conference at the Hofburg in Vienna, representing the OSCE PA.

The high-level event brought together diplomats and senior officials from the OSCE's 57 participating States, with the aim of strengthening dialogue on global security challenges. The conference provided an opportunity to exchange views on political-military security issues, to assess relevant activities undertaken by the OSCE and its participating States, and to foster the exchange of information and cooperation with relevant international and regional organizations and institutions.







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 Today, Special Representative [@eugenio_zoffili](#) is participating in the opening of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, the primary event in the politico-military dimension of security, for discussions on the security situation in Europe, and is meeting with OSCE officials.



Chamber of Deputies - Zoffili Launches a Forum on Legality at the end of the Interparliamentary Conference on the Fight Against Organized Crime in the OSCE Region: “An international common front against Mafias”



June 6, 2025

The Interparliamentary Conference on the fight against organized crime in the OSCE region, which has concluded today at the Chamber of Deputies, “was an extraordinary opportunity to share strategies and practices to combat the criminal phenomena that plague our countries. International cooperation—especially in these times, when technological innovation is crucial—will be the revolutionary tool to defeat mafias worldwide. Given the successful outcome of the conference, I have promoted the creation of a permanent OSCE Forum on Legality. This forum will involve all OSCE countries and aim at creating synergies to build a common front against mafias.”

So MP Eugenio Zoffili, Head of the Italian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, at the end of the Interparliamentary Conference on the fight against organized crime in the OSCE region, which was held yesterday and today at the Chamber of Deputies, in the Hall of Parliamentary Groups.

“Italy,” Zoffili emphasized, “is certainly a point of reference in the fight against organized crime, and I am confident that keynote speakers such as Prefects Cortese and Laganà, Deputy Prosecutor Birritteri, Generals Salerno and Quintavalle Cecere of the Guardia di Finanza, General Montanaro of the Carabinieri, and Riccardo Perisi, Director of the Service of State Police for countering extremism and external terrorism, not only brought prestige to the initiative with their speeches but also demonstrated the great commitment our country devotes to the fight against mafia organizations.”



The two-day conference featured numerous distinguished participants who contributed to the discussion on combating criminal organizations.

Over 140 parliamentarians and representatives from 33 countries, including participants attending online from Washington, engaged with Italian and international guests who shared their experience in fighting widespread criminal phenomena.

The conference was opened by messages from the Presidents of the two Houses of the Italian Parliament, Lorenzo Fontana and Ignazio La Russa, and inaugurated by Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini, Undersecretaries Giorgio Silli and Nicola Molteni, OSCE President Pia Kauma, and OSCE Secretary General Roberto Montella. The agenda included several thematic sessions:

- The 4th Inter-parliamentary Forum of the South East Europe Delegations to the OSCE PA, with discussions on strategies to counter organized crime in the region, moderated by the Special Representative for South-eastern Europe, Kyriakos Hadjiyianni;
- A session dedicated to the fight against organised crime and mafias and the social re-use of confiscated assets, with attendance from Italian and international institutions engaged in promoting legality and transparency, moderated by the Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime, MP Eugenio Zoffili;
- A focus on the fight against corruption in the OSCE region, featuring experts and representatives from international organizations, the judiciary, and law enforcement, coordinated by the Special Representative on Fighting Corruption, Irene Charalambides;
- A session on trends in terrorism: from youth radicalization to violent extremism, with contributions from scholars, law enforcement authorities, and research centre representatives, moderated by the Chair of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism, Kamil Aydin.



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

May 21 2025

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.



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

April 28 2025

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.





Zoffili (Lega) at the OSCE Bureau in Copenhagen: “The First Interparliamentary Conference on Combating organized Crime in the OSCE Region will take place in Rome on 5-6 June 2025”

April 8 2025

The Head of the Italian Parliamentary Delegation to the OSCE PA and Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime, MP Eugenio Zoffili, participated last Monday in the Bureau meeting of the Assembly held at the Parliament of Denmark in Copenhagen.

During the proceedings, he announced the organization of the first Interparliamentary Conference on combating organized crime in the OSCE region, to be held in Rome, at the Chamber of Deputies, on June 5 and 6 next.

The Conference will address issues related to combating organized crime and mafias, the social reuse of confiscated assets and anti-corruption practices, with a particular focus also on the area of South-Eastern European countries and the fight against terrorism. The Conference will be attended by parliamentary delegations from the 57

participating States of the OSCE, which is co-organising the event together with the Italian Parliament, as well as those from the 11 Partner States.

The initiative will provide an important opportunity to share information on tools and procedures to counter criminal phenomena. During the presentation, President Zoffili emphasized how today’s global challenges make it necessary to tackle organized crime with a transnational perspective and how the emergence of new technologies, combined with the best practices developed over the years by Italy, also thanks to the professionalism of the Law Enforcement agencies, will prove fundamental in the fight against both traditional and newly-emerging mafias.





Security: Eugenio Zoffili at the Police Union Conference: Promoting legality ASA an Institutional Priority

March 24 2025

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.



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

January 25 2025

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.



Meeting with Delphine Schatz, Director of the New York Office of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and Mauro Miedico, Director of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) - New York

November 6 2024



MP Eugenio Zoffili, Head of the Italian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, held two meetings in New York in his capacity as the Assembly's Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime. The meetings took place on the occasion of the OSCE PA Election Observation Mission to the United States for the 2024 Presidential Elections and were held at the Headquarters of the Permanent Representation of Italy to the United Nations, in the presence of Ambassador Maurizio Massari (Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations) and the Italian Parliamentary Delegation to the OSCE PA.

Zoffili first met with the Director of the New York Office of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Ms Delphine Schatz, who expressed concerns over an increase of the circulation of synthetic drugs and production of cocaine. Demand is growing especially in the ports and airports of large cities where violent organizations operate. If the latter acquire the chemicals to produce synthetic drugs, these can be manufactured anywhere. In some places, criminal gangs produce large quantities of drugs whilst also engaging in human trafficking. To obtain the necessary funds, they now use new technologies, notably cryptocurrencies.



Zoffili then met with the Director of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT), Mauro Miedico, who focused on the role of parliamentarians in preventing and combating terrorism, and emphasized that cooperation with parliaments is a key priority. He also welcomed the Fourth Parliamentary Policy Dialogue on countering the use of artificial intelligence and new technologies for terrorist purposes and the Sixth Meeting of the Coordination Mechanism for Parliamentary Assemblies on Counter-terrorism, to be held in Rome on 4 and 5 December next. In this regard, he described the Coordination Mechanism as a unique instrument and acknowledged the role of the OSCE Assembly, which was the first Organization to ever set up an ad hoc group on terrorism.



In answering a question from Zoffili on terrorist threats in connection with the current developments in the Middle East and relations between organized crime and terrorism, Miedico explained that terrorist groups have long had a well-defined strategy and that there is evidence of the dark web and cryptocurrencies being used for terrorist purposes. The time has come to adopt a different approach and coordinate the response systems, while not underestimating the importance of prevention.



Meeting with Ben Ryan, Assistant Secretary for Criminal Justice Policy at the Department of Justice of Ireland, and Michael McElgunn, Assistant Commissioner at the Crime and Security Intelligence Service of Ireland's National Police and Security Service (An Garda Síochána) - Dublin

October 3 2024

In the margins of the Autumn Meeting in Dublin, MP Eugenio Zoffili, Head of the Italian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, held two institutional meetings in his capacity as the Assembly's Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime.

The main topic of the meeting with Ben Ryan, Assistant Secretary for Criminal Justice Policy at the Department of Justice of Ireland, was the fight against drug trafficking.

Mr. Ryan provided a detailed overview of the current situation in his country, with a particular focus on the main organization running heroin and cocaine trafficking. He also emphasised that in order to fight organized crime, it is essential to forge coalitions with partners in and outside Europe and have adequate financial resources. The Irish government has adopted a number of programmes to counter youth crime, including family support measures and funding for programmes in schools.





OSCE, Zoffili meets the Ministry of the Interior's anti-drug chiefs: "It is essential to intensify measures against drug trafficking in the Mediterranean"

August 1 2024

"Yesterday, in Rome, I had the pleasure of meeting the Carabinieri Major General Pierangelo Iannotti, Central Director for Anti-Drug Services of the DCSA (Central Directorate for Anti-Drug Services) of the Ministry of the Interior, and his Director of the General and International Affairs Service, Carabinieri Brigadier General Giuseppe Donnarumma, to discuss strategies to combat drug trafficking and organised crime.

That meeting also gave me the opportunity to thank the DCSA on its excellent record, and for its invaluable contribution to the drafting of the resolution bearing my first signature on the

dangerous dissemination of 'Fentanyl', which was approved in July at the OSCE Annual Assembly in Bucharest, where Italy played a leading role. One of the most important aspects to emerge from the meeting was the need to step up our defences to combat drug trafficking in the Mediterranean. Italy's strategic position makes us a benchmark in the area, not only to guarantee the security of our borders, but also to put an end to this lucrative source of profit and lifeblood for all the mafias and criminal organisations involved.

As the Special Representative of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly on Combating Organised Crime, I renew my commitment to represent Italy and all the countries of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe to confront this challenge, working together to build a coordinated strategic response at the parliamentary level that will support the enhancement of all useful countermeasure on the ground".

So MP Eugenio Zoffili, Head of the Italian Delegation and Special Representative on Combating Organised Crime of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.



OSCE, Zoffili confirmed as Special Representative on Combating Organised Crime of the Parliamentary Assembly



July 31 2024



The Head of the Italian Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Eugenio Zoffili, has been confirmed by President Pia Kauma as the Special Representative on Combating Organised Crime of the international organisation, which has 57 participating Countries and 11 partner Countries.

"I wish to thank the President, my Finnish colleague Pia Kauma, for renewing her confidence in me, and for confirming me in this important role, notably in combating organised crime and mafias on behalf of all OSCE Assembly countries for another year, until the end of the Annual Session in Porto in July 2025," said Zoffili.

"Since my appointment, through the joint mission I conducted in Lampedusa together with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee on

Migration, I have raised the Mediterranean question to the heart of the debate.

Moreover, the recent adoption at the 31st Annual Session in Bucharest of my resolution on combating the proliferation of new drugs, with particular reference to Fentanyl, will enable us to promote and strengthen measures at the international level against the main source of finance of the mafias and transnational crime.

I shall continue to play the role entrusted to me

with the utmost commitment and determination, working to promote the adoption of innovative, cooperative and global responses to the numerous security threats posed by mafias and organised crime by all the Parliaments of the 57 participating Countries".



The President

Mr. Eugenio Zoffili
Head of the Delegation of Italy
to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
Chamber of Deputies
Rome

15 July 2024

Dear Mr. Zoffili,

I thank you for your recent letter expressing your interest in continuing your mission as Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime. I sincerely appreciate the work you have conducted since your appointment. I am therefore happy to reappoint you until the end of the Porto Annual Session in July 2025, in line with your previous mandate.



Drugs, Zoffili: “Italian resolution against Fentanyl adopted by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Bucharest”

July 3 2024

"I am proud to announce the adoption, at the 31st Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly that ended today in Bucharest, where I headed the Italian Parliamentary Delegation, of my resolution on countering the proliferation of new drugs, with particular reference to Fentanyl, as well as the mafias and criminal organisations involved in trafficking them, which was signed by 43 parliamentarians from 19 countries (text at: <https://linktr.ee/EugenioZoffili>) and has become an integral part of the Final Declaration of the meeting.

When I presented the document, I stressed the need to confront this challenge with a multidimensional approach combining healthcare measures, law enforcement and synergistic international cooperation, both to protect the victims of addiction

and to manage its consequences from a safety and public health perspective. I wish to thank my colleagues who have voted for the Italian resolution, committing the Parliaments of the



57 participating states to adopt measures to raise awareness of the dangers of Fentanyl and synthetic opioids, while providing effective health care and support services to those who have fallen prey to this sophisticated network which is backed by international organised crime and mafias, for whom the production and trafficking of illegal substances is one of their main sources of funding."

So Eugenio Zoffili, Head of the Italian Delegation and Special Representative on Combating Organised Crime of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.



SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM ON “FENTANYL”



The fight against drug trafficking, which is the lifeblood of mafias and organised crime, is one of my priorities. Therefore I have submitted a Supplementary Item on this issue, so as to raise the awareness of our Assembly on the danger of new drugs, notably Fentanyl, which must be combated and prevented.



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SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM

ON

"COUNTERING THE PROLIFERATION OF DRUGS,
PARTICULARLY FENTANYL AND OTHER SYNTHETIC OPIOIDS,
AS WELL AS MAFIAS AND CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS
INVOLVED IN TRAFFICKING THEM"

PRINCIPAL SPONSOR
Mr. Eugenio Zoffili
Italy

BUCHAREST, 29 JUNE - 3 JULY 2024

Eugenio Zoffili



"COUNTERING THE PROLIFERATION OF DRUGS, PARTICULARLY FENTANYL AND OTHER SYNTHETIC OPIOIDS, AS WELL AS MAFIAS AND CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN TRAFFICKING"



SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM

ON

"COUNTERING THE PROLIFERATION OF DRUGS, PARTICULARLY FENTANYL AND OTHER SYNTHETIC OPIOIDS, AS WELL AS MAFIAS AND CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN TRAFFICKING THEM"

PRINCIPAL SPONSOR
Mr. Eugenio Zoffili
Italy

BUCHAREST, 29 JUNE - 3 JULY 2024

Mindful of the mounting global threat to human health posed by the proliferation of drugs and especially fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, which are responsible for a major health emergency in the United States as a result of the devastating consequences of the abuse of these substances; namely, instant and insidious addiction, the deaths of thousands of people, and the destabilization of entire communities,

2. Given the huge profits generated by the criminal activities associated with the ever-increasing proliferation of these new substances that have attracted additional interest on the part of transnational criminal organizations, which also exploit the dark web and other digital platforms to expand their illegal trafficking,

3. Reaffirming the importance of co-operation and international efforts to clamp down on illicit production and trafficking and on the criminal networks running the illegal trade in fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, on top of the already existing criminal activities involved in drug trafficking,

4. Welcoming the international measures designed to counter the proliferation of drugs, including the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), soon to become the European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA), as well as the United Nations Synthetic Drug Strategy 2021-25 launched by the UNODC (the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), as well as the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971), the United Nations Vienna Convention on against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs (1988), Decision 5/05 on Combating the Threat of Illicit Drugs, adopted by the OSCE Ministerial Council on 6 December 2005, Decision 1048 on the OSCE Concept for Combating the Threat of Illicit Drugs and the Diversion of Chemical Precursors, adopted by the OSCE Permanent Council on 26 July 2012, and the conclusions of the OSCE Conferences to counter illicit drug trafficking and related organized crime, in order to stop the proliferation of illicit drugs and diversion of the chemical precursors,

5. Also considering the importance of national actions, supported by the international framework of reference, including the recent 'National Prevention Plan against the abuse of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids',

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM

adopted by the Italian Government to prevent the proliferation of these substances in Italy and to raise the awareness of the general public, and especially the younger generations, of the danger of consuming them,

6. Emphasizing the urgent need to counter the mafias and criminal organizations that profit from the illicit trade in fentanyl and other synthetic opioids by adopting a systemic approach, such as the one promoted by the US-led 'Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drug Threats' initiative, and the study and analyses carried out by the 'European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction', soon to become the European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA),

7. Noting the G7 Leaders' Statement on synthetic drugs threats of 29 April 2024, with particular reference to fentanyl,

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly:

8. Urges the participating States to enhance cross-border co-operation and the exchange of experiences within the OSCE in order to counter and dismantle the criminal organizations engaged in drug trafficking, and in particular in the illicit production and distribution of fentanyl and synthetic opioids, including the chemical precursors used to produce them;

9. Calls upon the participating States to strengthen their legislation and law enforcement measures to target all the parties responsible for illicitly producing, trafficking, and distributing these new substances, and the corresponding laundering of their proceeds, in addition to the already known illicit practices related to drug trafficking;

10. Encourages the participating States to invest in public health schemes and national plans to prevent and combat drug use, in particular the illicit use of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, by raising public awareness of the dangers of drug use and by providing effective medical treatments, and health care and support services for people who have succumbed to addiction;

11. Recommends the establishment or reinforcement of national and international task forces dedicated to combating criminal activities linked to trafficking, including online trafficking, particularly of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, while simultaneously raising training standards of law enforcement officers on these substances and their risks, such as those posed by unintentional contact;



12. Calls on the OSCE participating States to strengthen their border surveillance measures to intercept illicit drug shipments and trafficking, especially those organized via the dark web and other digital platforms, in particular of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, by using innovative technological solutions and adopting forensic techniques to improve the

detection of these substances;

13. Welcomes the initiatives taken by several countries, such as those of the Italian Government, and encourages participating States to exchange best practices, expertise and intelligence in order to step up international co-operation;

14. Supports the efforts of the Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime aimed at raising the visibility of issues relating to drug use and trafficking and related criminal activities, by promoting multilateral information exchange including through meetings and visits aimed at increasing co-operation between OSCE States, international organizations and relevant actors, in order to protect public health, promote the rule of law,

combat crime and any mafia and safeguard the security of citizens;

15. Calls on the OSCE Secretariat to expand its international co-operation network in order to strengthen its systems for monitoring and analysing the proliferation of drugs, especially the illicit use of fentanyl and the related activities of mafias and criminal organizations, and to encourage the sharing of relevant experiences between the participating States and the development of joint training projects to counter these criminal phenomena and activities;

16. Resolves to remain actively involved in analyzing and combating criminal phenomena and activities related to drug trafficking, particularly fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, and to explore the most appropriate regulatory actions to prevent their further proliferation, while safeguarding public health and security in the participating States.



World Drug Day, Special Representative Zoffili: "Italian resolution against Fentanyl at the Bucharest OSCE Parliamentary Assembly"



June 26 2024

"Today, as we celebrate the World Drug Day, the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, and in my capacity as the Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, I would like to sincerely thank the men and women of the law enforcement agencies, in Italy and abroad, who are committed every day, with professionalism and courage, to combating the trafficking of illegal substances, which is one of the main sources of funding for organised crime.

The alarm over the diffusion of new drugs, especially among young people, which was raised yesterday at the conference on the Annual Report to Parliament on drug addiction, is yet further confirmation of the

topical relevance of my resolution on countering the proliferation of new drugs, especially



Fentanyl, as well as the mafias and criminal organisations involved in trafficking them, which I have tabled and which will be dealt with as a supplementary item on the agenda of the 31st OSCE Annual Parliamentary Assembly starting on 29 June in Bucharest, where I will be heading the Italian Delegation. Nipping in the bud the propagation of these serious threats to the very foundations of our society, beginning with our youngest people, is a priority demand on which we are relentlessly continuing to work, both at home and throughout the OSCE Region, in order to safeguard the health and safety of our citizens".



So Eugenio Zoffili, Head of the Italian Delegation and Special Representative on Combating Organised Crime of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Special Representative Zoffili meets with Central Director of Italy's Anti-Drug Services

April 10 2024

OSCE PA Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime, Eugenio Zoffili, met on Wednesday 10 April in Rome, at his offices in Palazzo San Macuto, with Major General of Carabinieri Pierangelo Iannotti and Lieutenant Colonel of Carabinieri Salvatore Leotta, respectively Central Director and Director of the Analysis Section of the Central Direction for Anti-Drug Services, a multi-agency body of the Department of Public Security under the direction of the Chief of Police.

The Central Direction is tasked with implementing the directives issued by the Minister of the Interior in the areas of coordination of law enforcement agencies, planning and management of the law enforcement services with the aim of preventing and combating illicit traffic in drugs and psychotropic substances. Special Representative Zoffili is gathering important insights, which he is ready to share with his colleagues from the 57 OSCE PA participating States at upcoming international events. Drug trafficking is a fuel for the engine of mafias.

This is why it is even more important to prevent and combat, both within individual countries

and internationally, any trafficking in illicit substances, which is one of the major activities of organized crime.



Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime

Zoffili meets with senior officials of Italy's Department for Anti-Drug Policies



April 4 2024

OSCE PA Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime, Eugenio Zoffili, met on Thursday 4 April in Rome, at his offices in Palazzo San Macuto, with senior officials of the Department for Anti-Drug Policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Government: the Head of the Department, Mr. Paolo Molinari, and the Coordinator of its Technical-Scientific and General Affairs Office, Ms. Elisabetta Simeoni.

As a follow-up to his previous meetings with the Italian Minister of the Interior, Matteo Piantedosi, and with representatives of the United Nations

Office on Drugs and Crime, at the UN Headquarters in Vienna, Special Representative Zoffili has acquired new insights, which he is ready to share with his colleagues from the 57 OSCE PA participating States at upcoming international events.



The fight against drug trafficking, the main source of funding for criminal syndicates, is a challenge that can only be met by joining forces and implementing common practices, as is the case for crime. This is the focus of Special Representative's current activity, also with a view to the forthcoming Annual Session to be held in Bucharest between the end of June and the beginning of July, in full compliance with the mandate he received from the President of the Assembly, Pia Kauma.

Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime

Zoffili: "Committed to the fight against Mafias for a future of legality"



March 11 2024



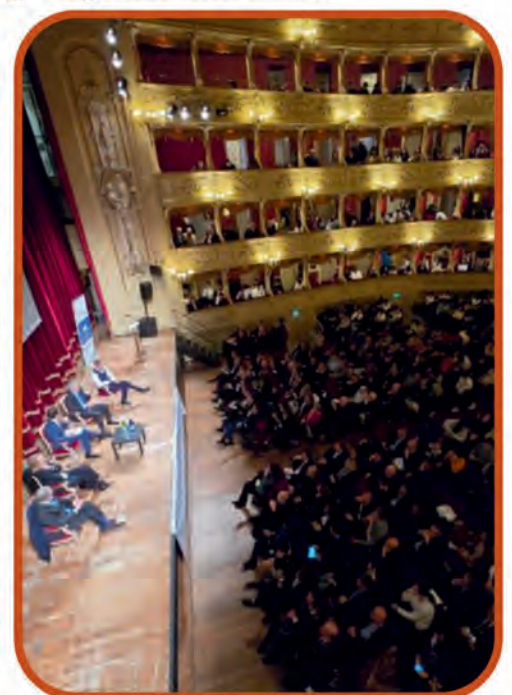
OSCE PA Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime, Eugenio Zoffili, took part in the conference on "The Response of the Institutions to Mafia Massacres: Society Starts Over Again from Legality," organized in the Italian city of Como by the Autonomous Police Union (SAP) in the presence of prestigious authorities, as well as a large audience of 650 high school students.

An important event to recall is that the fight against the Mafia is a constant and multi-faceted duty that involves institutions, civil society, and individual citizens, which is why it is necessary to promote a culture of legality and fight against the Mafia through education in schools.

On the same occasion, the shrine containing the remains of the "Quarto Savona 15" was exhibited, the car in which police officers Antonio Montinaro, Vito Schifani, and Rocco Dicillo lost their lives in Capaci, Sicily (Italy), on May 23, 1992, while escorting magistrate Giovanni Falcone, who was barbarously murdered together with his wife Francesca Morvillo in that tragic attack. It stands as a symbol of the fight against the Mafia.

The conference was attended by Ms. Tina Montinaro, the widow of Falcone's police escort officer Antonio Montinaro, whose words were an important signal of hope and commitment against the Mafia. Her testimony is a powerful tool to educate and raise awareness about the importance of fighting organized crime and defending legality.

Special Representative Zoffili thanked the Como SAP, and in particular its provincial secretary Igor Erba, for organizing the event, which allowed many young people to learn about the stories and experiences of women and men who wear their uniforms every day with honor and a high sense of State, doing their utmost to ensure the safety and security of citizens. He also assured his commitment to keeping the spotlight on mafia phenomena and sharing the good practices implemented in Italy with international interlocutors, to offer the new generations a future of security and legality.



Visiting Rome and Lampedusa, high-level OSCE PA delegation stresses need to support Italy's migration efforts and combat human trafficking

March 8 2024



LAMPEDUSA – OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Pia Kauma (Finland) joined members of the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Migration, chaired by Vice-President Daniela De Ridder (Germany), and Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime Eugenio Zoffili (Italy) on an official visit to Rome and Lampedusa this week to witness first-hand the challenges faced by Italy in dealing with irregular migration.

With the Central Mediterranean route from Africa to Europe once again the most active – and deadliest – route for migrants entering the European Union irregularly, and with Lampedusa at the front line due to its proximity to North Africa, the OSCE PA delegation noted that Italy deserves continued support for managing the migration flows, and that the international community must do more to jointly address irregular migration as well as drivers of migration.

“Migration is a global phenomenon that requires a co-ordinated approach,” President Kauma said. “The efforts of Italy and the EU to address irregular arrivals seem to be bearing fruit, with numbers so far down by 70 per cent in 2024 compared to last year. We must continue to learn from this experience and to work together to ensure that we are better prepared to meet the challenges ahead. OSCE parliamentarians can furthermore contribute by ensuring that our legislative frameworks support sustainable migration governance.”

President Kauma's participation underscored the significance of migration on the OSCE PA's agenda and the importance that the PA attaches to the challenges faced by Italy, she stressed. In Rome, she held a bilateral meeting with Lorenzo Fontana, President of the Chamber of Deputies, in which the sides discussed a range of issues facing the OSCE area, including migration, as well as Italy's support for the PA's activities.



Ad Hoc Committee Chair De Ridder said that there must be closer co-operation with other frontline countries around the Mediterranean. “Offers of help are always about the dignity of the refugees and this is managed in an orderly fashion on Lampedusa”, De Ridder said. “Lampedusa is a place where tragedy and hope mix with a lot of potential. We often cannot understand the willingness to take risks of refugees who want to reach Europe by sea, but we must work more intensively on the causes of flight, especially conflict, poverty and climate change.”

One of the main focuses of the visit was understanding how organized criminal networks exploit mixed-migration flows to traffic human beings and smuggle migrants across borders. The delegation noted that criminal groups have increasingly used the Central Mediterranean route to boost their illegal operations. During their perilous journeys, many migrants and asylum seekers fall prey to unscrupulous trafficking rings, and are subsequently exploited for sexual or labor exploitation in countries of transit and destination.

Special Representative Zoffili, who serves as Head of Italy’s OSCE PA Delegation, said that it is important to keep a strong focus on the criminal element related to irregular migration. “Migrant smuggling and human trafficking are closely related, albeit different, crimes that exploit vulnerable people for financial gain,” said Zoffili. “The organized criminal networks that profit from these crimes are usually interlinked, and often they are also involved in other dangerous criminal operations, such as drugs and weapons trafficking.



Combating these criminal cartels should be a top security priority for all of our countries. In this regard, there is much that can be learned from the Italian experience.”

In meetings with law enforcement and asylum policy officials in Rome, the OSCE PA delegation learned about the techniques that criminal networks use to evade detection, as well as the internal operations of these networks. They also heard how Italian border police authorities provide technical support to border police in Tunisia to improve their professional capacity to manage irregular sea migration and counter terrorism. Training activities also include a human rights component, the delegation heard.

Visiting Lampedusa, the delegation was briefed on the situation at the Air Force base and visited the Contrada Imbriacola ‘Hotspot’ managed by the Italian Red Cross where they met with a broad range of interlocutors including representatives of law enforcement agencies, Frontex, Europol, EU Asylum Agency and also representatives of UNHCR, IOM, and Save the Children.



Accounting for about 70 per cent of all arrivals on Italian soil in 2023, migrants arrive in Lampedusa on small boats from North Africa (Tunisia and Libya), committee members were told. Following an agreement reached with Tunisia, arrivals from Tunisia have gone down, with Libya again the main point of departure for the boats. The Mediterranean crossing continues to be the most treacherous route for migrants on record, with at least 3,129 deaths and disappearances. This is the highest death toll recorded in the Mediterranean since 2017.

Committee members also visited Favalaro Pier, where about 11,000 asylum seekers arrived over a four-day period in mid-September 2023. Meeting with Guardia di Finanza and Coast Guard officials, committee members learned about the challenges posed when an enormous influx of migrants arrives over such a short period. The remoteness of this small island of 6,000 inhabitants which is closer to Africa than to Sicily and the rest of Italy is one of the main challenges.

Italy's achievements in coping with the crisis was highlighted: migrants arriving in Lampedusa go through an efficient process, including health screenings, pre-identification and screening for vulnerabilities. The delegation also discussed lessons learned from agreements with third countries such as Libya, Tunisia and Albania, and whether there are sufficient human rights safeguards. The new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, including accelerated border procedures as well as the proposed solidarity mechanism and their expected impact on vulnerable categories of migrants, notably unaccompanied minors, women and potential victims of trafficking, were also discussed.

In addition to President Kauma, Chair De Ridder and Special Representative Zoffili, members of the delegation included Ad Hoc Committee Vice-Chairs Kyriakos Hadjiyianni (Cyprus), Farah Karimi (Netherlands), and Gudrun Kugler (Austria), as well as committee members Alessandro Alfieri (Italy), Kristian Klinck (Germany), Malik Ben Achour (Belgium), Kemal Çelik (Türkiye), and Fabrizio Comba (Italy).



In Vienna, OSCE PA Special Representative Zoffili builds new partnerships to fight organized crime

January 30 2024

VIENNA - OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime Eugenio Zoffili (Italy) is in Vienna this week, holding two days of meetings at the OSCE Secretariat and the Office of the United Nations against Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The visit has been an opportunity to assess the current level of threat from organized crime and



identify emerging trends and challenges that demand particular attention. Zoffili, who also serves as Head of the Italian Delegation to the OSCE PA, has met with Permanent Representative of Italy to the OSCE, Ambassador Stefano Baldi, and the Permanent Representative of Italy to International Organizations, Ambassador Debora Lepre, as well as a wide range of officials from the OSCE Secretariat and UNODC.

“Building political momentum and promoting international collaboration is essential to effectively combat the scourge of transnational organized crime”, Zoffili said. “This is why I am working to reinforce relationships and promote synergy between the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the OSCE executive structures, and relevant UN bodies at both the operational and political levels.”

At the UNODC today, Special Representative Zoffili discussed the latest drug and human trafficking trends with experts. He talked with UNODC officials about the links between trafficking and terrorism, and learned more about the regional impacts organized crime on Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Underlining the importance of UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime’s new review mechanism, he stressed the key role of parliaments in fighting serious crime.

In discussions, Zoffili underlined the importance of the fight against drug trafficking, in particular, in combating all criminal activities, as it provides criminal organizations to access large amounts of money. Today, he noted, synthetic drugs are easily marketable and are spreading devastating social problems throughout the OSCE area.

Migrant smuggling and human trafficking is also a top priority, he stressed.



Visit of the OSCE PA Special Representative on Combating Organized Crime to the OSCE Secretariat and United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Vienna

January 29-30 2024

On 29-30 January 2024, the OSCE PA Special Representative (SR) on Combating Organized Crime, Hon. Eugenio Zoffili, conducted an official visit to the OSCE Secretariat and the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Joined by the Secretary of the Italian delegation and staff from the OSCE PA Vienna Office, SR Zoffili exchanged views with over 20 experts from both organizations. Ultimately, **the visit proved instrumental in (1) introducing the new mandate of the SR, (2) learning more about the latest organized crime trends and, (3) fostering collaborative efforts among key international actors in the fight against all forms of mafias across the OSCE region.**

On 29-30 January 2024, the OSCE PA Special Representative (SR) on Combating Organized Crime, Hon. Eugenio Zoffili, conducted an official visit to the OSCE Secretariat and the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Joined by the Secretary of the Italian delegation and staff from the OSCE PA Vienna Office, SR Zoffili exchanged views with over 20 experts from both organizations. Ultimately, **the visit proved instrumental in (1) introducing the new mandate of the SR, (2) learning more about the latest organized crime trends and, (3) fostering collaborative efforts among key international actors in the fight against all forms of mafias across the OSCE region.**



At the OSCE Secretariat, discussions with key departments delved into the comprehensive policy frameworks and coordination mechanisms required to address the complex challenges posed by organized crime. Meetings with the Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and counterparts from the Transnational Threats Department and Office of the Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities allowed for in-depth exchanges on a wide range of organized crime-related challenges and projects.

Meetings in UNODC with the Organized Crime and Illicit Trafficking Branch, Research and Trend Analysis Branch, and Terrorism Prevention Branch provided a comprehensive overview of the evolving landscape of organized crime. The dialogue encompassed discussions on emerging trends, persisting threats and innovative strategies for prevention and repression.

Throughout these interactions, SR Zoffili explored avenues for enhanced co-operation with the aim to **foster effective responses to organized crime** through coherent policies and operational efforts. Emphasis was placed on boosting **policy alignment and information sharing** at international level, as well as promoting targeted joint initiatives addressing human and drugs trafficking, money laundering and migrant smuggling at regional level.

The multifaceted interplay between transnational criminal and terrorist networks was also in focus.

Finally, SR Zoffili actively sought ways to **integrate parliamentary perspectives into the broader strategy**, stressing the pivotal role of legislative bodies in addressing

complex challenges associated with organized crime. Deliberations centered around legislative **frameworks, parliamentary engagement, and the role of lawmakers** in reinforcing the international response against organized crime.

The visit concluded with a **debriefing at the OSCE PA Vienna Office**, where the SR had also the opportunity to briefly meet local staff.



Major Organized Crime Trends

Organized crime trends continue to evolve in response to societal changes, technological advancements, and shifts in global dynamics. The illicit drug trade remains a significant driver of organized crime, contributing to the financial strength and operational resilience of criminal organizations worldwide. According to the UNODC 2023 World Drug Report, recent



trends indicate a growing concern, particularly in the realms of Cocaine and synthetic drugs. Particularly alarming is the fact that the production of synthetic drugs is relatively inexpensive, facilitating their widespread availability in illicit markets and subsequently contributing to a surge in demand across the globe.

Money laundering remains a major concern worldwide, with criminal groups always seizing new opportunities to legitimize their unlawful gains. As financial systems become increasingly globalized, the fight against money laundering becomes crucial in disrupting the financial backbone of organized criminal enterprises, emphasizing the need for law enforcement and international organizations to adopt comprehensive and coordinated strategies. **Trafficking in cultural property** is also becoming an important source for the laundering of the proceeds of crime and has been identified as a possible source of financing for terrorist groups.



One significant global trend is the increasing sophistication of organized crime groups, utilizing advanced technology and global networks to facilitate their illicit activities. The convergence of various criminal activities, illustrating a trend where organized crime groups engage in a wide array of illicit enterprises simultaneously, is another prominent trend. Hotspots such as the **Balkan and the Mediterranean regions** are of particular concern, with organized crime exploiting these areas for the trafficking of migrants, drugs, and other

illicit goods. In the Mediterranean region, the convergence of different routes raises significant challenges. Notably, migrant smuggling routes often overlap with drug trafficking routes. Major drug trafficking routes such as those originating from South America and flowing through West Africa into Europe also play a significant role in facilitating the global movement of illicit substances, contributing to the pervasive influence of organized crime.

Similarly, Hotspots such as the **Balkan and the Mediterranean regions** are of particular concern, with organized crime exploiting these areas for the trafficking of migrants, drugs, and other illicit goods. In the Mediterranean region, the convergence of different routes raises significant challenges. Notably, migrant smuggling routes often overlap with drug trafficking routes. Major drug trafficking routes such as those originating from **South America** and flowing through West Africa into Europe also play a significant role in facilitating the global movement of illicit substances, contributing to the pervasive influence of organized crime. Similarly, the opium production in **Afghanistan** fuels another major drug route, with heroin and other opiates trafficked through various channels, including Central Asia and the Middle East, before reaching global markets. These regions, especially the Middle East and certain parts of Asia, are not only central hubs for drug trafficking but also exhibit known links between organized crime and terrorism financing.

It was highlighted that the **nexus between conflict and organized crime** represents a complex and dynamic relationship that demands closer examination. In many instances, conflict zones provide fertile ground for organized crime to flourish, taking advantage of the chaotic environments, weakened governance structures, and the breakdown of social order. The intricate interplay between these two phenomena requires further research to comprehensively understand the mechanisms, dynamics, and impacts on both conflict and crime.

Finally, the growing significance of cybercrime is a major component of organized criminal activities. The digital realm provides criminals with new opportunities to exploit vulnerabilities, conduct financial fraud, and engage in cyber-enabled crimes. This shift towards digital platforms poses unique challenges for traditional law enforcement methods, necessitating the development of advanced technological solutions and international collaboration.

Intersection with Terrorism

The complex nexus between organized crime and terrorist networks was also duly explored during the two-day visit. The discussions delved into the nuanced intersections of this connection that incorporates elements such as financing, operational methodologies and interlinked routes.

Terrorist organizations often engage in organized crime to finance their activities.

Both OSCE and UNODC recognized the importance of disrupting the financial networks supporting terrorism. Collaborative efforts focus on tracking and preventing money laundering, enhancing financial intelligence, and strengthening legal frameworks to counter the convergence of organized crime and terrorism.

The link between terrorism and organized crime is very prominent in Africa, as well as in Afghanistan. UNODC's engagement in the Sahel region extends to comprehensive threat assessments, emphasizing the need for multi-dimensional strategies to prevent violent extremism and enhance the capacities of criminal justice sectors. A critical challenge highlighted was the collection of **battlefield evidence**, an impediment to prosecuting Foreign Terrorist Fighters. While these individuals can be arrested, the lack of sufficient evidence hampers successful prosecutions. Efforts are underway to strengthen the work of different agencies, addressing this challenge and enhancing collaboration between investigators and prosecutors on terrorism and organized crime.

Another notable concern is the **exploitation of trafficking routes by Foreign Terrorist Fighters**, mirroring the patterns observed in the illicit trade of firearms. The interplay between **far-right extremists** and individuals involved in criminal organized groups was also underlined. Additionally, links between **organized crime groups and active sports groups** were discussed, underscoring the need for comprehensive strategies to disrupt these connections.



Through workshops, training programs, and technical assistance, both organizations work to enhance the skills of security personnel and strengthen legal frameworks to counter these converging threats. Raising awareness among youth and engaging with civil society are also crucial components of an effective strategy to prevent serious crime.

Key International Efforts

Recent trends and developments in the organized crime landscape have prompted the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to intensify its efforts in understanding and combating various facets of criminal activities.

The Research and Trend Analysis Branch of UNODC conducts research work related to the trends and developments in the organized crime and illicit markets field. In order to monitor global drug cultivation, the UNODC utilizes satellite imagery for data collection. The collation of data on drug use and trafficking enables the construction of a global picture, which results in the annual World Drug Report, providing in-depth analysis of key developments and emerging trends in selected drug markets, including in countries currently experiencing conflict.

UNODC Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Section reviews the impact of organized crime on vulnerable populations, with a particular focus on human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

The exploitation of individuals for forced labor, sexual exploitation, and other criminal purposes remains a grave concern, necessitating concerted efforts to strengthen legal frameworks and enhance international collaboration to combat these crimes. The Branch produces a Global Report on Trafficking in Persons every two years since 2009, utilizing the largest existing database (2). Interviews with migrants in countries of origin and transit, amounting to 10,000 interviews, offer insights into motivations and roots for migration, contributing valuable information for policy responses.

In order to enhance the effective implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocols, the State Parties have recently adopted a new Review Mechanism (3) which is a comprehensive and collaborative peer review process, emphasizing transparency, efficiency, inclusivity, and impartiality. Over the course of ten-year timeframe, the process aims to thoroughly assess all articles of the Organized Crime.

Convention and its Protocols, which have been divided into four thematic clusters: Criminalization and Jurisdiction; International Cooperation, Mutual Legal Assistance and Confiscation; Law Enforcement and Judicial System; Prevention, Technical Assistance, Protection Measures and Other Measures. Each state is reviewed for each instrument to which it is party by two other States. Reviewing states provide written feedback, engage in a dialogue with the reviewed state, and collaboratively prepare a list of observations, including gaps, challenges, best practices, suggestions, and technical assistance needs in the organized crime field.



In close co-operation with UNODC, the OSCE is also actively engaged in strengthening the fight against transnational organized crime. The main focus is on enhancing the capabilities of its participating States in combating transnational criminal activities and promoting regional co-operation. These efforts encompass various areas, including law enforcement, judiciary, and border management.

For instance, the OSCE-led extra-budgetary project on “Innovative policy solutions to mitigate money-laundering risks of virtual assets” is designed to support the governments of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in building the capacity of national authorities to mitigate criminal risks related to virtual assets and cryptocurrencies with the help of analytical tracing software. Furthermore, the extra-budgetary project on “Strengthening the fight against transnational organized crime in South-Eastern Europe” aimed at improving regional co-operation in the context of the seizure, confiscation, management and social re-use of assets of criminal organizations.

The organization also supports police forces across its region. It maintains a network of police advisers in its field operations and provides assessments, expert advice, and assistance to participating States to help them develop accountable policing services that protect their citizens.



1 World Drug Report 2023. UNODC. https://www.unodc.org/res/WDR-2023/WDR23_Exsum_fin_SP.pdf

2 More information on the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons:
<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>

3 More information on the UNTOC Review Mechanism:
<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/organized-crime/intro/review-mechanism-untoc/overview.html>

Online meeting with Pia Kauma, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and the other Special Representatives. At work to ensure safety and combat all forms of crime.

October 20 2023



OSCE PA Special Representatives met on 20 October with future activities to promote peace and co-operation in the OSCE area. Ten Special Representatives took part in the online meeting, discussing work on issues including human trafficking, organized crime, climate change, and fighting corruption. Special Representatives focusing on regions such as South East



Europe, Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean and the South Caucasus also participated in the discussion, highlighting their priorities in the work ahead.

The meeting served as an opportunity to promote synergy in the work of the Special Representatives and to minimize duplication, as well as how to best complement the work of the PA's committees.



Eugenio Zoffili has met Interior Minister Piantedosi and has introduced the fight against drugs and mafias into the OSCE debate

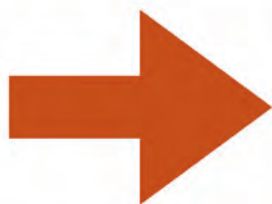
October 6 2023

"Yesterday I met the Italian Minister of the Interior, Matteo Piantedosi, at the Ministry, where we discussed several topics in relation to my work at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, notably in my capacity as Special Representative on combating transnational organised crime and mafias. I am in total agreement with the Minister on all fronts, especially on combating drug-trafficking, which is one of the main sources of finance for criminal gangs. Drugs not only undermine public security but are also ready cash and a source of revenue for mafia-style gangs; crushing these criminal activities means shutting off the taps that are draining rivers of money into the coffers of these criminal gangs. This is why, as I explained to Interior Minister Piantedosi, I have decided to fully execute the remit entrusted to me by President Pia Kauma by bringing the war on drugs into the OSCE debate, which is a fundamental and indispensable tool for stopping organised crime and mafias."





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